

HEBREWS

Fear to Faith

STUDY 3

Empathy of our Elder Brother

A. Why Christ is the Perfect High Priest [2:10-18]

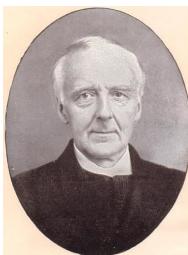
2:10,11 Contrary to many contemporary preachers, what is necessary if we are ever to reach glory?

[1] [2:10] The aim of a religious system is [teleiosis = perfection] (7:11), to bring men to their true end, when all the fulness of humanity in power and development is brought into fellowship with God. And in this sense God was pleased to 'make' the Incarnate Son 'perfect through suffering' (2:10; 5:9; 7:28) and the Son by His one offering, to 'make perfect them that are sanctified' (10:14; 11:40; 12:23). **Brooke Foss Westcott** *The Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 66

[2] [2:10-13] *Our Father has on hand a work greater than his original creation*, – He is "bringing many sons unto glory." The way may be rugged and tedious; but its end is glory. ... *But all these sons must tread the path of suffering.* – Since the first sin brought suffering to our first parents, and bloodshed into the first home, there has been but one lot for those who will live Godly. Their road leads to glory; but every inch of it is stained with their blood, and watered by their tears. It climbs to Hermon's summit; but it descends immediately into sombre and devil-haunted plains. It conducts to the Mount of Olives, with its ascension light; but it first traverses the glades of Gethsemane, the winepress of Golgotha, the solitude and darkness of the grave.

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.

F.B. Meyer *The Way Into the Holiest* p. 34



2:12-15 How ONLY could the Devil's power be undone? (1 John 3:4-9)

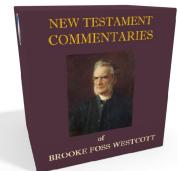
[3] [2:14] Nowhere does Scripture view the incarnation as means to some kind of sentimental identification or association of God with men, as though it were a divine tribute to the surpassing dignity of man (a conceit entertained by the mind of Renaissance man), or as though it were by itself a mystical means of raising human nature to a higher, or the highest, level of evolutionary existence (as some more recent "catholic" theologians have supposed). **Philip Edgcumbe Hughes** *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 111

[4] [2:15] Although we must still meet death, let us nevertheless be calm and

serene in living and dying, when we have Christ going before us. If anyone cannot set his mind at rest by disregarding death, that man should know that he has not yet gone far enough in the faith of Christ. [Calvin] **Philip Edgcumbe Hughes** *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 114

2:16-18 What does the writer include in Christ's sufferings?

[5] [2:17] On the one side we see how the majestic description of the Mediator of the New Covenant given in the opening verses of the Epistle, is justified by a series of passages in which He is pointed to in the records of the Old Covenant as Son and Lord and Creator and Sharer of the throne of God; and on the other side even we can discern, as we look back, how it was 'becoming' that He should fulfil the destiny of fallen men by taking to Himself, like King and Prophet, the sorrows of those whom He relieved. The greatest words of God come, as we speak, naturally and intelligibly through the occasions of life. In the history of Israel, of the Christ, and of the Church, disappointment is made the door of hope, and suffering is the condition of glory. **Brooke Foss Westcott** *The Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 71



[7] [2:10-13] *But this perfect efficiency, as we have seen, is the result of suffering.* – In no other conceivable way could He have been so effectively qualified to be our Leader as He has been by the ordeal of suffering. Every pang, every tear, every thrill – all were needed to complete his equipment to help us. And from this we may infer that suffering is sometimes permitted to befall us in order to qualify us to be, in our poor measure, the leaders and comforters of our brethren, who are faltering in the march. When next we suffer, let us believe that it is not the result of chance, or fate, or man's carelessness, or hell's malevolence; but that perhaps God is perfecting our adaptability to comfort and succour others. **F.B. Meyer**, *The Way into the Holiest* p.36

STUDY 4

'Builder' better than Moses

A. Why Christ is greater than Moses [3:1-6]

3:1,2 Mark the uniqueness of this description of Christ, and too its implications for the relation of believers to Christ

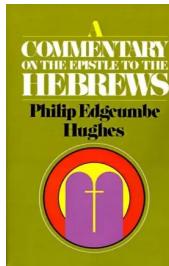
[8] [3:1-6] We have seen Christ in His superiority to angels as Son of God (chap. 1), and as Son of man (chap. 2); and now it naturally follows that He should be shown to be superior to the great Jewish law-giver, Moses, whose high position and reputation among the Jews required this proof of his inferiority to the Lord. **W.H. Griffith Thomas** *Let Us Go On: The Secret of Christian Progress in the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 38

[9] [3:1-6] The personal endearment ("brethren") by which this argument is prefaced is of special interest. The argument "wherefore" seems to be that because of Christ's sympathy and succor (2:17,18), it is essential to realize the importance of the situation. The use of the term "brethren," signifying relationship, and the word "holy," indicating their position of consecration, naturally leads to the statement of their wonderful privilege, "partakers of a heavenly calling." **W.H. Griffith Thomas** *Let Us Go On: The Secret of Christian Progress in the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 38

[10] [3:1-6] The description of Christ as faithful appears to apply to the present time, not to His earthly life in the past, "as now being faithful." The faithfulness of Christ is the foundation of our strength and peace. **W.H. Griffith Thomas** *Let Us Go On: The Secret of Christian Progress in the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 41

3:3,4 Note once again the juxtaposition of Christ's submission and stewardship with His exalted OTHER nature! (cf. 1:1-4 with 2:5-9)

[11] [3:2] For the Qumran Sect the "house" built by God is interpreted as the community of elect and undefiled persons who have withdrawn themselves from the ungodliness by which the nation and its leaders have become corrupted. If those to whom this epistle was addressed were in danger of coming under the influence of doctrines similar to those propounded by the Dead Sea Sect, this gives all the more force to what our author writes here, for he is then saying in effect: "False notions about membership in the 'house' of which God is the builder are placing you in peril of slackening your attachment to Jesus as your Saviour and Lord. **Philip Edgcumbe Hughes** *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 137



3:5,6 Contrast Christ's stewardship with that of Moses

[12] [3:6] The conception of 'hope' occupies an important place in the Epistle (6:2,18; 7:19; 10:23, note). 'Hope' is related to 'Faith' as the energetic activity of life is related to life. Through hope the power of faith is seen in regard to the future. Hope gives distinctions to the objects of faith. **Brooke Foss Westcott** *The Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 79

[13] [3:6b] Nor does an admonition of this kind conflict with the dominical and apostolic teaching that the Christian's eternal security is dependent not on himself but on Christ and his merits alone (cf. Jn. 5:24; 6:37; 10:27-29; Acts 2:47; Rom. 11:6f.; 1 Cor. 1:26ff.; 2 Cor. 5:18ff.; Eph. 2:8-10). But it does mean that a man whose profession of faith is contradicted by the quality of his life should examine himself to see whether he is a Christian at all (2 Cor. 13:5). **Philip Edgcumbe Hughes** *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* p. 139

[14] [3:6] The conditional sentences of this epistle are worthy of special attention. Nowhere in the New Testament more than here do we find such repeated insistence on the fact that continuance in the Christian life is the test of reality. The doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints has its corollary the salutary teaching that the saints are the people who persevere to the end. **F.F. Bruce** *Hebrews* p.59

A parallel situation in Colossae

[6] Alike in Phygrian Colossae and wherever the "Hebrews" lived there was an invasion of church difficulties and confusion. A certain affinity in detail links the two cases together. Colossian Christians and Hebrew Christians, under widely different circumstances and no doubt in very different tones, persuasive in one case, threatening in the other, were pressed to *retrograde* from the sublime simplicity and fulness of the truth. Their danger was what I may venture to call a medievalism. Not Mosaism, not Prophetism, but Judaism, the successor and distortion of the ancient revelations, invited or commanded their adhesion, or, in the case of the "Hebrews," their return, as to the one true faith and fold. There were great differences in detail. At Colossae it does not seem that the "medievalists" professed to deny Christianity; rather they professed to teach the Judaistic version of it as the authentic type. Among the "Hebrews" anti-Christianity was using every effort to allure or to alarm the disciples back to open Rabbinism, "doing despite to the Son of God." But both streams of tendency went in the same general direction so far that they put into the utmost prominence aspects of religion full of a traditional ceremonialism, and of the idea of human meritorious achievement rather than of a spiritual reliance for the salvation of the soul. **H.C.G. Moule** *Studies in Hebrews* p. 10