

A NEW DISPENSATION | V. 18

- Note: v. 18 really belongs with vv. 19 and following. The NASB break is in the wrong place.
- These words express the status of the Law for sin offerings for the present dispensation.
- The Hebrew people were being told that continued sacrifice in the Temple was fruitless. Remember that the book is written to encourage the Jewish people to recognize Christ as their Messiah. It is their last chance.
- Being descriptive of this dispensation, we must ask: what offering for sin is available today? Being none, we must rely on the "once-for-all" sacrifice of verse 14.

THE TWO THINGS HEBREW BELIEVERS HAD | VV. 19-21

- Verse 19 –
 - **Therefore** -- It is essential that the **therefore** is understood in this verse. The word inextricably links the boldness with the condition expressed in v. 18. If sin had not been remitted, then boldness would not be in order.
 - **Boldness** - The Greek *παρρησία* [parasia] is "free flowing" or even, in a cruder manner, "to speak and not shut up!" The roots are *pas* (all) and *rheo* (to flow or to speak - our English word *rhetoric* comes from this root). Remember that the author is trying to get the Hebrew people to recognize the new reality, and to do that the saved Hebrew people need to speak freely and boldly.
 - **To enter...by the blood of Jesus** - What a contrast from the age of the Law - no longer by the High Priest with the blood of animals, but now by the believer with the blood of Christ!
- Verse 20 - The previous way was "old" and entrance was only by death of an animal. Now anyone is able to enter by the **living way** rather than the dying way.
- Verse 21 –
 - **Having a High Priest** - This is the writer's second argument as a foundation for the instruction of v. 22. The first argument is in v. 19.
 - **The house of God** -
 - Though Christians often refer to the church building as "God's House," such terminology is in error, likely drawn from Catholicism.
 - All of the references to "the House of God" are a reference to Temple, and since Scripture interprets Scripture, we must settle for that meaning here.
 - The church as a body is referred to as the "household of God" in 1 Tim 3:15 and 1 Pet. 4:17, but that is different than the "house of God."

PASS THE "LET US" PLEASE! | VV. 22-25

- Verse 22 –
 - **Draw near** is the first of three "shoulds" contained in vv. 22-24. It is a reference to drawing near the heavenly "holy of holies" or **house of God**.
 - **Hearts sprinkled** and **bodies washed** - These two "having been" statements describe the one who should **draw near**.
 - Ezekiel 36:25 speaks of a coming day when God says of Israel, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you." The saved Jews of the time of the writing of Hebrews had the premature experience of this sprinkling, though in a spiritual sense.
 - The Hebrew had to have their **bodies washed** in the micvah [Jewish ceremonial bath, which is the origins of Christian baptism] before entering the Temple. Now the writer speaks of a spiritual cleansing that doesn't require the micvah. Caution: If you take **house of God** (v. 21) to be the church then you end up with a baptismal regeneration issue.

- Verse 23 –
 - **Let us hold fast** is the second of three "shoulds."
 - Rather than **the profession of our faith**, the translation should be "the profession of the hope."
 - The word ἐλπίς [elpis] is translated "hope" 53 of the 54 times it is used in the Greek New Testament.
 - Furthermore, there is no personal pronoun (our), which is misleading.
 - "The hope" is the promised Messianic reign, as it is in Heb. 3:6, 6:11, 6:18, 7:19.
 - When "the hope" is seen as the Messianic reign, it is abundantly clear that the Kingdom had not started as of 65-69AD, when the book was written.
 - When it is not seen as the Kingdom, it makes such little sense that translators felt urged to go against linguistics and interpret the word in a manner that fit their theology.
 - Notice the parenthetical statement about God's promise, which is a reference to the promised reign of the Messiah.
 - Many Bible scholars miss much of the point of the book of Hebrews because they take v. 23 as the reason for the book, saying that it was an encouragement to Hebrew believers not to go back on their profession of faith. Taken for "the church," in such a way, it makes many problems of doctrine.
- Verse 24 –
 - **Consider one another...** is the third of three "shoulds" in vv. 22-24.
 - The Greek κατανοέω [katanoeo] is to take thought to its farthest position. The prefix *kata* always strengthens the word to the greatest degree possible. The believing Hebrews were to put "100% mental effort" into "provoking" unto love and to good works.
 - The word **provoke** is παροξυσμός [paroxysmos], and interesting word.
 - The prefix *par* is "alongside" and *oxys* is "sour wine."
 - In the English language the *oxy* usage is "sharp or pointed." For example, *oxymoron* is "sharply stupid."
 - Oxygen is misnamed because early chemists believed the element was essential to produce (give birth) to acids.
 - Finally, *paroxysm* is the "sudden, uncontrolled expression of emotion" (MacMillan).
 - In Acts 15:39 the word is translated with the phrase "contention was so sharp," referring to the dispute between Paul and Barnabas.
 - Why would such a strong word be used here? Only because the urgency of the timing of the matter required a sharpness of demeanor that would spur others on to love and good works.
- Verse 25 –
 - Here, two descriptions of the ones who should **consider one another** (v. 24) are given.
 - First, **not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**.
 - The word **assembling** is ἐπισυναγωγή [episynagoge] and likely referred to the gathering at the synagogue (though not required by the word itself).
 - Second, **exhorting one another** - παρακαλέω [parakaleo] is "to come alongside calling."
 - The work to **provoke unto love and to good works** was to be done **so much the more, as ye see the day approaching**.
 - This is much more applicable for Israel than for the church.
 - First, it is works-based efforts
 - Second, there is really no way to **see the day approaching** for the church, which is looking for the imminent rapture.