



2022 1Q In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews

Lesson 1

The Letter to the Hebrews and to Us

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

We are starting a new quarter studying the book of Hebrews.

Who wrote this book? This has been a point of discussion throughout all Christian history. For the first four centuries after Christ, the Christian community couldn't decide, there was no consensus. The author is intimately familiar with Jewish rituals, and esteems and values the OT Scriptures. This led the church to conclude that Paul was the author. However, more recent scholars have noted that when Hebrews quotes the Old Testament the quotes are exclusively and exactly from the Greek not Hebrew OT. Further, the writing style, and word selection to convey the concepts are not consistent with those chosen in the epistles known to be written by Paul. So, recent scholars have doubted the authorship by Paul.

But, the most likely explanation is that Paul is the inspired source of the truths that are conveyed in the book of Hebrews, but it was penned by an assistant, Timothy or Luke. My belief is that Paul is the author.

But, this question of authorship of Hebrews is actually not a relevant question for determining truth, it isn't ultimately important, it makes no difference, it is just like those who would question the authorship of some of EGW's writings, to the serious Bible student it is inconsequential to the only truly relevant question, which is: Is what is written true? Does it harmonize with the rest of Scripture? Does it carrying forward the truths and principles of God as revealed throughout the totality of Scripture?

It is the spiritually immature who make a big deal out of the authorship—why? Because children are those who haven't yet developed the ability to discern right from wrong—thus they *need* an authority to tell them the answer. The immature believe because someone said so. Thus, if we don't know who said it, how can we trust it? If Paul didn't write it, then is it inspired? If EGW didn't write it, but copied it, is it inspired, how can we trust it?

The spiritually immature are not evil, they want to be good children, they want to obey, they don't want to get into trouble that is why it is so important to them to know who wrote what so they can determine who is the authority they are supposed to trust. They don't want to trust the wrong person and be tricked.



But this is the thinking of the immature. It is like those who don't know how to do math saying, "Why should we believe that 12×12 is 144? We don't know who wrote that answer. If we are sure the Nobel prize laureate in mathematics wrote the answer then we will believe it." But for those who have developed the ability to do math they can discern the difference between the truth and the false.

Why do I believe Hebrews was authored by Paul and penned by an assistant? Because the theology of Hebrews is the same theology in all of Paul's epistles, namely that the rituals of the Jewish services are incapable of providing salvation—they were merely teaching tools to point to Christ. It is Jesus who is the fulfillment of the Scripture; it is Jesus who completes the object lesson; it is Jesus who opens the way back to God; it is Jesus who restores us to unity to God and takes away sin and brings us righteousness.

So the message of Hebrews is to transfer one's faith from rituals to Jesus, from animals, priests, buildings, festivals, sacrifices to Jesus.

Interestingly, the great reformer Martin Luther didn't believe Hebrews was inspired. He rejected Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation.

This is quite significant as these are the books that most clearly teach the Great Controversy view of the sin problem, a war in heaven. He not only rejected these books, he rejected the idea of a war in heaven. Luther absolutely believed in an authoritarian God and the imposed law view of God's government.

I have no doubt that Luther was moved by the Holy Spirit to break away from the lies *that he perceived* and to move toward greater truth. However, it wasn't possible in his short lifetime for him to journey all the way out of the darkness into which he was indoctrinated and into the greater light—and especially so when he rejected the inspired record of much of that light. That is why the Reformation didn't end with Luther, but has continued since Luther. We esteem Luther, what a man of courage. We are thankful for Luther, but we don't teach ideas that are 500 years old and require us to reject four books of the Bible.

Sadly, many theologians, even in the SDA church, continue to advance a theology that depends on Luther's legal model of atonement. We have such a better understanding than Luther.

SUNDAY

Read fourth paragraph, "At the beginning of the Christian..." How do we deal with miracles today? If we see powerful signs and wonders should we believe the person doing the deeds has a message from God? Should the miracle convince us?

We must use the integrative evidence-based approach—which requires we harmonize Scripture, science, and experience. If we separate these threads, we get led astray. Science alone leads to



godlessness, experience alone leads to mysticism, nihilism, or deception, and Scripture alone leads to confusion.

What does Scripture tell us about miracles?

If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken **takes place**, and he says, “Let us follow other gods” (**gods you have not known**) “and let us worship them,” **you must not listen to the words** of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is **testing you** to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. (Dt 13:1–4 NIV84).

If someone appears and does real signs, wonders, miracles, and they do it in the name of Jesus, or Jehovah, or Yahweh, or Yoshua, but they teach that god is a god who makes up laws and that justice requires their god to use power to inflict punishment on law breakers, they are presenting a false god and we are not to follow them why? Because we know God for ourselves, we love God with all our heart and soul—meaning we have intimacy with God.

Imagine someone came to you and did signs and wonders and miracles and then said your spouse sent them and they claim that your spouse said that we should do thus and so, but what they said is out of character for your spouse whom you know—what would you do?

We must know God for ourselves, know Him personally. We must have an experience in His design laws and methods. We must be personally settled into the truth that we cannot be moved.

What does it mean the Lord is testing us? This is what we are facing at this time in history. God is giving us an opportunity to “test” our mettle, to test our resolve, to test our commitment, to test our sincerity, to test our character, to test our religion, to test our beliefs. In other words, as events unfold we will be presented with situations and circumstances that require us to choose what law we apply to our lives in how we live and treat others. We will be honest or lie? Will we protect others or sacrifice other to protect self? Will we stand for truth in practice or only in theological quizzes?

Remember what Jesus said:

Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ (Mt 7:22–23 NIV84).

Miracles can be counterfeited, the truth cannot. Satan does not have truth on his side thus he will counterfeit miracles and present lies. But the lies may not be the lies you expect—it is very unlikely Satan will appear and claim that Jesus is not Lord. No, he will appear and claim that Jesus is Lord. He will endorse that sin is transgression of the law. He will support that salvation requires Jesus to die for the sins of the people. And what if he endorses the Bible Sabbath? But what he won’t do is practice and apply God’s methods, God’s design law of truth, love, and liberty. He will seek to coerce and use



imposed laws, mandates, to compel compliance under the guise of the greater good, protecting others, protecting society, protecting the planet, and will likely do it with reluctance, with complaints of how he only loves us and wants to save us. But he won't leave us free, we will be pressured and compelled.

Read last paragraph “The Spirit gave early Christians...” This conviction of having sins forgiven is an important experience for all to have. The natural impact of sin upon the heart, mind and soul of the sinner is to feel guilt, shame, internal condemnation, and fear. Sin causes us to feel we are no good, that we deserve punishment. Sin warps our minds and causes us to be afraid of rejection and retaliation and to project these fears out upon God and believe God is mad, God is angry, wrathful and must punish us. Sin brings a burden a conviction that we deserve punishment and we cannot believe that God wouldn't punish us. Satan's lie is deeply imbedded in the sin experience, the lie that every sin must meet its punishment.

Therefore, God in love and mercy, meets the sinner in their place of fear, of condemnation, of guilt and shame and communicates they are forgiven. What a joy to experience the forgiveness of God. It is essential to the healing of our hearts to being reconciled to God.

But the barrier, the obstacle in our unity with God is not God—there is nothing in God that keeps us separate from Him. There is no anger, no wrath, no unforgiving attitude that blocks our approach—no it is sin in us that causes fear, guilt, shame and misjudgment of God that separates us from Him.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son” (Jn 3:16–18 NIV84).

But Christianity, infected with the false law view, has not understood this truth and has taught that God must punish and cannot forgive without some legal penalty being paid:

19th Century Evangelist George MacDonald wrote:

“The Lord never came to deliver men from the consequences of their sins while those sins yet remained ... Yet, feeling nothing of the dread hatefulness of their sin, men have constantly taken this word that the Lord came to deliver us from our sins **to mean that he came to save them from the punishment of their sins.**

“**This idea has terribly corrupted the preaching of the Gospel.** The message of the Good News has not been truly communicated. **Unable to believe in the forgiveness of the Father in heaven, imagining him not at liberty to forgive, or incapable of forgiving forthright;** not really believing him God who is fully our Savior, but a God bound—either in his own nature or by a law above him and compulsory upon him—to exact some recompense or satisfaction for sin, **a multitude of religious teachers have taught their fellow men that Jesus came to bear our punishment and save us from hell. But in that they have misrepresented his true**



mission.” George MacDonald, *Discovering the Character of God* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1989), p. 39.

God didn't send Jesus to pay a penalty to God, to do something to the law or Himself. When Adam sinned God didn't change, the law didn't change, but Adam and Eve were changed—they were infected with fear, selfishness, guilt, shame and ran and hid from God.

God sent Jesus to reveal the Father, to expose the lies of Satan, to remove the guilt, shame and fear that causes us to run from God and causes us to misjudge God as the source of pain and suffering and death as punishment for sin and to cure the sin problem, to overcome sin and restore God's living law back into humanity.

God did not send Jesus to condemn us but to heal and save us. But those who refuse to believe the truth about God that Jesus revealed, those who hold to the lie that God is severe and unforgiving and won't forgive unless a blood sacrifice is offered to Him to pay Him off, remain condemned because they continue to misjudge God and continue to live in fear of Him.

Remember this quote from Oswald Chambers:

The Bible does not say that God punished the human race for one man's sin, but that the nature of sin, namely, my claim to my right to myself, entered into the human race through one man. But it also says that another **Man took upon Himself the sin of the human race and put it away** — an infinitely more profound revelation...

Sin is something I am born with and cannot touch— only God touches sin through redemption. It is through the Cross of Christ that God redeemed the entire human race from the possibility of damnation through the heredity of sin. **God nowhere holds a person responsible for having the heredity of sin, and does not condemn anyone because of it.** Condemnation comes when I realize that Jesus Christ came to deliver me from this heredity of sin, and **yet I refuse to let Him do so.** From that moment I begin to get the seal of damnation. **“This is the condemnation [and the critical moment], that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light . . .”** (John 3:19) Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, <http://utmost.org>

What does it mean?

We are not condemned by God because we have the sin condition—this condition is something we were born with. We didn't have a choice to be born sinless. Adam and Eve had a choice to remain sinless or become sinners, but not us. So we are not condemned by God for the condition. We are not responsible for the condition of our birth. We are not born guilty with a legal condition, we are born terminal with a lethal condition.

Thus condemnation comes when we:

- refuse the Remedy of Jesus that will cure us of this lethal condition.



- choose fear and selfishness over love,
- lies over truth,
- hate and resentment over forgiveness,
- cruelty over kindness,
- coercion over freedom,
- compelling others over respecting their autonomy,
- force over liberty.

When we do this we are condemning ourselves; we are refusing to be healed by the Spirit applying the character of Christ into our hearts and minds.

God wants to free us from the power of sin and evil—how does He do that? By giving us opportunity to choose Him.

The Spirit is the Spirit of truth and love—we will be presented with opportunities to choose, the Spirit will bring enough truth to our minds in any given circumstance that we know the truth and then we are left free to decide what we will do. When we choose the truth the Spirit gives us divine power to succeed, but we don't get the power until we choose the truth, and this is how we grow, this is how we mature, this is how we develop godly character:

We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. (Ro 5:3–5 NIV84).

Note the progression—suffering, trial, difficulties in this world brings us decision points. Do we fulfill our duties as God gives them to us, or are we negligent? Do we turn to God, stand firm on His principles, trusting Him with outcomes—or when events circumstances conspire to undermine our efforts and we are short on money do we take matters into our own hands and steal, cheat, or embezzle? Do we turn to destructive substances to self-medicate away uncomfortable feelings or do we go to God, get professional help, and do the hard work of healing inner wounds?

It is only by choosing God, His methods, wrestling out the painful feelings in our trust relationship with God that we grow and when we do this, notice what happens? God pours His love into our hearts—His love casts out all fear, we experience a real transformation of motive. Our fear and selfishness is replaced with love and trust.

Trials, difficulties don't go away, but our frantic efforts to fix everything ourselves does as we have a living faith relationships with the Creator of the universe. Consider Joseph or Daniel—they had many real-life struggles, enemies, problems. There is no doubt they had anxieties and fears. I am sure they had many sleepless nights—but did God ever abandon them? And because they trusted God, because in their difficulties they went to Him, look what God was able to do through them? This is to be our experience. God is longing for people who will run to Him when difficulties arise, who will stay true to Him and not embrace the methods of the world.



Consider this quote out of the book *Education*:

The greatest want of the world [listen to this description and see if this isn't desperately true today] is the want of [people]—[people] who will not be bought or sold, [people] who in their inmost souls are true and honest, [people] who do not fear to call sin by its right name, [people] whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, [people] who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. Ed 57.3

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man. Ed 57.4

Wow—what a great description of what the world needs today, and how can we have such a character? Only by facing difficulties and choosing to say no to fear, no to selfishness, no to the methods of this world, and seek Jesus, surrender to Him, apply His methods to ourselves in how we live and treat others and trust God with outcomes.

MONDAY

The lesson asks us to read Hebrews 10:32-34:

Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. (Heb 10:32–34 NIV84). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

What is the message? Are people of conscience being publicly exposed to insult and persecution today? Are we standing by those who are honoring God with their bodies and not submitting to government mandates or are we colluding with the government to compel people to act against their conscience?

And what happens to us if we side with the government and seek to compel and force people to act against their conscience?

What does it mean to sympathize with those in prison? Is it talking about sympathizing with those like Barabbas—who are in prison because they are a danger to society, those who have ongoing evil in their hearts, and if released would seek to exploit and hurt others? Is it suggesting we should sympathize with the exploiters of others and let them out of prison, or defund the police?



Or is it speaking of sympathizing with those who have been wrongly imprisoned, imprisoned for the cause of Christ, imprisoned for standing up for conscience? Religious and political imprisonment?

If we want to apply this broadly to all people in prison, because we have a prison ministry, then what is the godly way we sympathize with those that are imprisoned for actual crimes they have committed? We see them as people suffering from sin-sickness and our prison ministry seeks to bring them the remedy of Jesus Christ that if they accept Him will change the criminal into an honest and trustworthy person. But if they don't accept Jesus, then we grieve for them because they will only get sicker in heart, mind and character, but we don't let them out of prison to injure their own selves more or others, just because we sympathize with them. So, we can still sympathize with them, but we don't ignore the reality their condition.

The lesson asks us to read Hebrews 11:24-26:

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. (Heb 11:24–26 NIV84).

What is the lesson? What is the truth for us today?

- Do we, by our faith, love and trust Jesus more than all others? Do we identify as being part of the family of God and refuse to be known as the son or daughter of the worldly?
- Do we identify first and foremost as an image bearer of Jesus—a Christian or do we identify first as an American or Australian or Canadian or South African?
- Is our identity first and foremost as a follower of Jesus or do we see ourselves first as white, African American, Asian, Native American or Danish?
- Do we identify first and foremost as a Christian—one who follows Jesus, or do we identify as a follower of Paul, Apollos, Luther, Wesley, Joseph Smith, Ellen White, Graham Maxwell, Tim Jennings?

I served in the US Army and was conditioned to see the uniform first, and never really noticed a person's race. Are they Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force? I automatically looked at their rank, their specialty (medical, infantry, engineers etc.), their unit badge—were they in my chain of command or not, any specialty training (jump wings). The military conditioned me to evaluate people based on merit, ability, training, experience, and not race.

But the military also conditioned me to identify myself as a patriot, and American, to see the world through the lens of America being the best. And I developed a certain America-centered worldview in which as an American I thought better of myself than non-Americans.

But as I have grown spiritually I have realized this is just another trap of Satan. Human nation states are not part of God's kingdom. America is not God's kingdom. America is part of Satan's domain—all the nations of the world are part of Satan's kingdom. It has been a painful process to cut these heart-strings, to change how I identify, to become like Paul, who recognized his Roman citizenship, but



didn't identify as a Roman—Paul was first and foremost Christian. And that is what I have chosen to be.

We must all face these questions of our identity, what we value in our own sense of self.

Do we value the methods and principles of God—truth, love, liberty supreme so that we would choose, like Moses, to be mistreated with the people of God—those who stand for conscience, for liberty, or do we prefer the pleasures of this world and will join with the state in order to keep our privileges?

We are living in perilous times and Satan is bringing ever increasing pressures and deceptions to bear. Only those who daily surrender to Jesus, who have a personal experience with Him, who value His methods, who have His law written upon their hearts and who trust Him with their entire lives, fortunes, families and futures will stand—it is these who endure until the end.

The lesson also asks us to read 1Peter 4:14, but let's read 12-17:

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1 Pe 4:12–17 NIV84).

What is being described? Those who reject the principles of God (truth, love, liberty), those who embrace and value the methods of this world, power, control, force, authority—will hate those who represent Jesus. They will use all the powers of Satan against us. They will lie, bear false witness, accuse, twist, distort. They will do evil and then blame the righteous for it. They will make it appear that the suffering, the problems in the world are because of the righteous when it is because of them.

Consider this quote from *Christ's Object Lessons*:

Whoever trusts in himself that he is righteous, will despise others. As the Pharisee judges himself by other men, **so he judges other men by himself.** His righteousness is estimated by theirs, and the worse they are the more righteous by contrast he appears. **His self-righteousness leads to accusing. "Other men" he condemns as transgressors of God's law.** Thus he is making manifest the very spirit of Satan, the accuser of the brethren. With this spirit it is impossible for him to enter into communion with God. He goes down to his house destitute of the divine blessing. COL 151.2

For those with eyes to see this is exactly what has happened with COVID. The safest people in society are the unvaccinated recovered. They have natural immunity far superior to those who have been vaccinated. But those in power deny truth, deny this reality, and continue to project the lie that it is the



unvaccinated that are making society unsafe. (If you haven't seen the data, multiple animal populations are now documented to be infected with SARS-COV2, including up to 50% of the deer population. The virus will persist, it will continue to mutate in these animals and it is not going away, and the so-called vaccines will not eliminate it. The entire vaccine approach to this virus has been built on lies, misinformation, and distortion. Why? Because it has not been about eliminating the virus or treating the condition, it has been about reshaping society and the virus is just an opportunity to achieve this.)

And have you notice as more truth comes out that those who have rejected the truth become more determined to force their way upon others. More mandates, more unreasonable orders, more violations of liberty, more assaults on common sense and people are put in positions they must decide how they will act in governance of self.

TUESDAY

Read Hebrews 2:18:

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. (Heb 2:18 NIV84).

What does this mean? Why couldn't Jesus help us if He didn't suffer?

The SDA Bible commentary says the following:

The human nature of Christ felt the full force of temptation. Otherwise, Christ would not have understood the terrific struggle of a poor sinner who is mightily tempted to yield. Christ was tempted in all points "like as we are" (Heb. 4:15). He actually suffered under temptation." Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1980). The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (Vol. 7, p. 407). Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Do you agree? I do not agree with this view. I do not agree that our infinite God didn't comprehend, understand, know of our terrific struggle, that there was something beyond the knowledge of God and that God had to become human in order to learn. I reject this view.

This view, in my opinion, is a result of the legal view of salvation. They are trying to explain what is meant here, but they don't understand the sin problem and its solution.

This is explained in Hebrews 4:15 and 5:8,9:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one **who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.** (Heb 4:15 NIV84).



Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered **and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him...** (Heb 5:8–9 NIV84).

It is because He was tempted like us, but unlike us, He overcome every temptation to act on fear and selfishness and instead chose to love perfectly developing a perfect sinless human character that He is able to help those who are being tempted. **He is able to help us because He has procured an actual cure to treat our terminal sin condition.**

EGW puts in this way:

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and **developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them.** His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, **Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character,** a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:26. DA 762.2

This is why His suffering enabled Him to help those of us who are suffering.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson asks us to read Hebrews 5:11-6:3:

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the **elementary truths** of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, **is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.** But solid food is for the **mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.** Therefore let us leave the **elementary teachings** about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the **foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death,** and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so. (Heb 5:11–6:3 NIV84).

What does this passage mean to us today? Do we teach children differently than adults? Why?

Why are those who are stuck on elementary teachings not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness?

What do children focus upon? Just think of any group of children, where is their focus? On rule-keeping.



Elementary schools are filled with tattle-tales, with kids monitoring other children's behaviors and tattling on those who break a rule. It doesn't matter the reasons, whether another teacher asked a child to leave class early, or to come to school in regular clothes rather than the uniform—what do the other children do?

Children are preoccupied with not getting in trouble with those in charge.

The immature are preoccupied with their legal standing, with getting their legal sin-debt paid, and with what behaviors are right and wrong.

Children do what they are told, or not, but children don't understand why.

Jesus said He wants us to be understanding friends, to be mature, to grow up, to do what is right because it is right, and those who do internalize the principles of God into their hearts and they are the ones who are acquainted with righteousness for righteousness is the restoration of God's character, His living law of love into the inmost being of people. Righteousness is not about a legal declaration that we are legally righteous while we remain unrighteous.

This takes us back to the seven levels of moral decision-making:

1. **Reward and punishment:**
2. **Marketplace exchange:**
3. **Social conformity:**
4. **Law and order:**
5. **Love for others:**
6. **Principle based living:**
7. **Understanding Friend of God:**

The first four levels are the levels of the immature, the focus is on self, on getting rewards, avoiding punishment, getting a good deal, being accepted and avoiding rejection, or not getting into legal trouble. Level five is the first level of the converted, the mature, it is where we love God and others more than self and we stop living with self at the center. Level six is moving beyond love, to an intelligent love, to not only having love in the heart for God and others, but understanding the methods and principles of God, His design law and making intelligent choices in how we live out God's love. And level seven goes beyond love as a motive and understanding design laws, to understanding friendship with God and intelligently participating in His purposes.

THURSDAY

Read Hebrews 10:23-39 from *The Remedy*:

so that we may have ultimate confidence and trust in him who has revealed himself to be completely trustworthy.²⁴ And think constantly how we can work with God to help each other



to grow in character to be like Jesus.²⁵ Don't stop meeting together, as some have done, but continue to encourage each other, and do so even more as you see the Day of our ultimate deliverance approaching.

²⁶If we deliberately reject the truth about God and his loving, life-promoting methods, and instead — after God sacrificed everything to bring us this healing truth — continue to practice self-destructive methods, no further remedy remains:²⁷only the inevitable consequences of unrestrained selfishness — the total destruction of character, perversion of mind, and abject panic and fear when God unveils his life-giving glory which transforms the righteous but consumes the wicked.²⁸ In the symbolic stage play — which was designed to reveal the truth about God and his plan to heal — anyone who rejected the script of Moses was terminated from the group on the testimony of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much more certain will the agonizing death be for those who reject the Son of God (the only Remedy for our terminal condition), who treat as poisonous the healing truth that his death revealed, and who reject God's Spirit that enlightens the mind with this life-saving Remedy?³⁰ For we know him who said, "It is up to me to determine when someone is beyond healing—when someone has rejected the only healing cure; I will decide when to let them go;" and again, "The Lord will accurately diagnose his people."³¹ It will be horrible for those who remain God's enemies to experience his unveiled goodness and realize all they have rejected, and experience the full weight of their own guilt.

³² Remember those first days of recovery when you had just begun to internalize the healing truth: You stood firm for what is right and healthy in the great battle against the tormenting forces of selfishness, both internal and external;³³ sometimes you were attacked publicly with name-calling or even physical assault; at other times you stood up and supported fellow believers who were being mistreated.³⁴ Your hearts went out to those imprisoned for this cause, and when your properties were seized, you remained joyful because you knew they couldn't take your possessions of real worth—God's love, a new heart, a healthy mind, and life eternal.

³⁵ So don't become discouraged and lose confidence; your trust will be richly rewarded.³⁶ Maintain your focus and continue to implement God's methods in your lives, and you will receive all that he has promised;³⁷ for in the grand history of the cosmos, it is just a very short time until "He who is coming to get us will come and will not delay.

³⁸ And those who are set right with me will live their lives trusting me; but if any stop trusting and turn away, my heart will break over them."

³⁹ But we are not those who stop trusting and turn away into the path of self-destruction and death; we are those who trust God and are healed. (Hebrews 10:23-39 REM).

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

New Release: The Final Message of Mercy to the World—The Three Angels, magazine.

You can read a digital version online at our website. Here is a link to the flip version <https://comeandreason.com/files/flipbooks/3Angels/>

We encourage you to do read it online so you know what you are getting and then order you copies.

The vision we have for this magazine is for it to be shared—we want our friends and supporters to give as many away in their community as they can. We would encourage you to organize a Sabbath afternoon discussion group to discuss it. And please send us feedback after you have read it and shared it.

You may order yours at no cost to any US postal address by visiting our webstore. You may download a digital copy on our website.

New Roku channel: Come and Reason has just opened a Roku channel and you can find it in Roku by searching for Come and Reason. For those with Roku you can now watch our programs on your TV full screen.

Property update: Renovations have started:

