

November 4-10, 2019

# Hebrews 1–6

## Jesus Christ “the Author of Eternal Salvation”

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**Summary:** *The Son is in the express image of the person of the Father—Christ is the Only Begotten Son and thus above the angels.*

*Jesus came to suffer death and save men—He came to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*

*Christ is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession—Jesus, being the Son, is more than a servant—Now is the time and the day of our salvation.*

*The gospel was offered to ancient Israel—Saints enter into the rest of the Lord—Though tempted in all points, Jesus was without sin.*

*For a man to hold the priesthood, he must be called of God as was Aaron—Christ was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek—Jesus Christ is the Author of eternal salvation.*

*Let us go on to perfection—The sons of perdition crucify Christ anew—God swears with an oath that the faithful will be saved.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

#### What reason would cause God to give “less-than-the-best?”

Sometimes people think the Old Testament was a lesser law and the New Testament is the higher law. Immediately that prompts the question, “What would cause God to give less than the full plan to His children?” So, let us begin with the premise that the gospel and eternal covenants were given to man from the beginning.

#### How much Gospel did Adam receive?

“Commencing with Adam, who was the first man, who is spoken of in Daniel as being the “Ancient of Days,” or in other words, the first and oldest of all, the great, grand progenitor of whom it is said in another place he is Michael, because he was the first and father of all, not only by progeny, but the first to hold the spiritual blessings, to whom was made known the plan of ordinances for the salvation of his posterity unto the end, and to whom

Christ was first revealed, and through whom Christ has been revealed from henceforth. Adam holds the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times; i.e., the dispensation of all the times have been and will be revealed through him from the beginning to Christ, and from Christ to the end of the dispensations that are to be revealed.”

**(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Four 1839-42 p.167)**

#### What caused the Children of Israel to get a “lesser law?”

It was later that the Children of Israel rejected the responsibilities (and subsequently the blessings) of the higher law, settling instead for a lesser law. At least, Moses was able to keep the lesser law as a Messianic guideline. It was created to anticipate the Savior. The lesser law was predicated on performance-related criteria rather than on intent or attitude. Simply put, do’s and don’ts became the law instead of the Spirit of God dictating the law.

## What did Heavenly Father say about Him giving the Children of Israel, less?

During the entire twentieth chapter of Ezekiel, the prophet speaks of God's sadness in giving His children less than the best. Some selected verses highlight His feelings of giving statutes (commandments) that were less than the best, resulting in judgements (rewards) that were less than the best. In fact, the lesser statutes and judgements were a pollution. Here are selected verses from the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel. "In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands." (Ezekiel 6) "But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt." (Ezekiel 8) "But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt." (Ezekiel 9) "And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them." (Ezekiel 11) "But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them . . ." (Ezekiel 13) "Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness." (Ezekiel 17) ". . . I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth." (Ezekiel 22) "Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not (as) good, and judgments

whereby they should not live (with me)." (Ezekiel 25) "And I polluted them in their own gifts . . ." (Ezekiel 26),

## What is His promise?

Both the physical and spiritual scattering of Israel is compared to heathens who want to worship stone and wooden images. The Israelites stayed away from those images, but resorted to rules of do's-and-don'ts instead of the Holy Spirit. Yet, in the end, the children of Israel will be gathered, and their original covenants will be restored. Ezekiel chapter twenty continues: "And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone." (Ezekiel 32) "And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out." (Ezekiel 34) "And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face." (Ezekiel 35) "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the (New and Everlasting) covenant:" (Ezekiel 37) "I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen." (Ezekiel 41) "And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled . . ." (Ezekiel 43) ". . . Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee . . . (gift of the Holy Ghost). (Ezekiel 47) "And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched." (Ezekiel 48) The world will truly see . . . "The spirit of God like a fire is burning." As of now, only a part of the family of Israel knows that the original covenants have been restored.

### **How does the covenant become new and everlasting?**

"The everlasting gospel made known in the last days is nothing more nor less than the ancient religion restored. It is the commencement of the "restitution of all things, spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was."

(John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom*, p.2-3)

### **How did the rift of Jews and Christians widen?**

A few more comments about Jewish philosophy on faith/belief and works (mitzvot) show some wavering between the two. "The developing rift between Christianity and Judaism and the animosity after their final split in the second century C.E. produced many great disputations. A crucial one occurred about the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt (c. 135 C.E.) between the Christian Justin Martyr and the Jew Tryphon. While the two adversaries expressed friendship toward each other, the argument became bitter. Justin challenged the Jewish concept of being the chosen people by pointing out their low position in the world, and argued that the Jews were made to follow laws as punishment by God. Tryphon countered by charging Justin with selecting his

quotes from the Bible, and - proclaiming that true salvation comes from strictly following the law, not from faith in man. He argued." "The medieval Jewish philosophers gave a great deal of thought to formulating articles of faith and disagreed among themselves as to how many there should be. Some even opposed any such formulation on the grounds that every mitzvah (deed or act) is an article of faith." "One of the first formulations was that of Hananel ben Hushi'el who was an important Babylonian scholar of the 11th century. He saw, as basic to the Jewish religion, the following four principles: (1) belief in God; (2) belief in the prophets; (3) belief in the World to Come; and (4) belief in the coming of the Messiah." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

### **Who was, and still is, the real Messiah?**

That Messiah, still unknown by a part of the House of Israel (and most of mankind), is the original author and finisher of our faith. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (*Revelation 1:8*)