

Chapter 37: Jesus Christ—The Author and Finisher of Our Faith

Reading Outline:

- Hebrews
1. Introduction to Hebrews
 2. Book of Hebrews
 - 2.1. Hebrews 1
 - 2.2. Hebrews 2
 - 2.3. Hebrews 3
 - 2.4. Hebrews 4
 - 2.5. Hebrews 5
 - 2.6. Hebrews 6
 - 2.7. Hebrews 7
 - 2.8. Hebrews 8
 - 2.9. Hebrews 9
 - 2.10. Hebrews 10
 - 2.11. Hebrews 11
 - 2.11.1. Adam and Cain
 - 2.11.2. Enoch
 - 2.11.3. Noah
 - 2.11.4. Abraham
 - 2.11.5. Isaac
 - 2.11.6. Jacob
 - 2.11.7. Joseph
 - 2.11.8. Moses
 - 2.11.9. Joshua and the Children of Israel
 - 2.11.10. Rehab
 - 2.11.11. Others
 - 2.12. Hebrews 12
 - 2.13. Hebrews 13
 3. Conclusions

1. Introduction to Hebrews

“Sent from:	Paul, in Italy, and probably at Rome.
Sent to:	‘The Hebrews,’ probably those who helped Paul in the Judean imprisonment.
Date:	Possibly A.D. 62.
Purpose:	To warn Jewish Christians against falling from the faith and to re-convince them that Christ and his gospel are above the law of Moses.
Main themes:	Christ’s authority and mission; faithfulness and first principles; Melchizedek priesthood; Christ’s atonement; faith and endurance.”

Reference¹

The LDS Bible Dictionary states,

At least ten years have passed since the Jerusalem Council was held and yet many of the Jewish members of the Church are still “zealous in the law” of Moses (Acts 21:20)...[and] that certain ordinances of the law of Moses [are still] necessary for the salvation of gentile Christians...Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews to show them by their own scripture and by sound reason why they should no longer practice the law of Moses...[primarily because] the law of Moses, as a forerunner, had been fulfilled in Christ, and the higher gospel law of Christ had replaced it.”²

Paul comments on a variety of gospel subjects presupposing prior gospel knowledge on the part of the reader. The five areas we will address are:

1. Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of Heavenly Father is our Savior
2. The Melchizedek Priesthood is part of the fullness of the gospel
3. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the new covenant between God and His children
4. Those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ will inherit a place in the kingdom of God
5. Those whom the Lord chastens, He loves

Bruce R. McConkie concludes,

“Paul is at his theological best in Hebrews...as an inspired theologian. Paul takes the revelations of the past, the dead letter of the ancient law, and ties it into the living Christianity of the present. He shows how the gospel grew out of the preparatory law which prevailed in Israel, and which in fact had as its purpose the preparing of the way before the coming of that Prophet who led Israel of old and was the Author of both covenants.

“...In Hebrews we learn that Jesus was made a little lower than Elohim [God the Father]; that he has precedence over the angels; that he took upon himself mortality [in order] to bring salvation to man.

“In Hebrews our understanding is refreshed with the knowledge that salvation is available through his intercession; that he sacrificed himself for the sins of the world; that by his blood the saints were sanctified.

“In it we are taught that the Mosaic ordinances prefigured his ministry; that his gospel was offered in ancient Israel; that he is the Mediator of the new covenant.

“There is no other Biblical source for detailed knowledge of the Holy Priesthood; of Christ’s status as the great High Priest and the Apostle of our profession; of the oath which God swore that his Son would be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

“And nowhere else in the Bible do we find the oath and the covenant of the priesthood set forth; or that through this priesthood the gospel is administered; or that it is the power whereby eternal life is gained.”³

With the preceding introduction, we begin our exploration of the book of Hebrews.

2. Book of Hebrews

2.1. Hebrews 1

Paul begins his letter to the Hebrews, not by focusing upon his credentials, but upon Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1:1-6, 10

**1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;
3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.
5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?
6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.**

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

In these introductory verses, Paul addresses the position that Jesus Christ as God's Son holds in relationship to God, His Father. These include:

1. He is God's heir
2. It was through His Son that God the Father created worlds
3. Jesus has the glory of the Father and was created in His express physical image
4. He fulfilled His role as Savior and Redeemer for God's spirit children by coming to this earth and suffering for their sins
5. He reigns on the right hand of the Father
6. He is higher in authority than the angels who minister or serve under the Father's direction
7. In Jesus' role as "creator," prior His being born into mortality, He was instrumental in directing the creation of our earth and the heavens above

It is important for the Jews, and each of us, to understand the role that Jesus Christ held in relationship to God the Father prior to His coming to earth. His position of responsibility in the Fathers' plan for His children is greater than all of the Fathers' spirit children. He obtained this position by His complete and total obedience to the will of His Father in a manner superior to all other spirits.

Kent P. Jackson states,

"What was the glory that Jesus had with the Father 'before the world was'? Abraham, beholding that time in vision, reported that Jesus was 'like unto God.' (PGP, Abraham 3: 22, 24.) Into the hand of him who later was to become his Only Begotten in the flesh, the Father had given all power and authority in the universe. Jesus

was ‘the brightness of [the Fathers’] glory, and the express image of his person, ‘who upholds ‘all things by the word of his power.’ (Heb. 1:3). Such divine acts as the creation of worlds without numbers, the governing of the earth and millions of others like it, the revelation to the prophets, and the atonement for all of God’s children were entrusted into the hands of Jesus Christ. Jehovah, the Lord God of the universe, the Father of heaven and earth, Jesus was, as Paul taught, ‘in the form of God’ and ‘thought it not robbery to be equal with God,’ (Phillip 2:6.) How mighty this man was as a spirit son of God in premortality that the Father would endow him with all the attributes of deity save only those that pertain to the possession of a physical body. How we, his spirit siblings, but spirit underlings, must have stood in awe of him as we followed him in the course that the Father laid out for his children. How we must have admired the indescribable wisdom with which, even then, he administered the Father’s plan. How we must have marveled at the unutterable courage with which he stepped forward to accept the burden of the holy atonement. If the present sensitivities that we feel for him, his sacred eternal work, and his gospel plan are any indication of the admiration that we had at that time in his presence, then heaven is a glorious place indeed. And if it is glorious because of the presence of the Son there, how glorious it must be because of the present of the Father, the source of all glory in eternity.”⁴

2.2. Hebrews 2

Hebrews 2:1-3

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.

Bryan Richards states,

“If the message of an angel is important and the law of Moses is just, how much more should we pay attention to the gospel delivered to us by the Savior who is greater than both the angels and the law of Moses? Christ is greater than the angels for he will be in charge in the world to come, not the angels. His greatness has also been confirmed to us by the miracles which he wrought and the teachings we have receive through his apostles. Hence, we must give more diligent heed to his teachings.”⁵

Hebrews 2:9

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

So that Christ might bring about the atonement of all men, He condescended to leave His place of honor and glory and come to earth to experience the challenges and adversity of mortality. Following His atonement and resurrection, He returned to His Father and received all the glory He once held, and more. We are grateful He volunteered to be our Savior and Redeemer and we continue to honor Him for His sacrifice.

Hebrews 2:14-15

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

John Taylor states,

“Jesus descended below all things, that he might be raised above all things.’ He took upon him a body, that he might die as a man, and ‘that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil.’ (Hebrews 2:14). Having conquered death, then, in his own dominions, burst the barriers of the tomb, and ascended with his body triumphant to the right hand of God, he had accomplished a purpose which God [the Father] had decreed from before the foundation of the world, ‘and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.’ Hence man, through obedience to the Gospel, is placed in a position to be an adopted son of God, and have a legitimate right to his Father’s blessings, and to possess the gift of the Holy Ghost.”⁶

Hebrews 2:17-18

**17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation [atonement] for the sins of the people.
18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [aid] them that are tempted.**

Kent P. Jackson states,

“One of the reasons Christ descended from his divine throne to become as we are was to establish a pattern for us to follow. He demonstrated that we can indeed keep the commandments and overcome the trials and temptations of life. It is of immeasurable worth to millions who have suffered trials and temptations or have experienced sorrow in their mortal existence to know that there is One who has suffered and sorrowed more. He not only has overcome adversity, but he empathizes with those who are still struggling to learn how.”⁷

He not only empathizes; He also assists and strengthen us as we strive to overcome the temptations of our lives.

2.3. Hebrews 3

Hebrews 3:3-5

**3 For this man [Jesus Christ] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.
4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.
5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;**

Jesus Christ, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, was the one who spoke unto Moses, His prophet, and gave him guidance and direction regarding the children of Israel.

Hebrews 3:8-12

**8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.
10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.
11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)
12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.**

M. Catherine Thomas states,

“The event at Meribah is the Provocation mentioned throughout the Bible. In that incident, the Lord tested the faith of the children of Israel and their willingness to accept his love and grace. Grace is the Lord’s divine enabling power, given to humankind to help them with all the challenges of their lives; grace ultimately empowers them to lay hold on heaven itself. But the Israelites’ response to the Lord’s abundant generosity illustrates a religious paradox: God offers his children grace, but the children will not seek it; God offers his children heaven, but the children will not enter in.”⁸

Hebrews 3:18-19

**18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?
19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.**

There continued to be a lack of belief on the part of the children of Israel regarding the promise the Lord gave to them that He would provide for them during their journey in the wilderness. Despite His having brought them through the Red Sea and had provided food for them in the form of manna and quail, they continued to doubt. It was their lack of belief in the Lord’s promise that resulted in their death. Paul is reminding the Jewish members of the Church not to harden their hearts against the blessings they have been given through the sacrifice and atonement of Jesus Christ, and instead cling to the law of Moses.

2.4. Hebrews 4

Hebrews 4:1-2

**1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.
2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them which heard it.**

Joseph Smith states,

“We find also, that when the Israelites came out of Egypt they had the Gospel preached to them, according to Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, (Hebrews 4:2). It is said again, in Gal. 3:19, that the law (of Moses, or the Levitical law), was ‘added’ because of transgression. What, we ask, was this law added to, if it was not added to the Gospel? It must be plain that it was added to the Gospel, since we learn that they had the Gospel preached to them. From these few facts, we conclude that whenever the Lord revealed Himself to men in ancient days, and commanded them to offer sacrifice to Him, that it was done that they might look forward in faith to the time of His coming, and rely upon the power of that atonement for a remission of their sins.”⁹

What is the ‘rest of the Lord’? (see Hebrews 3:11, 18; 4:1-11).

Joseph F. Smith states,

“The rest here referred to is not physical rest, for there is no such thing as physical rest in the Church of Jesus Christ. Reference is made to the spiritual rest and peace which are born from a settled conviction of the truth in the minds of men. We may thus enter into the rest of the Lord today, by coming to an understanding of the truths of the gospel.”¹⁰

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“The rest of the Lord, in eternity, is to inherit eternal life, to gain the fullness of the Lords’ glory. (D&C 84:24).”¹¹

Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Dallin H. Oakes states,

“Paul warned the Hebrews that God ‘is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,’ and ‘all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him.’ (Heb. 4:12-13).

“In other words, God judges us not only for our acts, but also for the desires of our hearts. He had said so again and again. This is a challenging reality, but it is not surprising. Agency and accountability are eternal principles. We exercise our free agency not only by what we do, but also by what we decide, or will, or desire. Restrictions on freedom can deprive us of the power to do, but no one can deprive us of the power to will or desire. Accountability must therefore reach and attach consequences to the desires of our hearts.

“This principle applies both in a negative way—making us guilty of sin for evil thoughts and desires—and in a positive way—promising us blessings for righteous desires.”¹²

Alma, a prophet in ancient American, recognized the power of the word of God for its effect upon the minds of the people, even more so “than the sword or anything else.”

B/M, Alma 31:5

5 And now, as the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them...

The word of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, penetrates us “even to the dividing asunder of [our] soul and body” (Hebrews 4:12). In this manner the word of God can have a powerful effect in bringing us to the truth.

Hebrews 4:15-16

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Howard W. Hunter states,

“It is important to remember that Jesus was capable of sinning, that he could have succumbed, that the plan of life and salvation could have been foiled, but that he remained true. Had there been no possibility of his yielding to the enticement of Satan, there would have been no real test, no genuine victory in the result. If he had been stripped of the faculty to sin, he would have been stripped of his very agency. It was he who had

come to safeguard and ensure the agency of man. He had to retain the capacity and ability to sin had he willed to do so. As Paul wrote. ‘Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered’ (Hebrews 5:8); and he ‘was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin’ (Hebrews 4:15). He was perfect and sinless, not because he had to be, but rather because he clearly and determinedly wanted to be. As the Doctrine and Covenants records, ‘He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them’ (D&C 20:22).”¹³

How blessed we are to have a Savior who has walked the path of mortality without stumbling as we do. Who understands the rocks, ruts, and pitfalls we so frequently encounter and can, if we will allow Him, give us strength to overcome them in our lives? The words of a familiar hymn come to mind.

“I Stand All Amazed”

I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me,
Confused at the grace that so fully he proffers me.
I tremble to know that for me he was crucified,
That for me, a sinner, he suffered, he bled and died.

Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me,
Enough to die for me!
Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!

I marvel that he would descend from his throne divine
To rescue a soul so rebellious and proud as mine,
That he should extend his great love unto such as I,
Sufficient to own, to redeem, and to justify.

Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me,
Enough to die for me!
Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!

I think of his hands pierced and bleeding to pay the debt!
Such mercy, such love, and devotion can I forget?
No, no, I will praise and adore at the mercy seat,
Until at the glorified throne I kneel at his feet.

Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me
Enough to die for me!
Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!¹⁴

2.5. Hebrews 5

Hebrews 5:1

1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins;

The LDS Bible Dictionary states,

“Under the law of Moses the presiding officer of the Aaronic Priesthood was called the high priest. The office was hereditary and came through the firstborn among the family of Aaron, Aaron himself being the first high priest of the Aaronic order.

“The high priest’s main duties, in addition to the duties of a regular priest, were to perform the service of the day of Atonement; to inquire God’s will by the Urim and Thummim in the breastplate of his office; and to offer the sacrifices on Sabbaths, new moons, and yearly festivals. He also had to offer a meat offering twice daily for himself (Lev. 6:19-23).”¹⁵

Hebrews 5:4

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Kent P. Jackson states,

“The New Testament teaches, ‘No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron’ (Heb. 5:4). The Lord’s authorized servant, Moses, learned by revelation that it was God’s will that Aaron serve (see Ex. 28:1). Accordingly, Moses called and consecrated him (see Ex. 40:12-16; Lev. 8:9-13) ...People do not have the right to call themselves to act in God’s name. Neither a desire to serve nor a love of God and fellowmen—however heartfelt and sincere—authorizes one to claim God’s authority in matters relating to his church. [Jesus taught his apostles], ‘Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you’ (John 15:16).”¹⁶

Hebrews 5:8-10

**8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek.**

The Doctrine and Covenants clarifies why the higher priesthood is referred to as “the order of Melchizedek.”

Doctrine and Covenants 107:2-4

**2 Why the first is called the Melchizedek Priesthood is because Melchizedek was such a great high priest.
3 Before his day it was called the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God.
4 But out of respect or reverence to the name of the Supreme Being, to avoid the too frequent repetition of his name, they, the church, in ancient days, called the priesthood after Melchizedek, or the Melchizedek priesthood.**

The Melchizedek priesthood holds the power of God. It is the power and authority to govern in the affairs of the kingdom of God. In turn, He has delegated this power to His Son, Jesus Christ and to select representatives on earth whom He has designated.

Hebrews 5:11-12

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Richard Lloyd Anderson states,

“Like the Corinthians, the Hebrews had to go back and relearn the ‘first principles’ at a time when their growth should have been advanced (Heb. 5:12-14). They were ‘dull of hearing’ (Heb. 5:11), which shows that Paul had particular information that worried him. What were their problems? One was living the gospel, a problem common to most branches of the Church in the letters. But the long arguments of reconversion center around Jewish ritual. The Hebrews overstressed the Levitical priesthood that operated the temple and the daily sacrifices that were superseded by Christ’s great sacrifice.”¹⁷

2.6. Hebrews 6

Hebrews 6:1	JST, Hebrews 6:1
1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.	1 Therefore <u>not</u> leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

In the above verse, it is of interest to note the difference the addition of the word “not” brings in clarifying the meaning of the verse.

Joseph Smith states,

“If a man leaves the principles of the doctrine of Christ, how can he be saved in the principles? This is a contradiction. I don’t believe it. I will render it as it should be....”¹⁸

Hebrews 6:2

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Joseph Smith states,

“The doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead & Eternal Judgment are necessary to preach among the first principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹⁹

It is common among members of the church to quote the Fourth Article of Faith in reference to the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Both Paul and Joseph Smith state that we should include in our teaching of the first principles the doctrines of resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

Hebrews 6:4-6

**4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,**

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“These who are to be so severely punished must first have the testimony of the gospel and by the power of the Holy Ghost know that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. Afterwards if they sin and openly and willfully turn against the truth and deny Christ, they assent unto his death, and this is equivalent to crucifying him again and the shedding of innocent blood, and they put him to open shame.”²⁰

It is tragic when one who had known for themselves by the spirit, the divinity of Jesus Christ and His works on their behalf, would turn against the light. None of us are exempt from the temptations of Satan and those who serve him. Therefore, it is important we continue to strengthen our testimonies of the truthfulness of the gospel. We must remember, and hold firm, to that which we know by the spirit. Our witness has not changed, nor will it change, regardless of arguments based upon the wisdom of man. Hold on to your faith. Doubt your doubts. The truth will prevail.

Hebrews 6:18-20

**18 ...it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us;
19 Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;
20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, ...**

Russell M. Nelson states,

“A more excellent hope is mightier than a wistful wish. Hope, fortified by faith and charity, forges a force as strong as steel. Hope becomes an anchor to the soul. To this anchor, the faithful can cling, securely tethered to the Lord. Satan, on the other hand, would have us cast away that anchor and drift with the ebb tide of despair. If we will cling to the anchor of hope, it will be our safeguard forever. As declared in scripture: ‘Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with a surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast.’ (B/M, Ether 12:4).”²¹

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“As the high priest in Israel passed through the veil into the holy of holies on the day of atonement, as part of the cleansing rites which freed Israel from sin (Lev. 16), so Jesus has entered into heaven to prepare the way for those who through obedience to his laws become clean and pure.”²²

As we too hold firm to the anchor of hope, someday we too will enter into the heaven prepared for us for we have kept the faith and endured in obedience to the end.

2.7. Hebrews 7

James A. Carver provides an overview of this chapter:

“In his epistle to the Hebrews, Paul refers explicitly to the Melchizedek Priesthood...His purpose in writing the epistle is to prove the superiority of the higher covenant (gospel law) to the lesser covenant (Mosaic law).

In chapter seven, he continues to follow this pattern by showing that the Melchizedek Priesthood, which administer the higher law, is superior to the Aaronic or Levitical Priesthood, which administers the lesser law.

“This chapter could best be understood as a typology, with Melchizedek, the great high priest, being a ‘type of Christ—and the order of the priesthood held by Melchizedek and his people as being typical of the order of the priesthood held by Jesus Christ and his disciples.

“There are many informative concepts about the priesthood in this chapter, such as the ideas that perfection comes through the Melchizedek Priesthood (Heb. 7:11-12), that the Melchizedek Priesthood is not restricted to one lineage (Heb. 7:13-15), that the priesthood is eternal (Heb. 7:16-17), that it is received with an oath and a covenant, (Heb. 20-21), and that Christ’s priesthood function continues eternally (Heb. 7:27-28).”²³

Melchizedek was the “king of Salem” [Jerusalem], and a “priest of the most high God” (Hebrews 7:1). Abraham paid to him his tithing “a tenth part of all [his goods]” (Hebrews 7:2).

David Rolph Seely states,

“In addition to his [Melchizedek] biblical title ‘King of peace’ (Heb. 7:2), in the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 14:33 [JST, Gen. 14:33] we learn Melchizedek was called by his people ‘the Prince of peace,’ another title identifying him as a type foreshadowing the ministry of Jesus Christ.”²⁴

We learn Melchizedek was a very righteous man and held the higher priesthood, or the authority to act in God’s name. He was honored by Abraham who came to him seeking to receive the priesthood Melchizedek held.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“...there was an apostasy. During this time there was one man in the city of Ur, among the few that remained faithful to the Lord, who sought after righteousness...The Lord answered Abraham’s prayer, and he received the priesthood under the hands of Melchizedek, king of Salem, who is called king of peace. Melchizedek was a great high priest, and so faithful was he that the Church in his day called the *Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God* by his name, or the *Melchizedek Priesthood*.”²⁵

Bryan Richards states,

“For Paul’s audience [the Jews], Abraham is the pinnacle of religious history. He is the father of all righteousness whose supremacy is without dispute. Yet, Paul is proving that Melchizedek was even greater than Abraham. He also has to prove that Melchizedek’s priesthood was superior to the Levitical tradition.”²⁶

Hebrews 7:3

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

Some have mistakenly understood that this verse is speaking about Melchizedek.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“It was not Melchizedek who was without father and without mother and without beginning of days or end of life, but it was the priesthood which he held.”²⁷

Hebrews 7:11-12

11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

J. Reuben Clark, Jr. states,

“Paul thus declared the Priesthood of Melchizedek as above the Levitical Priesthood, and that Christ exercised the powers and authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood; that perfection did not come by the Levitical Priesthood, which was the law of carnal commandments; that the Levitical Priesthood made nothing perfect; but that, through the Melchizedek Priesthood we draw nigh to God, with the power of endless life. We may become, even as the Lord commanded on the Mount: ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’

“Unless this were true there was no occasion for the Melchizedek Priesthood.”²⁸

Hebrews 7:15-16

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

Joseph Smith states,

“The power of the Melchizedek Priesthood is to have the power of ‘endless lives.

“...Melchizedek, who has still greater power, even power of an endless life, of which was our Lord Jesus Christ, which also Abraham obtained by the offering of his son Isaac. [This] was not the power of a prophet, nor apostle, not patriarch only, but of [a] king and priest to God, to open the windows of heaven and pour out the peace and law of endless life to man. And no man can attain to the joint heirship with Jesus Christ without being administered to by one having the same power and authority of Melchizedek.”²⁹

Hebrews 7:21

21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Jesus was ‘made a high priest ‘after the similitude of Melchisedec,’ thus gaining ‘the power of an endless life’ (Hebrews 7:15-16), or in other words, the promise of eternal life and exaltation. He is our prototype, and all who receive the Melchizedek Priesthood become heirs of the same promise; sworn with the same oath; the promise of glory and honor everlasting as joint-heirs with him in the kingdom of his Father.”³⁰

Bryan Richards states,

“Paul notes another significant difference—namely, that priests of the Melchizedek priesthood receive a promise of God that they will be priests ‘for ever after the order of Melchisedec.’ The Levitical priests could not make this claim, being made priests ‘without an oath.’”³¹

Hebrews 7:27	JST, Hebrews 7:26
27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.	26 <u>And not as those high priests who offered up sacrifice daily first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for he [Jesus Christ] needeth not offer sacrifice for his own sins, for he knew no sins; but for the sins of the people. And this he did once, when he offered up himself.</u>

It becomes clear from a comparison of this verse in the King James Bible with the Joseph Smith Translation, that unlike the high priest, who under the Levitical priesthood daily offered up sacrifice for his own sins, Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, was sinless. He need not offer sacrifice for His sins for He had none. It is because of His sinless life, and His power of life over death, that He could qualify as a sacrifice for the sins of all people.

Bruce R. McConkie concludes,

“Thus far Paul has taught the principles involved. He has shown that Israel failed to enter into eternal glory through the law alone. He has shown that salvation did not come by the Law of Moses alone. He has shown that the Messianic High Priest was needed to sacrifice himself for the sins of the people.”³²

2.8. Hebrews 8

Hebrews 8:1

1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

Richard Lloyd Anderson states,

“Romans testified that Christ was ‘at the right hand of God’ making ‘intercession for us’ (Rom. 8:34; also v. 27). And Hebrews unfolds the Atonement with the same picture of the Lord ‘on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens’ (Heb. 8:1), living in eternity ‘to make intercession for them’ (Heb. 7:25). Here is Christ the Advocate, one who walked unscorched through mortal fires. The Advocate is literally the Father’s Counselor, who from person understanding petitions for mercy for mortals. The Petitioner asks not through more pleading, but because he can boldly certify that has paid the price of sin. The great truths of modern revelation show why Christ is an effective advocate, for he satisfied justice (Alma 42:14-15) and in trembling pain ‘suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent’ (D&C 19:16)... Thus, Christ literally intervenes between the Father and mankind to produce harmony. He does more than seek peace and understanding—he pays the price necessary to bring forgiveness. He is the contributing mediator, the effectual Savior.”³³

Hebrews 8:6

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

“On those days when we have special need of heaven’s help, we would do well to remember one of the titles given to the Savior in the epistle to the Hebrews. Speaking of Jesus’ ‘more excellent ministry’ and why He is ‘the mediator of a better covenant’ filled with ‘better promises, this author—presumably the Apostle Paul—tells us that through His mediation and Atonement, Christ became ‘an high priest of good things to come’ (Heb. 9:11).

“Every one of us has times when we need to know things will get better. Moroni spoke of it in the Book of Mormon as ‘hope for a better world’ (Ether 12:4). For emotional health and spiritual stamina, everyone needs to be able to look forward to some respite, to something pleasant and renewing and hopeful, whether that blessing is near at hand or still some distance ahead. It is enough to know we can get there, that however measured or far away, there is the promise of ‘good things to come’ (Hebrews 9:11).”³⁴

Christ’s intercession with the Father on our behalf is based upon His having suffered for our sins and our willingness to accept His sacrifice for us. While all will yet rise from the grave because of Christ overcoming the bonds of death, in order for us to return to live with Him it will require us to accept the conditions that will qualify us for His grace. His offer provides each of us, if we are willing, the opportunity to partake of the good things that are reserved for those who know and love the Lord, including life eternal.

Hebrews 8:10-12

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, said the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Orson Pratt states,

“Now (in the meridian of time) did all Israel and all Judah know the Lord, from the least of them to the greatest of them? Had they no more need to say, every man to his Jewish neighbor, know ye the Lord? Was that the case anciently, when the Lord offered them the covenant of the everlasting Gospel? No, instead of all Israel and all Judah knowing the Lord, from the least to the greatest, they were the very ones that were cut off and lost the privileges of the covenant. But in the latter days when the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in by the proclamation of the Gospel committed by the angel, then is the time that the Lord will renew this covenant, and the same Gospel that he offered to them eighteen hundred years ago, and which they rejected, will be offered to them again, and all Israel will be saved. As it is written— ‘There shall come out of Sion [Zion] the Deliverer [Jesus Christ], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob’ (Romans 11:26).”³⁵

The blessings of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our day are available to all who are willing to make and keep sacred covenants. As they enter the waters of baptism, they begin a new life that will bring them great joy and happiness. Through continued faithfulness and obedience throughout their lives, in the end, they will receive the blessing of eternal life. (See B/M, Jacob 6:11).

2.9. Hebrews 9

Paul in the first seven verses [Hebrews 9:1-7] addresses the three divisions of the tabernacle of Moses:

1. The outer courtyard: Here was the altar of sacrifice and the large laver for washing ordinances. In this area, animal sacrifices were performed by the Levite priests.

2. The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were two rooms within the inner courtyard, separated by a double veil. The Holy Place was a room that contained the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, and the golden candlestick. Paul refers to this room as the first tabernacle (v, 2, 6). Performing ordinances in this room was common, but still considered a privilege.

3. The Holy of Holies: This room contained the ark of the covenant and the holiest relics of the Mosaic tradition (v. 4). Only the high priest was allowed to enter this room—and this was only allowed once a year. None of the other Levites were allowed to enter.
(see: www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/hebrews-9).

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Paul named various of the Mosaic ordinances and performances and said they were a ‘shadow of heavenly things’ (Heb. 8:4-5). The ‘meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation,’ he said, were designed as ‘a figure for the time then present.’ He spoke of the various formalities involved in sprinkling blood as ‘patterns’ of things of a much higher nature. ‘The law,’ he said, was ‘a shadow of good things to come.’ (Heb. 9:1-10, 19-23; 10:1). But perhaps Amulek’s statement is the clearest and best of all. He said: ‘This is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal.’ (B/M, Alma 34:14).”³⁶

The purpose of the tabernacle of Moses and the animal sacrifices, as designed by Jehovah, was to direct the focus of the children of Israel toward the final sacrifice He would make as the mortal Son of God in the meridian of time.

Alma, a prophet in ancient America wrote:

B/M, Alma 34:9-11, 13-15

9 For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish;...
10 For...there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice.
11 Now there is not any man that can sacrifice his own blood which will atone for the sins of another...

13 Therefore, it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice, and then shall there be, or it is expedient there should be a stop to the shedding of blood; then shall the law of Moses be fulfilled; yea, it shall all be fulfilled, every jot and tittle, and none shall have passed away.
14 And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice, and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal.

15 And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance.

Bryan Richards states,

“The Aaronic [or Levitical] Priesthood] had not the power to bring the children of Israel into the presence of God. Accordingly, none of the children of Israel or the priests were allowed past the veil. What would it take to break the barrier? How could the chosen people ever break through the veil? It would take the infinite and eternal sacrifice of the Son of God. His entering into the holy place and sitting at the right hand of the Father opened the holy of holies to all who would be his disciples.

“Hence, when the Great Sacrifice was complete, the veil of [Herod’s] temple was rent in two pieces. Was it the earthquake that tore the veil? The veil was suspended on two rods. An earthquake might have knocked it to the ground but it could not have torn it in two. ‘from the top to the bottom’ (Matt. 27:51). Rather, the temple veil was torn by the hand of God—symbolizing that moment when the Great High Priest had broken the great barrier, when He had spilt the blood that could actually atone for sins, when the Law of Moses and its temple ordinances had finally been fulfilled.”³⁷

Hebrews 9:16-17

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“In legal usage, a testator is one who leaves a valid will or testament at his death. The will or testament is the written document wherein the testator provides for the disposition of his property. As used in the gospel sense, a testament is a covenant. Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant or testament, that is of the gospel which came to replace the law of Moses. (Heb. 9:15; 12:24; D&C 107:19).

“Paul mixed these legal and gospel definitions to teach a basic doctrine. Speaking of Christ’s death, and the gifts in effect willed to men in and through that death, he said: [quotes Hebrews 9:16-17]. In other words, Christ had to die to bring salvation. The testament or covenant of salvation came in force because of the atonement worked out in connection with that death. Christ is the Testator. His gift, as would be true of any testator, cannot be inherited until his death. Christ died that salvation might come; without his death, he could not have willed either immortality or eternal life to men.”³⁸

It was Christ’s death on the cross that completed His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane. His suffering alone, as acute as it was, for “without his death, he could not have willed either immortality or eternal life to men.”³⁹

Some may ask, in light of Paul’s teachings, was it also necessary for the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith to occur?

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

“[Joseph Smith] had to die. Why? Because we read in the scripture that the testimony is not of force without the death of the testator—that is [true], in his particular case, and in the case of Christ. It was just as necessary

that Hyrum Smith lay down his life as a martyr for this cause as a witness for God as it was for Joseph Smith, so the Lord permitted them both to taken in that way and both sealed their testimony with their blood.”⁴⁰

Hebrews 9:28

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Richard Lloyd Anderson states,

“As the pure sacrificial offering, Christ was beyond sin; thus, he gave for sin what sin could not rightfully claim. As the perfect high priest, he gave himself as the perfect offering. He was ‘holy, innocent spotless, set apart from sinners’ (Heb. 7:26, literal translation). He took on himself our blame, though ‘without spot’—or literally blameless’ (Heb. 9:14). Thus, his culminating sacrifice superseded the daily sacrifices. This is the point of Paul’s long arguments—repeated altar slayings were no longer necessary, for Christ died ‘once’ for sins to bring forgiveness to all. That thought and number is restated over a half-dozen times in about three chapters, revealing Paul’s core message. Christ’ offered one sacrifice for sins for ever’ (Heb. 10:12).”⁴¹

2.10. Hebrews 10

Paul’s continues to raise questions regarding the ability of sacrifice of animals to remove sin from the individual which continues to be offered year after year.

Hebrews 10:1-4

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Paul states when Christ comes into the world, He will do away with burnt offerings and sacrifices.

Hebrews 10:5-6

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

When Christ appeared to those gathered in ancient America after His resurrection, He taught them this important truth:

B/M, 3 Nephi 9:19-20

19 And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.

20 And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost,...

Hebrews 10:10-12, 14

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12 But this man, after he had offered once sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Here Paul contrasts the repeated offerings for sin by the priests with the single sacrifice by Jesus Christ. Paul's teaching states it was not necessary for the offering of sacrifice and burnt offerings to continue, for through Christ's atoning sacrifice, the price of sin was paid for ever.

Hebrews 10:16, 18

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

The atonement of Jesus Christ paid for the transgressions committed by Adam and Eve that introduced physical death into the world. Because of Christ, all will live again following their physical death. Through His atonement, He provided the opportunity for each of us to overcome the spiritual death which brought about the separation of man from God. In order for this to occur, we would need a Savior, one who will take upon Himself our sins. In agreement with His willingness to pay for our sins, individually we entered into a covenant with Him to accept His conditions. If we are faithful and keep our covenants, someday we will be able to return to the presence of God. This process will not be easy for it will require a change in our nature. It will be necessary for us to sacrifice upon the altar the animal of lust and wickedness within us if we are truly sincere about becoming clean again. In this process, we will not be alone for our Savior will not forsake us, especially when the going gets tough. He will be there to encourage and support us.

Hebrews 10:19-21

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

Joseph Fielding McConkie states,

“The entrance of the high priest into the Holy of Holies and his passing through the sacred veil of the temple was a type for that future day when the Son of God would rend the veil to enter the heavenly temple and stand in the presence of God. Having satisfied the demands of justice through his atoning sacrifice, Christ could now commence his great work of mercy and mediation in behalf of all whose labors attested that they had accepted him. By virtue of his mercy and grace, the faithful of all ages could now also enter into the holiest place. ‘So

new, my friends, 'Paul explained, 'the blood of Jesus makes us free to enter boldly into the sanctuary by the new, living way which he has opened for us through the curtain, the way of his flesh. We have, moreover, a great priest set over the household of God; so let us make our approach in sincerity of heart and full assurance of faith, our guilty hearts sprinkled clean, our bodies washed with pure water.' (Hebrew 10:19-22, New English Bible).

"The purpose of the atonement was to remove the effects of the Fall whereby men were cast out of the presence of God. Through his sacrifice, Christ opened the door through which we might return to the divine presence."⁴²

Hebrews 10:23

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Delbert L. Stapley states,

"Those souls who waver in faith are driven off course by listening to every doctrine dictated by the agents of evil. They lose the Spirit and drift into darkness of mind and often end up as apostates to truth and righteousness. All of us should strive to follow the counsel of Paul: 'Let us hold fast [to] the profession of our faith without wavering... (Heb. 10:23).

"Our duty is to prepare our hearts in righteousness, forsake iniquity, cleanse our souls of evil, not become beguiled by enticing and flattering words or the vain deceits of designing men who would lead us down the paths of misery to destruction."⁴³

It is important we become steadfast and immovable in our individual faith and obedient to the covenants we have made. If we believe we can flirt with sin, after we have embraced the faith, and it will not affect us, we will quickly learn we were wrong. None of us are immune to the temptations of Satan found in the world in which we live. Our one sure defense is to avoid even the appearance of sin like it were the plague!

Hebrews 10:26

26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Hyrum L. Andrus states,

"There is a difference between willful sin and sin committed inadvertently as a result of weaknesses of the flesh. It is in cases of willful sin that those who make their calling and election sure are visited with judgments. Having sealed some brethren at Kirtland to eternal life in 1833, Joseph Smith warned that 'if any of them should *sin willfully* after they were thus cleansed, and sealed up unto eternal life, they should be given over unto the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption."⁴⁴

The words of Paul certainly reflect the verity of the statement made by the Savior, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required:" (Luke 12:48). To have obtained the privilege of having your calling and election made sure and then to willfully turn from that blessing surely will bring the greater penalty.

Hebrews 10:35-36, 38

**35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.
36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.**

38 Now the just shall live by faith:...

We live in a world where many are reluctant to forego the need for instant gratification. It is “as if” they want what they want whenever they want it. Few are reluctant to set aside their needs and wait, even for a brief period of time. Patience, for some, seems to be a virtue of the past. The laws of nature are in opposition to this view of life. We do not plant and harvest the same day.

Those who are willing to forego the pleasures of today for the rewards of tomorrow, are sure to gain great treasures others will never obtain. This is especially true regarding matters of faith. If we are sincere in our desire to strengthen our faith, we must be willing to be faithful despite the absence of reward. Faith and trust in the Lord will bring the desired results, if we are also willing to exercise patience.

2.11. Hebrews 11

J. Lewis Taylor states,

“Hebrews 11 is perhaps the greatest single chapter on faith in the New Testament. Paul has already mentioned faith as a necessary condition for the righteous life (Heb. 10:38); now he proceeds to illustrate this fact by pointing to examples of faithful men of earlier dispensations. He then admonishes the saints [members] to lay aside their own sins and look to “the author and finisher of our faith,” even Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:2). As they do so, they are promised an everlasting inheritance in “the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the...church of the firstborn.” (Heb. 12:22-23. See also D&C 76:62-70).”⁴⁵

Hebrews 11:1	JST, Hebrews 11:1
1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.	1 Now faith is the <u>assurance</u> of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Once again it is the difference of a single word, found in the Joseph Smith Translation, that offers clarity to Paul’s definition of faith.

Alma, a prophet living in ancient America offers another definition:

B/M, Alma 32:21

21 And now as I said concerning faith—faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true.

Howard W. Hunter states,

“...faith makes us confident of what we hope for and convinced of what we do not see. The scientist does not see molecules, atoms, or electrons, yet he knows they exist. He does not see electricity, radiation, or magnetism, but he knows these are unseen realities. In like manner, those who earnestly seek for God do not

see him, but they know of his reality by faith. It is more than hope. Faith makes it a conviction—an evidence of things not seen.”⁴⁶

Hebrews 11:3

3 Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed [created] by the word of God,...

Joseph Smith states,

“Faith, then, is the first great governing principle which has power, dominion, and authority over all things; by it they exist, by it they are upheld, by it they are changed, or by it they remain, agreeable to the will of God. Without it there is no power, and without power there could be no creation nor existence!”⁴⁷

As we come to understand faith and the power it contains, we come to a greater appreciation of its importance in our lives as a principle in the gospel. We recall it was by faith that on the Sea of Galilee, Peter was able to walk on water. By faith, he was able to do what no other mortal, except the Savior Himself, was able to do. We are also reminded that his venture came to an abrupt halt for his faith faltered; his doubt increased, and he sank. (See Matt. 14: 27-31).

Paul, in order to teach the importance of faith, does so by addressing the manifestation of faith in the lives of several individuals from the sacred record. These include:

2.11.1. Able and Cain.

Hebrews 11:4

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Joseph Smith states,

“By faith in the Atonement, or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was acceptable, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground and was not acceptable, because he could not do it in faith. He could have no faith, or could not exercise faith, contrary to the plan of heaven. It [the sacrifice] must [be symbolic of]...the shedding of the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man, for this was the plan of redemption, and without the shedding of blood [there] was no remission. And as the sacrifice was instituted for a type by which man was to discern the great sacrifice which God had prepared, to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised, because redemption was not purchased in that way, nor the power of the atonement instituted after that order.”⁴⁸

In other words, Cain rebelled against God by choosing to make an offering contrary to the directive of God. His offering was not symbolic of the blood offering of Jesus Christ, nor was it done according to his faith in God’s will.

2.11.2. Enoch

Hebrews 11:5

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God.

LeGrand Richards states,

“I love the statement in the Bible where Enoch of old...obtained the assurance that while yet here in mortality that he had pleased the Lord. (See Heb. 11:5.) I think by the keeping of His commandments—doing all things, as the Lord said, that the Lord God had commanded (see Deut. 12:32; Matt. 28:20)---that we can get an assurance that comes through the Holy Spirit that our labors are acceptable to the Lord and we have pleased him.”⁴⁹

Contrary to Cain, it was Enoch’s complete faith and trust in the will of the Lord, during his mortal probation, that pleased the Lord and resulted in his being translated.

2.11.3. Noah

Hebrews 11:7

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Noah was warned from God that the earth was going to be destroyed by a flood (see Genesis 6:17). So, Noah and his family, along with the animals and fowls, could be saved, God commanded Noah to build an ark (see Genesis 6:18-21). Acting in faith to God’s command, in the middle of the desert and while experiencing the ridicule of others, Noah built the ark. It was acting upon his faith that saved he and his family while the rest of the earth drowned as a result of their wickedness.

2.11.4. Abraham

Abraham’s entire life was a manifestation of his faith. He trusted completely in God’s direction given to him and his family. He left the place where he was living, “not knowing whither he went” (Hebrews 11:8); he went to “a strange country” (Hebrews 11:9); Sarah, his wife, in faith “conceived seed, and was delivered a child when she was past age” (Hebrews 11:11).

Hebrews 11:17-19

**17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had receive the promises offered up his only begotten son,
18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:
19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.**

Spencer W. Kimball states,

“Father Abraham and Mother Sarah knew—knew the promise would be fulfilled. How? They did not know and did not demand to know. Isaac positively would live to be the father of a numerous posterity. They knew he would, even though he might need to die. They knew he could still be raised from the dead to fulfill the promise, and faith here preceded the miracle.”⁵⁰

2.11.5. Isaac

Hebrews 11:20

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

Patriarchs give blessings to their family members, based upon faith when they speak in the Name of the Lord, He will honor their words. The blessings pronounced will be fulfilled if the individual continues in righteousness.

2.11.6. Jacob

Hebrews 11:21

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

It matters not if the patriarch is young or old, as he pronounces divine blessings given him from the Lord upon the heads of others. What is important is his righteousness and faith the promises he pronounces are from the Lord.

2.11.7. Joseph

Hebrews 11:22

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel: and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Joseph, who had risen from being a slave in Potiphar's home to second in command to the Pharaoh, knew Israel was not to remain in Egypt. The Lord has spoken to him, and by faith, he knew the future event would occur. With this assurance, he requested that his bones be buried in the promised land.

2.11.8. Moses

Like Abraham, Moses acted in faith. His parents "hid him for three months...not afraid of the king's commandment" (Hebrews 11:23); "By faith...[he] refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" (Hebrews 11:24); He chose "to suffer affliction with the people of God [rather] than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25); He esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater [than the] treasures of Egypt" (Hebrews 11:26); and, "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king" (Hebrews 11:27).

Hebrews 11:29

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

2.11.9. Joshua and the Children of Israel

Hebrews 11:30

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

The conquest of the city of Jericho was in itself an act of faith. The walls of Jericho did fall as Joshua and the children of Israel in faith followed precisely the directions of the Lord. The command given by the Lord for the children of Israel to march around the city once for six days, and on the final day, march around seven times and then make a great shout, initially must have sounded strange to their ears (see Joshua 6:3-5). In faith, however, they acted and the city was conquered.

2.11.10. Rehab

Hebrews 11:31

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Rahab was a harlot in Jericho. She befriended the two men that had been sent by Joshua to spy upon the city and bring a report. When their escape was blocked, in exchange for the safety of her family and herself (see Joshua 2:13-14), she let them safely down the outside wall. She and her family were the only survivors of the city. She had faith in their word, and acted on her faith, otherwise she would not have agreed to shelter and assist them.

2.11.11. Others

Hebrews 11:32-33

**32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:
33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,**

The individuals referenced by Paul and others were valiant in their testimony and exercised faith and obedience to the Lord's commandments. They received directions from the Lord and then proceeded to do as the Lord directed them. As Paul notes:

Hebrews 11:37

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

Their lives had been difficult and trying, and yet they persevered to do the will of the Lord. We can be assured each went to their heavenly reward where they received their crowns of righteousness. Each had given their all for the building of the kingdom of God on earth.

It is important to understand there yet will be other names added to list of those who exercised great faith in carrying out the work of the Lord upon the earth. The work of the Lord is not yet finished and the need for individuals with faith continues.

Hebrews 11:40	JST, Hebrews 11:40
40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.	40 God having provided some better things for <u>them through their sufferings, for without sufferings</u> they could not be made perfect.

As we contrast this verse with that provided by the Joseph Smith Translation, we get a very different perspective. How do we reconcile the different emphasis?

Robert J. Matthews states,

“In the King James Version, it reads: ‘God having provided some better thing for us, that they [referring to the dead who had had faith in the Savior] without us should not be made perfect.’ Members of the [LDS] Church frequently cite this verse in connection with salvation for the dead. However, the Joseph Smith Translation says: ‘God having provided some better things for *them through their sufferings, for without sufferings* they could not be made perfect.’ This rendition is in harmony with the overall message of the chapter, which is not talking about those who died without the gospel but rather about those who were valiant in the gospel, even suffering and dying in defense of it. The JST rendition of verse 40 is thus consistent with the context of the chapter; the KJV rendition is not.

“However, even though the Prophet Joseph Smith knew that Heb. 11:40 had reference to earthly suffering, he still occasionally used the KJV passage for teaching about salvation for the dead.”⁵¹

2.12. Hebrews 12

Paul begins Chapter 12 with a discussion of the importance of chastisement by the Lord and the benefits that can be derived from the experience.

Hebrews 12:11

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

As Paul notes, no chastening, even by the Lord, is pleasant for us to receive. What makes it bearable, is our faith that eventually it will be for our benefit and improvement.

Hebrews 12:12

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

Do we, at times, feel that our hands hang down and our knees feel feeble under the burdens that we are carrying? Do we also wish there was another who would help us bear our burdens and lift our spirits?

You will recall from the Old Testament the experience of Moses and the children of Israel as they faced their first battle with the Amalekites. As the faith of the children of Israel was not yet secure in the Lord, when they saw Moses’ arms raised, their belief in victory increased and they fought with greater strength. When his arms became tired and fell by his side, their faith also faltered and with it the hope for victory. Aaron and Hur, his two counselors, recognizing the lack of faith of the Israelites, then reached out to help raise the arms of Moses until the victory was secured. (See Exodus 17:8-13).

Harold B. Lee states,

“I think that is the role [as Aaron and Hur did for Moses] that President Tanner and I have to fulfill. The hands of President Smith may grow weary. They may tend to droop at times because of the heavy responsibilities; but as we up hold his hands, and as we lead under his direction, by his side, the gates of hell will not prevail against you and against Israel. Your safety and ours depends upon whether or not we follow the one whom the

Lord has placed to preside over his church...Let's keep our eye on the President of the Church and uphold his hands as President Tanner and I will continue to do."⁵²

Just as President Smith's counselors offer their support and strength regarding the fulfilling of his prophetic responsibilities, we also can reach out and offer support to those around us who seem to be weary and whose arms are drooping. If we do so, we may be surprised to find that our own burdens may seem to be lighter and easier to bear. Lifting another always brings blessings to the one who is lifted as well as to the one who lifts.

Hebrews 12:5-7

**5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:
6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.
7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?**

Our relationship with God the Eternal Father, is that He is the Father of our spirits and we are His children. He knows us intimately. He also knows we have the potential to become more than we are. It is in response to God's knowledge of us that He provides opportunities to help us to reach our divine potential.

Neal A. Maxwell states,

"Therefore, how can you and I really expect to glide naively through life, as if to say, 'Lord, give me experience, but not grief, not sorrow, not pain, not opposition, not betrayal, and certainly not to be forsaken. Keep from me, Lord, all those experiences which made Thee what Thou art! Then let me come and dwell with Thee and fully share Thy joy.'"⁵³

Through our mortal experiences, God seeks to refine us and thereby help us to reach our divine potential. It is out of His love for us that He allows these events to occur.

In all areas, Paul reminds us, we may look to the example of Our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 12:2-4

**2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.
4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.**

As we come to better understand the trials that Jesus faced during His mortal existence—rejection, ridicule, temptation, betrayal, and more—including His suffering in the garden which was so intense, He bled from every pore. This experience was then followed by the tormenting of the soldiers and culminated on the cruel cross where He continued to bear the sins of all. Then came that moment of moments, when even the Father withdrew from Him, and He was all alone. As we review these events, and more, we come to understand that no matter our pain and suffering, His was greater.

Hebrews 12:1

1 ...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

As we continue to be faithful and obedient to our chastening, the day will come when we will be rewarded for our efforts and we will be received by Our Father into His presence.

Hebrews 12:15-16

**15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;
16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.**

One of the challenges we face is, as a result of our experiences, we may become bitter and resentful. Rather than opening our hearts to the opportunity for change, we may recoil out of a spirit of resentment and anger. We are so convinced of the unrighteousness of our experience that we withdraw and thus do not benefit from the trial that was custom designed to lift us to a higher level. We may even feel that God does not love us or He would not allow events to occur that are so painful for us to bear. We may even go so far as to deny our faith thereby cutting off the very branch upon which we are standing.

Hebrews 12:25

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

Paul counsels us not to reject Jesus. We need Jesus Christ in our life especially when we are facing life's challenges. If we will turn to Him, and seek His strength, we will not be disappointed. We may in anger or pain reject Him, but He will never turn away from us. If we do so, in a future day we will realize how great His effort was to bless us, but it was us who turned away from Him.

2.13. Hebrews 13

As Paul concludes his letter to the Hebrews, he gives us important counsel to consider:

Hebrews 13:2

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

We never know who may come to us in need of our help and support. It is, therefore, important we consider doing what we can to assist them. How many innkeepers turned away Joseph and Mary, before one decided for them to have lodging under his roof? Did he know the Son of God was going to be born in his manager?

Hebrews 13:4

4 Marriage is honorable in all,...

This does not mean the happiness comes to the couple without their mutual effort and adjustment. It has been my experience that nothing of great worth in this life comes without effort and patience.

Hebrews 13:5

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

When we are able to rejoice with the good fortune of another and not be envious, we have learned one of life's important lessons: What another has does not take away from what I have and it is possible for us to both be happy.

Hebrews 13:8

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

It is comforting to me that even when things change, Jesus Christ does not. His love for me is unchangeable. He will not forsake me nor leave me. I may falter, but He will not. He will always be there, no matter what!

Hebrews 13:12

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

No matter what I am experiencing, Jesus knows on a personal level what it is like. The scriptures state that in the garden, past the gate, He knelt. Here He took upon Himself all my sins. He experienced them even before I did. He knows and understands, and if I will accept His Atonement and repent from my sins, through His blood, I can be forgiven.

Hebrews 13: 17

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

I have benefited from those in my life [parents, family members, church leaders, teachers] who have, through their experience or learning, provided me with important counsel and guidance. When I have been willing to submit to their direction, I have found their counsel was well-grounded and thereby have avoided pitfalls I would have otherwise encountered. When I have chosen to ignore their advice, I have suffered myself the hard knocks of mortality.

Hebrews 13:20-21

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

These are among Paul's last words to the Hebrews. He wants them to understand their hope and eternal salvation, and ours, is fundamental to their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Savior and Redeemer and their obedience to His gospel.

3. Conclusions

As we conclude the writings of Paul to the Hebrews, we have been blessed with additional understanding and appreciation for the lessons Paul has taught. The testimony borne by Paul of Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer is truly a reflection of his being one of Christ's special witnesses. He understands not only the purpose for Jesus' mortal journey, but also His pre-mortal existence and the glory He now has with the Father.

Hebrews Chapter 1: Paul begins by addressing the position Jesus Christ as God's Son holds in relationship to God, His Father. It is important for all to understand the role Jesus Christ held in relationship to God the Father prior to His coming to earth.

Hebrews Chapter 2: Despite Jesus Christ's position of honor and glory before coming to this earth, He came to do the will of His Father. He was willing to leave His place of honor and glory so He could bring about the Atonement of all men.

Hebrews Chapter 3: Paul states, "For this man [Jesus Christ] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses..." (Hebrews 3:3), It was Jesus Christ, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, who was the one who spoke to Moses, His Prophet, and gave him guidance and direction regarding the children of Israel. Paul exhorted the Jewish members of the Church not to harden their hearts against the blessings they have been given through the sacrifice and Atonement of Jesus Christ and instead cling to the law of Moses.

Hebrews Chapter 4: We learn that the gospel was taught to the children of Israel, however, due to their lack of faith they did not embrace it. Paul admonishes his readers not to let their unbelief bring them to the same result. He reminds them that while each of us are tempted, as was Christ, He did not succumb to temptation and remained without sin. Because of His Atonement, He has a perfect understanding of all our pain and adversities.

Hebrews Chapter 5: Paul taught, as a result of His obedience and suffering, Jesus Christ became "the author of eternal salvation unto them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9). He is the Savior of all of God's children.

Hebrews Chapter 6: It is important, Paul taught, those who received the ordinances of baptism, and of laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior not fall away. If they fail to repent, they will also have rejected Christ. It is important we hold firm to the anchor of hope, despite our challenges and adversity, so someday we may receive the blessings that await us.

Hebrews Chapter 7: Paul teaches us regarding Melchizedek and his righteousness. It was he to whom Abraham paid tithes and offerings. It was from Melchizedek whom Abraham received the higher priesthood with an oath and a covenant. When Jesus, as our High Priest offered up His sacrifice on our behalf, He did not need to offer a sacrifice for His own sins as He had none. It is because of His sinless life, and His power of life over death, He qualified as a sacrificial sacrifice for the sins of all people.

Hebrews Chapter 8: Christ's intercession with the Father on our behalf is based upon His having suffered for our sins and our willingness to accept His sacrifice for us. While all will yet rise from the grave because of Christ overcoming the bonds of death, in order for us to return to live with Him, it will require us to accept His conditions that will qualify us for His grace. The new covenant Christ offers us is He "will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:10). After we do all we can to do His will, He will make up the difference.

Hebrews Chapter 9: Paul clarifies the purpose of the law of Moses, under the Levitical or lesser priesthood as being designed, through animal sacrifices, to direct Israel to the final and great sacrifice offered by Jesus

Christ. If we will accept Him by partaking of sacred ordinances and making and keeping our covenants, Christ will be our mediator with the Father.

Hebrews Chapter 10: Paul continues to raise questions regarding the ability of the sacrifice of animals to remove sin from the individual. He states that when Christ comes and offers His great sacrifice, burnt offerings and animal sacrifices will no longer be necessary. We learn that today our covenant with the Lord is not to be found in animal sacrifices, but is now written upon our “broken hearts and contrite spirits” (B/M, 3 Nephi 9:19-20). It is this covenant we renew each Sunday as we partake of the Lord’s Sacrament.

Hebrews Chapter 11: Here Paul teaches the importance of Faith which is the first principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In order to teach the importance of Faith, Paul addresses the manifestation of faith in the lives of several individuals from the sacred record. Their lives had been difficult and trying, yet they persevered to do the will of the Lord. The work of the Lord is not yet finished and the need for individuals with faith continues.

Hebrews Chapter 12: Paul begins by addressing the importance of chastisement by the Lord and the benefits that can be derived from the experience. What makes the experience bearable is our faith that eventually it will be for our benefit and improvement. It is through our mortal experiences God seeks to refine us and thereby help us to reach our divine potential.

It is imperative in our trials we not reject Jesus. We need Jesus Christ in our life especially when we are facing life’s challenges. If we turn to Him, not away, and seek His strength, we will not be disappointed.

Hebrews Chapter 13: Paul concludes his letter by reminding us that by entertaining strangers, we may also be caring for angels. He also states the importance of marriage as well as our not coveting the happiness of others. Foremost in our lives should be our allegiance to Christ for His sacrifice and continuous dependability for He will never forsake us. Never!

Once again, we appreciate Paul for sharing his insight and his witness of Jesus Christ.

In the next chapter, we address Paul’s return to Jerusalem following his Third Missionary Journey. We will learn about his return to Jerusalem, his experiences while he was there, and why it was necessary he be sent to Rome.

Footnotes

-
- ¹ Richard Lloyd Anderson. *Understanding Paul*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1993, [Second Printing, October, 1993], 195.
- ² LDS Bible Dictionary in *Holy Bible*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1979, 746.
- ³ *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Vol. 3. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973, [9th Printing, 1976], 133-135.
- ⁴ “Jesus and the Gospels” in *Studies in Scriptures*, Vol. 5. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1986, 1-2.
- ⁵ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/2-hebrews-2.
- ⁶ *The Government of God* [Liverpool: S.W. Richards, 1852], 33-34.
- ⁷ “The Eternal Ministry of Christ,” in *Ensign*, January, 1991, 8.
- ⁸ “The Provocation in the Wilderness and the Rejection of Grace.” in *Thy People Shall Be My People and Thy God My God*. The 22nd Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994, 166-167.
- ⁹ *Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, [1977], 60-61.
- ¹⁰ *Gospel Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939 [Eighth Edition], 126. See also 58.
- ¹¹ *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 633.
- ¹² “The Desires of Our Hearts” in *Ensign*, June 1986, 64-65).
- ¹³ *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997, 4.
- ¹⁴ #193 “I Stand All Amazed,” in *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. Text and music: Charles H. Gabriel, 1856-1932. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985.
- ¹⁵ LDS Bible Dictionary in *Holy Bible*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979, 702-703.
- ¹⁶ “I Have a Question,” in *Ensign*, February 1995, 62.
- ¹⁷ *Understanding Paul*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983, [Second Printing October 1983], 195-196.
- ¹⁸ *Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Compiled by Alma P. Burton. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977, 245.
- ¹⁹ *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*. Compiled and Edited by Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook. Provo: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1980, 4.
- ²⁰ *Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 1. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957, 63.
- ²¹ “A More Excellent Hope,” in *Ensign*, February 1997, 61.
- ²² *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Vol. 3. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971, [9th Printing, 1976], 165.
- ²³ “I Have a Question,” in *Ensign*, January 1986, 55.
- ²⁴ “The Joseph Smith Translation: ‘Plain and Precious Things’ Restored,” in *Ensign*, August 1997, 14.
- ²⁵ *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3. Edited by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956, [18th Printing, 1978], 82.
- ²⁶ Bryan Richards. (www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/hebrews-7).
- ²⁷ *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3. Edited by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956, [18th Printing, 1978], 82-83.
- ²⁸ *On the Way to Immortality and Eternal Life*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1949, 42.
- ²⁹ *Joseph Smith’s Commentary on the Bible*. Compiled and Edited by Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994, 192.
- ³⁰ *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985, 318.
- ³¹ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/hebrews-7.
- ³² *The Mortal Messiah, Book 1*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979, 148.
- ³³ *Understanding Paul*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983, [Second Printing, October 1983], 216.
- ³⁴ “An High Priest of Good Things to Come,” in *Ensign*, November 1999, 36.

-
- ³⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18. London: Latter-day Saints Book Depot, 1877, [Eighth Reprint, 1974], 176.
- ³⁶ *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978, 417.
- ³⁷ Bryan Richards. www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/hebrews-9.
- ³⁸ *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 784-785.
- ³⁹ *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 785.
- ⁴⁰ *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1. Compiled by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954, [24th Printing, 1980], 221.
- ⁴¹ *Understanding Paul*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983, [Second Printing October 1983], 218.
- ⁴² Jesus Christ, Symbolism, and Salvation (Hebrews),” in *Studies in Scripture*, Vol.6. Edited by Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987, 199-200.
- ⁴³ “An Unwavering Faith,” in *Conference Report*, April 1970, 75.
- ⁴⁴ *Principles of Perfection*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970, 342.
- ⁴⁵ “New Testament Backgrounds: Thessalonians thought Hebrews,” in *Ensign*, April 1976, 58.
- ⁴⁶ “To Know God,” in *Ensign*, November 1974, 97.
- ⁴⁷ Lecture 1, paragraph 24, in *Lectures on Faith*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985, 5.
- ⁴⁸ *Joseph Smith’s Commentary on the Bible*. Compiled and Edited by Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994, 16-17.
- ⁴⁹ “What the Gospel Teaches,” in *Ensign*, May 1982, 30.
- ⁵⁰ *Faith Precedes the Miracle*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972, [Fifth Printing 1975], 7.
- ⁵¹ “Comparisons of the Joseph Smith Translation and Similar Book of Mormon Passages,” in *Selected Writings of Robert J. Matthews: Gospel Scholars Series*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999, 309-310.
- ⁵² “Uphold the Hands of the President of the Church,” in *Conference Report*, October 1970, 153.
- ⁵³ “Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds,” in *Ensign*, May 1991, 88.