

Book of Hebrews Part 63 of 63 13:13-25; Outside the Camp; Sacrifice of Praise; Conclusion

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/7n3dwh3/book-of-Hebrews-part-63>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserving the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Shabbat shalom everyone.

We are going to do something unprecedented today. We're going to do something that none of you possibly thought I was capable of. Unimaginable and unthinkable! We are going to cross the finish line of this series today.

Yes. You chuckle. As I mentioned last week, the epistle to the Hebrews, for me, is very, very special. Without exaggeration I'm going to tell you, this is without question one of the most important documents that has ever existed in the history of the world. I'm not sensationalizing it; that's not hyperbole. I'm being quite literal. This is a theological masterpiece. I am in awe of this thing. The way the writer has navigated it tells me we're not dealing simply with the heart, the thoughts, and the emotions of a man. We're dealing with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. That's how profound this book is. To be able to go through and articulate the things that he does in the way that he does it, reveals to us Yeshua, and His deistic nature in that He holds all things together by the word of His power. The hosts of heaven are to worship Him, and that He Himself is called God. We are to move from that and start talking about things like the fact that He is the new *Kohen Gadol*. It's totally, completely radical.

To be able to navigate those waters, you have to have the Holy Spirit. To be able to talk about what the New Covenant is, and compare and contrast it to the old, and actually dumb it down so that I can understand it, is an incredible thing. Yet he does this. And he seems to do it with beautiful ease. He seems to be able to take and contrast the concepts of law and grace and weave them together showing the relationship that exists between them that expresses the beauty of what grace really is and the importance of the Torah (the Law of God). It's one of the most valuable pieces of literature you'll ever read. I really mean that.

With that said, I want to break in. Let's begin to cross the finish line here. We're going to pick it up in verse 14, and this is what we read: **Hebrews 13:14 - For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.**

What is the writer talking about here? **For here we have no continuing city.** What city is he referring to? Yerushalayim, Jerusalem. But he's contrasting the earthly Jerusalem to that of the heavenly. He's making a stark contrast here. We've talked about this, but if you put this statement in its historical context, it becomes much more radical in the sense that here you have a Jew writing to Jewish believers. And keep

in mind while he's writing this, the temple is functioning. We have the priesthood fulfilling their duties in service. They're sacrificing the animals; blood is getting applied to the altar; they're lighting the menorah; they're going in with the table of the showbread; and they're burning incense on the altar. They're bringing the blood in on Yom Kippur. All these things are happening.

People are going up to the temple. Jerusalem is robust. It's the very symbol of relationship between Israel and God. It's the symbol. Yet this writer comes out with this statement: **Here we have no continuing city.** It's radical. And again, in the first century, in the proper context, this could get you stoned. Talk like this did not go well for Jeremiah, who came and brought the holy Word of God and was just expressing what God was trying to tell His people. It was a message of grace. Do you know what the people said? They said, "No, you hate us. You hate our city. You deserve to die." The apostle Paul goes even further in his description by calling Yerushalayim 'Hagar,' the bond servant who was cast out with her son.

So, when you start talking about the earthly Jerusalem at that level, yes, that could get you stoned. But the free woman, meaning Sarah, the one who gives birth to this miracle child, is the New Jerusalem. That's what we're a part of. That is what the writer is getting into here.

I want to bring further clarity to this passage because sometimes going verse by verse you can lose the broader context. I want to go back to last week and put verse 13 back up here. This is what the writer says: **Hebrews 13:13 - Therefore let us go forth to Him (Yeshua), outside the camp, bearing His reproach. Hebrews 13:14 - For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.** (Brackets added)

Why are we going to go outside? Because we're going to go after Him. **For here we have no continuing city.** In other words, abandon ship. This is why. Go back to **John 4**. As he's talking to the Samaritan woman He says, **"Woman, I tell you, the hour is coming and now already is, when you will neither on this mountain (Mount Gerizim), nor in Yerushalayim, worship the Father. For the ones that are going to go worship Him are going to worship Him in spirit and truth."** (Brackets added). It's amazing. It's 'abandon ship' on one serious level, but guess what? You're not abandoning God; you're going out to Yeshua; you're going outside the camp. You're running to Him. Absolutely amazing.

To reiterate, here is Hebrews 11:9. Listen to what the writer says: **Hebrews 11:9 - By faith Abraham dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.**

Look at that. Abraham is dwelling in the land that God promised him. You would live normally as a citizen, - 'This is my land,' and yet he doesn't. Neither did Isaac, neither did Jacob, and neither did David. Read the Psalms. David said to the Lord, **"I'm a stranger with you... as all my forefathers were."** They knew something. Abraham knew that he wasn't going to plant his flag in the dirt of the earth because what God promised him transcended what he was seeing. It transcended it and went way beyond. He knew what he was promised was eternal.

Remember, Abraham knew Yeshua. Which is why the writer goes on and says: **Hebrews 11:10 - for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.** That's what Abraham was waiting for. That's why he dwelt as a foreigner, as a stranger, and he didn't get comfortable. If you're going to a different country, it's uncomfortable because you're not a citizen of that country. You're not comfortable in your own skin. This is where Abraham is. This is where Isaac was. This is where David

was. This is where the first century messianic Jews are. They are not planting their flag in the dirt of earth.

Here we see again: **Hebrews 13:13** - Therefore let us go forth to Him (Yeshua), outside the camp, bearing His reproach. **Hebrews 13:14** - For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. (Brackets added)

There's one specific thing for today that I didn't cover last week, intentionally, and that is this: **Let us go forth to Him outside the camp**. It is so pivotal to understanding the broader context. One of the things we talked about last week was the fact that on Yom Kippur you had the bull being sacrificed for the priest, you had the goat for the people, and that blood was brought into the Holy of Holies. Then those animals were carried outside the camp and completely consumed. We know these are representative of Yeshua giving His life.

But there is another aspect here that the writer is conveying. There's an old Jewish proverb:

‘מעשי האבות מתנבאים לבנים’

“The deeds of the fathers are a prophecy for the children.”

In other words, when the rabbis read the Torah, they don't read it simply as history. They read it as if these things are going to happen again. This is prophecy.

We need to pay attention to these stories. We need to commit them to memory because this is going to happen again. It's foretelling us what is to come. When the writer says this, there's no question that this is ringing the bell of the messianic Jews in the first century. And it rang their bell when they read that Moshe's tent was outside the camp. What do I mean? Let me take you there and you'll understand this better. We read in **Exodus 33:7** - Moshe took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it...

This tent is called the אוהל ישיבה, ‘*ohel moed*,’ the Tabernacle of Meeting. Or you would say, the Tent of Meeting. *Ohel* means ‘tent’. This is the Tent of Meeting. There are two things to mention here that are important. Number one, Moses (Moshe) is going outside the camp. Number two, his own personal residence is called the ‘*ohel moed*’. Why is that important? Because that's what the Tabernacle is called several times within the Torah. I've gotten this question because people get confused. They don't understand if this is talking about the actual Tabernacle, or Moses's personal tent. Listen to me carefully, this is explicit. This is talking about Moses's private tent. It's called the ‘*ohel moed*’ and the actual Tabernacle, the ‘*damesh khan*,’ was also called the ‘*ohel moed*’.

When God does stuff like this, it's to stop you dead in your tracks. It's because He is conveying something to get you to stop and say, “I've got to understand this. What is going on? Clearly there is something deeply prophetic here.” And there is. IT is the fact that Moshe sets his tent up outside the camp. Let's go back to **Deuteronomy 18:15** where Moses tells the children of Israel that “**The LORD is going to raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you. And Him you shall hear.**” That's interesting because the writer of Hebrews has already drawn a parallel between Yeshua and Moses going back to chapter three. Moshe's life is very important. It's an example of, ‘מעשי האבות מתנבאים לבנים’, “The deeds of the fathers are a prophecy for the children.” Okay? It's prophetic in nature, and it tells us there's something being revealed to us. Let's see what this is as we continue.

Finishing out the passage: **...And it came to pass that everyone who sought the LORD...** (What did they do?) **...they went out to the Tabernacle of Meeting which was outside the camp.** In other words, they

went to him (Moses) outside the camp. You can't make this stuff up. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews is telling his first century Jewish brethren to do in regard to the Prophet like unto Moses.

This gets better. As we go to the Targums on this very passage, we're going to read the same passage in the Aramaic Targums. Listen to this: **Targum Jonathan: Exodus 33:7 - But the tabernacle he (Moshe) took away from thence, and spread it without the camp, and removed it from the camp of the people to the distance of 2 000 cubits;...**(brackets added).

Mind-blowing! Why is this mind-blowing? Because that was the exact distance that was prescribed to stay away from the Ark of the Covenant. Think of it as the 'Holy Distancing.' Think of it that way, okay? This measurement is being applied to Moshe's '*ohel moed*'. This is incredible.

It goes on and says this: **...and it was called the Tabernacle of the House of Instruction:...**The House of Torah. The House of Learning. One thing I could tell you is that the Orthodox Jews are waiting on pins and needles to be taught by the Messiah. They want the Messiah to teach them Torah. Amazing!

Going back to the wilderness, all those who were seeking instruction in Israel, where did they go? They went to Moshe outside the camp to learn. That's where they went.

Continuing, we read this:**...and it was that when anyone turned by repentance with a true heart before the Lord, he went forth to the Tabernacle of the House of Instruction that was without the camp,...**Listen to this:**...to confess and pray for the pardon of his sins; and praying, he was forgiven.**

Absolutely incredible! They're not just going to learn Torah. They're not going outside the camp to see Moshe. They're going outside the camp to be forgiven! To confess their sins and get forgiveness. That's what the writer is confessing here. This is profound, this is deep.

Moving to **Hebrews 13:13 - Therefore let us go forth to Him (Yeshua), outside the camp, bearing His reproach.** Because guess what? **Hebrews 13:14 - For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.** (Brackets added)

A first century Jew's life was flipped upside down by this. It was rocked by the implementation of the '*B'rit Chadasha*', the New Covenant, which is all based on Yeshua, where the Master Yeshua comes in and takes over the place and role of Mediator. He comes in and takes over the role of the Kohen Gadol. He comes in and takes over Kingship. This is incredible. What He did was He flipped the world upside down. And it wasn't just our writer who understood this. It wasn't just the apostle Paul that understood this.

How did the messianic Jews, at the birth of the church, respond? The church was just beginning to grow, and it was explicitly messianic Jews at this time; the Gentiles were not even a part of this equation yet. This is important to know. Let me give you an example of how they responded. We see this early in the book of Acts. It's amazing.

Acts 4:33 - And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Yeshua. And great grace was upon them all. Now verse 34; listen to this: **Acts 4:34-35 - Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.**

This is mind-blowing. Do you understand? They're acting like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They're selling their lands. Wait a second! That's their inheritance. They're selling their houses. Do you remember what the Torah prophesied? In summary, it said, 'I'm going to bring you into a land of vineyards you didn't plant, wells you did not dig, and houses which you did not build. And you will inherit it.' That was their inheritance coming into this physical land. Yet now you have first century messianic Jews selling everything. You might say, "Well Daniel, there's kind of a loophole to that because you have the Jubilee, and they'll get it back, so they can sell it now." That is not the context of what's being expressed here. In fact, I could take it a step further. If you read Leviticus 25, it says that if you sold a house within a walled city, and you didn't redeem it within one year, you'd never get it back, Jubilee or not.

Do you see the hearts of these men, these messianic Jews? They have left the earth. There's nothing here for them. They want to go home and be with Yeshua, that's all they want. For us, that mindset's going to get easier and easier as we see what is unfolding in this world with the antichrist spreading his evil tentacles out all over the place doing what we painfully must watch him do. This is going to become easier and easier for you.

The writer goes on: **Hebrews 13:15 - Therefore by Him (Yeshua) let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.** (Brackets added)

It's interesting that the writer moves on to instruct his Jewish brethren that they're to go outside of the camp to go to Yeshua. The first thing he commands them to do is to sacrifice, but not animals. He tells them to bring the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

There are a few things that you ought to know about the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. If you go to the Torah, in Leviticus chapter seven, you'll notice there's a section there called '*Ha Shalem*,' which deals with peace offerings. In *Ha Shalem*, these peace offerings, or *Ha Shalamim*, can be offered three different ways. One way is through a vow. Another is just because you want to. Then there's the first one that's listed, which is known as the *Todah*. In Hebrew, *Todah* means 'Thank you.' You could say this in Israel today. But the *Todah* is also known as the Thanksgiving Offering.

What I want you to understand is the reason someone would offer a *Todah*. The reason they would bring thanks to the Lord has to do with the Lord granting some type of favor or success. This could be regarding a journey, some situation, or perhaps a person was delivered, set free, or was spared. Perhaps someone was on their deathbed, they were bedridden, they were going to die, they were going to check out, but all of a sudden, they had a miraculous recovery. That person would come and offer this *Shalem*. They would come and offer a *Todah*, a thanksgiving offering because they're thankful to God for sparing them, for delivering them.

I can think of no better way, and for no better reason, to bring a *Todah* to the Lord than for Him sending His Son because every single one of us has been condemned to death. Every one of us has been given a death sentence. Every one of us has regret, and we have despair because of what we've done. And when the truth comes in, it casts light on the darkness. But because of Yeshua, there is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Him. Right? That's a beautiful thing. We, as believers, have this beautiful cause. We need to go to Him outside the camp. We need to bring the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. He's earned it; He is worthy. We need to glorify Him in that.

Something else I want to point out about the *Todah* is this: **Leviticus 22:29** – **And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer it of your own free will.**

This is fascinating to me, and I'll tell you why. As you look back to the Exodus and see the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, the children of Israel are instructed to build a tabernacle. The Lord shows Moses all the dimensions, everything that needs to be done. Where did they get the materials to build this tabernacle, the tabernacle which was the very symbol of their relationship with the Lord? Where did they get all this stuff? The answer is, from all of Israel who had a willing heart. They came and brought all these, what you would call sacrifices. They brought all the materials needed: the gold and silver, blue, the purple, and the scarlet thread and all this beautiful stuff. They did it out of their own free will. And what's amazing is that they were building the Kingdom of God in that capacity. It's such an awesome concept.

This is what we do when we embrace the *Todah*. This is what we do when we come to bring thanksgiving for what Yeshua has done: we are building the Kingdom of God. Nay I say, as Israel in the wilderness when they built that tabernacle, they were connecting directly to God. This is the power of the *Todah*; it's the power of the Thanksgiving Offering.

Here is **Psalm 107:1**. I love this.

הדרו ליהוה כי טוב כי לעולם חסדו

'Hodu l'Adonai ki tov ki l'olam chasdo'

Psalms 107:1 – **Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.**

How many times have I taught on this? There is power in this statement. There is power when you embrace it, when you act it out, and when these words come upon your lips. **Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.** This is why Jehoshaphat put the singers first. He put the worshipers first, and the armies behind them, and they went out literally saying, **"Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."** And the enemy was routed. The enemy fell because of the praise.

What do we know about praise? The Lord inhabits the praises of His people. There is an incredible connection that happens when we say, **"Hodu l'Adonai"** – **"Give thanks to the LORD."** We are connected to power, and the Lord loves it. We are saying things that He wants to hear from His creation.

Think about this in terms of a marriage. When a marriage is operating successfully, and love is firing on all cylinders, it's because the spouses are speaking out the things that need to be said to the other spouse. They are saying things that minister to each other. These are things that build up; things that strengthen one another and make each other feel good. Husbands, when your wife comes to you and asks you if you like her new haircut, that's a pivotal moment for you. You're in the valley of decision. You have a rare opportunity. You can either connect with her in a very powerful way, or you can totally separate. I'll admit, I don't always say the right things, and I don't always know the right things to say. But, when husbands know the right things to say, you can melt the heart of your wife. And wives, when they know the right things to say, they can melt the hearts of their husband. We are given scriptural instruction on the things that melt the heart of God in a powerful way. **'Hodu l'Adonai ki tov ki l'olam Chasdo'**. If you are ever to commit to memory any Hebrew, you should remember this. This in Hebrew is so powerful. I encourage you to do that.

I want to share with you additional knowledge regarding the power that this verse possesses. Seeing the landscape today, what do you think the enemy is going to try to shut down? Praise and worship. If we could just see for a moment into the spiritual realm, we would understand the power that this verse has. We would see what it does to demons and how it destroys and breaks down strongholds in our lives and in other people's lives. If we could see that, we would fill our mouths with it all day long, right?

Think of **Psalms 113:3** - From the rising of the sun to its going down the name of the LORD is to be praised. There's a reason for that. It's equipping us for power. It's equipping for strength and for wisdom. These things come into play in a very mighty way.

Let's look at the next verse in **Psalms 107:2** - Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy.... Who is supposed to say "*Hodu l'Adonai ki tov ki l'olam Chasdo*"? Those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We are to give thanks to the Lord and unlock that power. The Lord loves to be praised.

Jumping to **Psalms 107:22** - Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare His works with rejoicing. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews is conveying. He is instructing his Jewish brothers to go out and offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving. This is what we're commanded. This is nothing new; this is not a personal opinion. This is something the prophets of long ago were telling the children of Israel to do.

For example, in **Hosea 14:1-2** - O Israel, return to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity; Take words with you, and return to the LORD. Say to Him...

It is a momentous time in Scripture. You're literally being called to come and repent, to embrace *teshuva*, and turn to the Lord. Here's what's fascinating about this – "**Take words with you. When you return to the LORD. Say to Him...**" How many times have people said, "I don't know what to pray." Listen closely because Scripture is going to tell you exactly what the Lord wants to hear. This is what we read as we continue: "**Take away all iniquity; receive us graciously,**"

Come with brokenness before the Lord begging and asking Him, "Forgive my sins." The Lord wants to hear this! What's so amazing is after so many conversations and all the lies the enemy tells people, they are convinced that this is not what the Lord wants. He doesn't want to hear this. He doesn't want me to come and say this. However, this is EXACTLY what He wants: for you to come and confess your sins, and to ask for His grace to fall upon you.

Then it says this: **For we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.** Lord, if you have mercy on us, know what's going to follow. It's going to be glory.

Psalms 50 verse 15 has the same structure: **Psalms 50:15** - Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me. It says, **Glorify Me**, because that's what He wants. When He brings deliverance, He brings glory to Himself. When He brings healing, He brings glory to Himself. It's an awesome thing that we can go forward and offer that sacrifice with our lips.

I think of David in Psalm 51: **Psalms 51:16-17** - For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart—

These, O God, You will not despise. That is the sacrifice that the Lord is looking for. The sacrifice that we see is being called upon here in Hosea.

Let's look at one more passage by taking you to **Jeremiah 33:11** – 'the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say: "Praise the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for His mercy endures forever"-- and those...'

Does that sound familiar? It's the exact same thing. **The LORD is good, His mercy endures forever.** This is the '*Hodu l'Adonai*'. This is perfect! Then we read this: **...who will bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD.** Again, this is what the Lord wants.

Look at **Psalms 100:4** – **Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise.** In other words, as we're coming in, we need to know how the Lord wants us to approach Him. Right?

As an example, going back to the marriage, there are specific ways that a husband should be approaching his wife. There are specific ways that a wife should be approaching her husband. It's no different with Yeshua when we come in. If you've ever been through a community service, we start off with song every Shabbat because we are to enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. This is how He wants us coming in to meet Him. He wants to come into the praises of His people. Think of Yeshua as He's making His triumphal entry into Yerushalayim. He did so with what? The praises of the people. He was glorified; He was honored. There's power in that.

Continuing: **Hebrews 13:16** - **But do not forget to do good and to share.** Here we're in the closing portion. The writer is getting close to his exit, and he wants to take the time to give another life-giving principle. He is taking the time to tell us not to forget this. It's like the Lord telling us to remember the Shabbat and to keep it holy. Remember to do good and to share. As we know, pure and undefiled religion in the sight of God is to visit widows and orphans. We are to care for those who are in need. We are to labor intensely in doing good.

I like what the apostle Paul says, who also, in his closing to the Galatians, is doing the same thing the writer of Hebrews does here. But Paul says something specific that adds a dimension to what the writer of Hebrews is saying. Paul says in **Galatians 6:7** - **Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.**

That's a warning. You will reap what you sow. The devil wants to come and tell you, "No you won't; you will surely not die. You can live like hell, and it's fine. You said a prayer; you're going to inherit heaven. Sleep well."

Moving to verse 8: **Galatians 6:8-9** - **for he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the spirit will of the spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.**

You need to understand that when the writer tells us to not forget to do good, and to share, you're going to be exhausted. There will be times that you're hanging by a thread, and you'll say, "I can't, I just can't. I'm done. I can't do this anymore. I'm exhausted. I don't have anything left." That's when you need to draw to your mind that I will reap if I do not lose heart. David tells us in **Psalm 27:13** - **I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.**

In essence, David is saying that ‘Unless Yeshua was my Lord and Savior, unless my eyes were affixed to Him, I would’ve fell. I would not have stayed on the road. I would not have stayed on the narrow and difficult path.’ This is the reality.

The writer goes on and says: **Hebrews 13:16 - ...for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.** He is pleased with doing good. He is pleased with you giving to those who have need.

Then it says this in **Psalms 4:5 - Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.**

There are a couple things about this passage I want to point out right off the bat. Here's the Structure of the Faith. Some of you know what I'm talking about. There is the Structure of the Faith. It's this formula that you find scattered throughout the Word of God. Genesis to Revelation, you see it everywhere. It's based on that revelation where the dragon is enraged with the woman and goes to make war with the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of the Messiah Yeshua. Those are the people who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. They keep the commandments; they confess Yeshua as Lord. That is exactly what is being said here. **Offer the sacrifices of righteousness.**

So, what is righteousness? **Psalms 119:172 – all your commandments are righteousness.** It says, “all of your commandments.” And what else? **Put your trust in the LORD.** Put your faith in Yeshua. This is the Structure of the Faith. This is what we need to do. Yeshua says, **“If you love me, keep My commandments”** [John 14:15]. When you're walking in that love, you're walking in a sacrificial love. You are literally, spiritually speaking, offering beautiful sacrifices.

The apostle Peter throws his hat into the ring here. He says in **1 Peter 2:4-5 - Coming to Him as a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Messiah Yeshua.**

It's amazing. We have all these Jewish believers in the first century such as the writer of Hebrews, the apostle Paul, and Peter. They're all talking about these kinds of sacrifices that are totally spiritual in nature. These are things that refer to obeying God. Things that refer to praising and giving thanksgiving. Things that refer to helping those in need. These are all spiritual sacrifices. These are the sacrifices we are called to bring to the Lord. Amen.

Do not forget to do good and to share. For with such sacrifices God as well pleased. **Hebrews 13:17 – Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, ...**

To reiterate, in context, this passage is explicitly talking about church governance. What is said here plays out, there's no debate. There are certainly times where Scripture talks about obeying secular authority. This, however, is specific to the Church. It's talking about the elders, the shepherds, the pastors, the teachers, and these rabbis. This is what it's talking about. **Obey those who rule over and be submissive. Why? They watch out for your souls.**

It goes on and it says this: **...as those who must give an account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.** In other words, for the sheep, there are two sides of the coin here. The sheep need to understand that you need to trust that the Lord has established church leadership, that He has established shepherds. You need to trust in that and know that however a

shepherd treats you, however he leads the community, there will be a day of reckoning upon his head. Take solace in that reality. Whereas the flip side, guess what? As pastors, the shepherds, the teachers, and the elders, we must step back and understand that we're on the receiving end of this. We need to hear this.

I think of James regarding this topic: **James 3:1 - My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.**

I kid you not, this passage almost took me out of ministry early on in ministry. It weighed so heavy on me that I wanted to leave. I wondered, as you're looking at the lines to get into heaven, who in their right mind is going to say, "Hey Lord, just a quick question. I want to get in the line that has the strictest judgment. Which line is that? Can I get into that line?" Are you kidding me? I'm looking for the line that is literally drowning in grace; that's my line. This was my train of thought. I was thinking, "I don't need to teach. I'd rather not have a stricter judgment upon me. I have enough fear of God. I've read enough of the Word to know that when the day comes, we are going to tremble. It's going to be terrifying for the world to see His awesome holiness. I don't want to be in the line with stricter judgment." I battled this. The devil even tried to utilize this as an excuse for me to leave ministry. The problem is I'm caught between a rock and a hard place. When you know that you have a call on your life, what happens when you don't fulfill that call? What line do you get in? It's not even there, that's the problem. Do you see the dilemma? I don't want to be in this situation.

This is what James is saying: you don't want to be in this position. You don't. I don't. I don't have a choice. I'm going to be obedient to the Lord, but what the writer is conveying is that it weighs heavy on both sides of the coin.

Continuing in **Hebrews 13:18-19 - Pray for us, for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. But I...** Singular. Did you catch that? He started out with the plural, **Pray for us**, but now he says: **...But I especially urge you to do this,...**

What is he urging them to do? Pray. He's in the closing of his letter, and there is something that he is consumed with, something he wants to convey the importance of. He says you need to pray for us. Is the writer simply saying this because he wants to sound spiritual by saying, "I'm going to speak Christian-ese for a time and pat them on the back, and we're going to talk about prayer because we know that's a spiritual thing"? The reason the writer is asking for this is because he believes in it. He is asking for prayer because he knows the power of prayer. He knows that doors that can't be opened can be opened with prayer. People who need deliverance, that otherwise could not be delivered, need prayer. People that are afflicted by demons, where even the apostles can't get them out because they can't be cast out except by prayer and fasting, need to be prayed for.

I think about Peter in Acts 12. He's in prison. But it said constant prayer was offered up for him. They're still praying, and then Peter shows up at the door. Their prayers are literally being answered as he is knocking at the door. A supernatural miracle! The writer of Hebrews is not asking for prayer because it sounds good, or that this is just going to be a nice, happy little ending. He's asking for it because he's desperate for it. He knows we need it. I need it; I need you guys praying for me. I value those prayers. That's the most important thing we can do for one another in addition to meeting needs. When there's a need, we need to meet those needs. But this is so critical.

Then he goes on and tells us why. He says this: **...that I may be restored to you the sooner.** What does that mean? I ask this question because there is a lot of debate about this passage: **that I may be restored to you sooner.** The concept or the idea of being restored suggests that you were taken. In other words, had he been thrown into prison? It's possible. Many of the first century Jews were thrown into prison. They knew prison well. Peter, Paul, and many of them knew the prisons. Looking at the historical landscape and looking at this, it's very possible. It's not definitive because he doesn't explicitly say that is the case. This could simply mean, "I want to be restored to you because I've been taken away from you for a time. The Lord has me doing this and that right now, but in my heart, I really want to come back to you." That could be what he is saying, or it could be the former. I think, given the historical context and what we're going to read in a little bit, it's very possible that this is a prison situation.

There's one more thing worth noting, and that is the fact that what we're looking at on the screen right now is a very familiar structure to me. In other words, have you ever read the epistles of Paul such as Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon? In all of Paul's closings, he asks for prayer. It's pivotal; it's imperative that he receives that prayer. James does it in his closing in his little epistle. But what he does is he commissions them to pray for one another. You need to pray for one another so that we can be healed. That's a huge aspect to healing; we need to be praying constantly. We can't ever stop.

Considering the atmosphere that we are peering into, this thick cloud of evil, we have to be in meditation all day long. I want to meditate all day long on the goodness and the richness. I want to praise the Lord Yeshua because I want to walk in that power. I want you to walk in that power. We need to pray for one another.

I think of Psalm 122:

שאלו שלום ירושלם ישליו אהביך
'Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim, yishlayu havayich'

Psalms 122:6 - Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may they prosper who love you.

I've talked about this passage before. Jerusalem is a synecdoche for the people. It's not simply asking us to pray for dust. In **Matthew 23:37** when Yeshua comes into the city, He says, **"Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"** We're talking about people. We're talking about Israel. We're talking about the body of Messiah, and we are to pray. Shalom doesn't just mean 'have peace'; it means wholeness, to be restored, and to unify. To be in unity with one another. This is what we're praying for. It goes way beyond that. This is powerful, and we need to pick up on these things.

Continuing in **Hebrews 13:20-22** - **Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus (Yeshua) from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ (Messiah Yeshua), to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. ²² And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words.** (Brackets added)

When you look at the landscape, we have some larger epistles in the New Testament, but a lot of them are smaller. Yet this writer says, **"I have written to you in few words"** suggesting that this guy's got a lot on his heart. What he shared were all the instrumental points. It's a mind-blowing mammoth epistle.

Theologically speaking, this epistle is mind-blowing! It's so incredible. When he says he's written to us in a few words, I kind of chuckle at that.

Hebrews 13:23 - Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly. The writer, who may or may not have been in prison, is asking to be restored to his Jewish brethren. It's interesting that he mentions that in light of this passage because Timothy, we know, was in prison. The enemy was laying waste.

I want to say something a little bit off track here. When I read the book of Acts, about the growth of the Church in the first century, when God moved in the most glorious power, it was a time when Satan vomited filth out of Hell and came at them with everything he had. I'm going to tell you, he's coming after us right now with everything that he has. If we stand strong, we will live, and we will experience the things that the apostles experienced through the power of the Holy Spirit. I am convinced of that; I know this to be true. We can't read this as just a great history book. This is your life. This is current events. This should be us today. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. I really believe there's going to be some awesome, radical believers who are going to start experiencing mind-blowing things while at the same time they're getting attacked from every angle, every side. The enemy's trying to undermine them, lock them up in prisons, and do whatever he can to shut the mouths of people who testify of Yeshua, that testify of His truth.

I think of **John 7:7** - The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. This is why we are going to be hated. If you want to go out and say abortion is wrong, they're going to foam at the mouth because you're testifying of truth, and you're testifying of Yeshua. You're testifying to what's good. If you want to talk about how gay marriage is not God's plan for marriage, they're absolutely going to go ballistic. It's because there are demonic spirits behind this. That's just a reality.

Another thing to think about, although not a big deal theologically, is as we began this series talking about early church history and church historians, we talked about who wrote this epistle. The consensus that I believe is safe is that this is the mind of Paul, but it's the hand of Luke. It's interesting that the writer now brings Timothy to the table, and that he's going to come with Timothy. Timothy was a known associate of Paul, there's no question that this author, regardless of who he is, knows Paul well. If you read this epistle to the Hebrews, you have Pauline-isms all over the place; it's saturated. You can see the unity here of the apostles. You can really see that.

Moving to **Hebrews 13:24** - Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you. Grace be with you all. Amen. He closes it out. Again, this is a theological masterpiece. This is a game changer for us as believers today in Yeshua. If you really want to understand who Yeshua is and understand what the New Covenant really means and that it is a new covenant, not a renewed covenant, you've got to get into the epistle to the Hebrews.

To close this up, I must go back to one verse. There was one verse that I missed in this series, and I'll be doggone if I close this without going back to it. Henry was the only guy that noticed this. It was **Hebrews 10:21** - And having a high priest over the house of God. You may not remember me missing this. Guess what? I don't either. I don't even know how it happened, but my good, trusted friend Henry recognized it. He told me I missed it, and oh my goodness, I went back, and he was right. Now we can close this epistle.