

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Study With Us

# Redemption

**CITY**  
**ONAHILL**

PART TWO

# Introduction

## Study With Us

Welcome to Study with Us - Part 2 of 3. This booklet contains information and questions to help you study the book of Hebrews in depth. These questions are the same ones we ask in Gospel Community. If you're in a Gospel Community, please study these questions before your meeting. If you're not in one yet, why not join today and study with us in community?

## Hebrews

*"Hebrews is one of the most beautifully written, powerfully argued, and theologically profound writings in the New Testament"* - Timothy Johnson

The book of Hebrews is for followers of Jesus who have been worn down by the world and need to be reminded of the greatness and glory of Jesus. This epistle is a masterpiece of theology, imagery, and pastoral wisdom, intentionally woven to teach us about the redemption we have in Christ. This letter is written with both encouragement and warnings so that followers of Jesus would 'not grow weary or fainthearted,' but rather be courageous disciples known for their endurance.

# Redemption

In Hebrews 1-4, the author highlights the person of Christ, showing that He is more glorious than anyone or anything else. But in Hebrews 4-10, the focus shifts to the work of Christ and the redemption He accomplished.

*"He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption." - Hebrews 9:12*

In these chapters, you'll discover that Jesus is the great High Priest—fully human, yet without sin. He is the final High Priest who entered the most holy place, offering the ultimate sacrifice: Himself, for us. As the mediator of the new covenant, inaugurated by His blood, He secured the forgiveness of our sins.

But His work didn't end in death. He rose again and will return to "save those who are eagerly waiting for Him." Because of this, we can now draw near with confidence to the throne of grace and experience a relationship with the King of righteousness and peace.

# Bible Reading & Challenges

To help you study and apply the book of Hebrews follow the reading plan below and complete the weekly challenges.

Week	Passage	Theme	Challenge
5	"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace..." Hebrews 4:16	Prayer	Dedicate 1 hour this week to offer up prayers and supplication like Jesus. Go for a walk, and invite the Holy Spirit to bring names to your attention.
6	"For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened..." Hebrews 6:4	Apostasy	Find a time and place to sit still and think about this question —what would draw you away from Jesus? Visualise falling away and how you'd live and feel about leaving Jesus. Then read Hebrews 4:15 3 times and spend some time in prayer.
7	"since he always lives to make intercession for them" Hebrews 7:25	Presence	Picture Jesus next to you with his hand on your shoulder interceding for you. What do you think he would be praying for you?

8	"For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." Hebrews 8:12	Sacrifice	Write down all the sins you can think of from the last week on a piece of paper. Then read Hebrews 8:12 and strike out the first sin, read Hebrews 8:12 and strike out the next and repeat this process.
9	"This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you" Hebrews 9:20	Communion	This week find a quiet spot and journal or write down what the death of Jesus means for you. Try and personalise it as much as possible, so you aren't just using theological terms that sound like an ESV study bible (unless of course that is how you normally speak). Turn that into a prayer and praise God for Jesus.
10	"would no longer have any consciousness of sins" Hebrews 10:2	Repentance	Clean your conscience.  Name one sin that you keep falling into and confess this to the Lord and to someone you trust.

# The Great High Priest

Hebrews 4:14-5:10

## Sermon

1. What were you encouraged or challenged by in the sermon?
2. What questions do you still have about this text?

## Read Hebrews 4:14-5:10

3. The Old Testament describes the requirements for priests in a lot of detail (see Exod. 29; Lev. 21:1-22:16).
  - a. What do you know about priests already? What is it that priests do?
  - b. Look up Lev. 16:1-34. What role does the high priest (or *anointed priest*) play in offering sacrifices for sin?
4. Look at Hebrews 5:1-4.
  - a. How does Hebrews describe a high priest?
  - b. What does it mean that he is “beset with weakness”?
  - c. What impact does that have on how he responds to “the wayward and ignorant”?
  - d. Try to draw the relationship between a priest, God, and people.

5. How is Jesus described in this passage? List the ways that Jesus is similar to other high priests, and the ways He is different.

- a. Why is it good for us that Jesus is similar to previous high priests?
- b. How is it better for us that Jesus is different from previous high priests?

6. Why is it significant that God “appointed” Jesus to be our priest? What does this reveal about Jesus?

7. How does 5:7-10 describe Jesus’ path to priesthood? [How does verse 7 describe Jesus’ life on earth?]

8. In Hebrews 2, we see what it means for Jesus to “be made perfect through suffering”. This passage says that Jesus “learned obedience through what he suffered”.

- a. Does this mean that Jesus was ever disobedient? How do you know?
- b. How would you explain what it means that Jesus “learned obedience through what he suffered”?

9. The word translated as ‘sympathy’ in 4:15 not only conveys a sense of relating to someone’s suffering, but also being willing and able to help.

- a. Why is Jesus able to sympathise with us in our weakness?
- b. How does His experience “learning obedience” (v8) equip Him to be our high priest?

10. Even though Jesus is in heaven, He is still human. In order to be an effective high priest, He must be both transcendent, and tender. And He is! The author encourages us to “draw near to the throne of grace” with confidence, because Jesus is there as our representative.

- a. When you confess your sin, how do you imagine Jesus’ response to you? List two or three words that describe Jesus’ expression. Why do you imagine Jesus like that?
- b. Take some time individually to consider, where are you finding it most difficult to follow Jesus?
- c. Write out a prayer, asking Jesus for help to obey Him in the area you are finding most difficult.

## Prayer

- Thank Jesus for acting as our representative before God.
- Praise God for sending His Son to learn to be our sympathetic high priest.
- Pray that we would each recognise the privilege we have to talk to God ourselves, because of Jesus. Pray that we would grow in confident and faith-filled prayers to God for ourselves and others.



# The Anchor of the Soul

Hebrews 5:11-6:20

## Sermon

1. What were you encouraged or challenged by in the sermon?
2. What questions do you still have about this text?

## Read Hebrews 5:11-6:20

3. Look at Hebrews 5:11-6:3. How would you describe the spiritual state of the original audience?
4. Look back at the last few chapters of Hebrews. Does it seem 'basic' to you? Why do you think the author says they need milk, when they should already be teachers?

## Read Hebrews 6:4-8

5. Read through Hebrews 6:4-8 again slowly. We can talk a lot about what it says.

- a. How does it make you feel?
- b. Why does it make you feel that way?
- c. Do you think that is the response the author intended?

6. What do you think the author is describing here? What is the point of the illustration in vv 7-8?

7. The author has talked about obedience quite a bit throughout the letter. How would you describe the relationship between faith in God and obedience to God?

## Read Hebrews 6:9-20

8. How do vv13-20 make you feel?

9. What is the author's goal for his audience? What is he trying to achieve in this section?

10. Read Genesis 22:1-19. From what you know about Abraham, why do you think the author chose him as an example of faith and patience?

11. We don't tend to take oaths as seriously in our culture. But historically, an oath was a solemn confirmation that the speaker was telling the truth; in taking an oath they swear by someone more important than themselves (of course, humans might choose to lie when taking an oath anyway).

What was the point of God taking an oath? How might it help us to trust Him when life feels hard?

12. In summary, what do you think it looks like to mature in faith?

13. What are the risks of not maturing in faith?

14. What response does this passage call you to?

15. Reflect on your last week. Is there a part of your life where you have avoided applying the “word of righteousness”? i.e. Is there part of your life where you are reluctant to live out your faith practically? God is inviting you to ‘grow up’ into the faith you have received.

## Prayer

- Ask God for help to obey Him in our day to day lives. You could pray about a particular area in your life where you feel embarrassed or afraid to share your faith.
- If appropriate, pray for someone else in our church or broader Christian community who might be stagnating in their faith. Pray that your friend would hear the call to earnestly trust and obey Jesus in their current circumstances.

# The King of Peace & Righteousness

## Hebrews 7

### Sermon

1. What were you encouraged or challenged by in the sermon?
2. What questions do you still have about this text?

### Read Hebrews 7:1-3 and Genesis 14:8-24

3. Create a personal profile for Melchizedek. What facts do you know about him from the Genesis account? What's missing?

### Read Psalm 110

4. We're missing a lot of information about Melchizedek. How does King David and the author of Hebrews utilise the absence of this information in Scripture?

### Read Hebrews 7:4-10

5. How does the author convince us that Melchizedek was greater than the Levitical priests? What's his argument?

## Read Hebrews 7:11-28

6. What was lacking in the Levitical priesthood?
7. Melchizedek reveals a gap or inadequacy in the old order of priests, which points to the need for a better priest and a better covenant (because priests were restricted to descendants of Aaron in the old covenant and were mortal). In what ways does Melchizedek 'resemble' Jesus?
8. How else does this passage describe Jesus' priesthood? List as many descriptors as you can from the passage.
9. In last week's study we saw how God's oath gives us more reassurance. What does His oath confirm in this passage?
10. Spend a moment reflecting on Hebrews 7:26. Hebrews 4:15 reminds us that Jesus can sympathise with sinners. What do you think it means that Jesus is "separated from sinners" and "exalted above the heavens" in 7:26? Why are both of these truths important?
11. How does this description of Jesus (in 7:26) help you to worship Him? You might like to write out a prayer of praise using some of the phrases from this verse.
12. Hebrews 7 highlights the permanence of Jesus' priesthood. He became a priest forever "by the power of an indestructible life" (His resurrection). What if Jesus had died for our sins, but hadn't been raised from the dead? What difference would that have made? i.e. Could He still be effective in dealing with our sin? See 1 Cor 15 if you'd like to reflect further on this.

13. Why is Jesus' permanent priesthood good news for us? Why is it, personally, good news for you? Can you think of a time recently when you needed forgiveness? Can you imagine a time in the future when you will need God's help to resist sin?

14. What confidence can Jesus give us as we face these challenges?

## Prayer

- Thank God for the signs of Melchizedek and the Old Testament priests, who point us to the need for a better priest.
- Thank Jesus, for being the high priest we really need.
- Use your reflections on 7:26 to praise Jesus.

# The Better Covenant

## Hebrews 8

### Sermon

1. What were you encouraged or challenged by in the sermon?
2. What questions do you still have about this text?

### Read Hebrews 8

3. We'll consider the location of Jesus's ministry more deeply next week, but for now think through the following questions:
  - a. How has Jesus become a high priest? What do we already know about His priesthood?
  - b. Where is Jesus now?
  - c. What do you think it means that they (the Levitical priests) "serve a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things"?
4. From this passage and what we've already read in Hebrews, what is the problem (or problems) with the Old Covenant?
5. If there was fault with the Old Covenant, why do you think it existed?
6. How does Jeremiah 31:31-34 describe the new covenant God promised?

7. If this covenant is with Israel, does that include us? Why or why not?

## Read Hebrews 8:10-12

8. What do you think these verses mean for God's people?

9. How does Jesus (and the Holy Spirit) fulfil these promises in our lives now?

10. Is there anything listed here that hasn't happened or been completely fulfilled yet?

11. How has this passage helped you to understand your relationship with God?

12. Which description of the new covenant encourages you the most? Why?

## Prayer

- Praise God for His faithfulness to Israel, for choosing to restore instead of giving up on His people.
- Thank God for His faithfulness to you, choosing to incorporate you into His redeemed people in Christ Jesus.



# The Most Holy Place

Hebrews 9:1-22

## Sermon

1. What were you encouraged or challenged by in the sermon?
2. What questions do you still have about this text?

## Read Hebrews 9 and Leviticus 16

3. Who is allowed to enter the most holy place? How often are they allowed to enter it?
4. Focus on verse 7-9 for a minute. Could you summarise what these verses say about worship under the old covenant?
5. Focussing on Hebrews 9:11-14, what is different about Jesus' service as high priest?
6. What does the author of Hebrews say is the purpose of having a clear conscience?

## Read Hebrews 9:15-22

7. In the context of these verses, what do you think the “inheritance” is?
  
8. In Australian culture (or the culture with which you’re most familiar), what is significant about receiving an inheritance? What does this say about you and your family? What do you think about the inheritance described here?
  
9. How many times do you count the word “blood” in this chapter? Why is blood so significant?
  
10. How can we be confident that we are under a new covenant and not under the old covenant?
  
11. How can we be confident that we are qualified to enter God’s presence and worship Him?
  
12. You have access to God!
  - a. How can you worship Him?
  - b. How should you worship Him?
  - c. Do you think we have an obligation to other believers towards worship of our God?
  - d. How does being guilt-free affect your worship?

# Prayer

- Thank God for the eternal inheritance we have in Christ Jesus.
- Spend some time praising God for His holiness.
- Thank God for purifying our conscience, redeeming us from dead works to serve the living God (v14).

# The Ultimate Sacrifice

Hebrews 9:23-10:18

## Sermon

1. What were you encouraged or challenged by in the sermon?
2. What questions do you still have about this text?

## Read Hebrews 9:23-10:18 and Leviticus 1:1-16

3. What are your first impressions of this section? What questions do you have?
4. We read last week that Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant and that without blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. Consider the practice and tradition of the 'Burnt Offering' and the process required to "please the Lord". Write out a list of the benefits and challenges of presenting an "offering" to God.
5. Referring back to Hebrews, what do we learn about the limitations of the Old Covenant? What is the result of Jesus being the ultimate sacrifice?
6. Looking at verse 23, when Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him". What does this imply about our sin now? What can we look forward to?

7. How does the reference from Psalm 40:6-8 in verses 5-7 highlight the difference between sacrifice and obedience?

8. Reflect on 10:18. "Where there is forgiveness of these (lawless deeds), there is no longer any offering for sin." What are the implications of this verse? How does this change the way we approach our walk with Christ?

9. Reflect on the following:

- a. How has this passage shaped your understanding of Jesus?
- b. How does that help you worship him?
- c. What rhythms could you grow this week that help you to come to Jesus in prayer and to confess and repent of sin?

10. Who in your life could help keep you accountable in resisting particular temptations you experience? This week's Hebrews challenge is to name and confess one sin you struggle with to God and to another person you trust, who can help to keep you accountable.

## Prayer

- Praise God for the perfect sacrifice of Jesus, offered once for all to cleanse us from sin and guilt.
- Thank God for the new covenant, allowing us to draw near to Him with confidence, knowing our sins are fully forgiven.
- Ask God to protect us from relying on anything but Christ, and to keep our trust in His finished work for our salvation.



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