



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Psalm 40:6-8, Hebrews 10:1-11

Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy, part VII

Eschatology Doctrinal Studies

TRANSCRIPT

My tie has golf figures on it and evidently I was having a little trouble getting it on my shirt because, I think, this thing was in the sand trap.

Let's begin our class with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are again giving thanks for the way in which the divine purpose has been unfolding. We thank thee for the past, for the assurance of Thy hand upon the affairs of men and of this creation and of angels of all of the intelligence's of this universe. We thank Thee that all of the events are events that fit a program that Thou art carrying out for we remember the apostle has told us that thou didst work all thing according to the counsel of Thine own will. And we thank Thee especially for the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ that marvelous miracle according to our human thinking the idea, the very idea, that God himself should come into our midst and carry out a ministry for our benefit is utterly astounding and beyond our ultimate comprehension.

And then, Lord, when we think of the fact that the son of God has not only come into our midst carried out the ministry of the revelation of the Godhead, but reflect upon

the fact that it was necessary for him to give himself as a sacrifice for sin is itself a climax of the magnificent first coming work of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we give Thee thanks we thank Thee for the way in which Scriptures unfold these mighty truths. And, Lord, we on the basis of the perfect completion of the past program we look forward to the consummation of it all and the glorification of our great triune God and of our participation in grace and all that Thou hast designed for us. We gave Thee thanks, we praise Thy name. We thank Thee that Thou hast included us in the company of the divine elect, and we rejoice, Lord, in the assurance that brings to us and we pray that our lives may truly reflect the high station to which that has called us.

Deliver us from our sins we desire, Lord, to be a means by which our great Godhead may be glorified. Deliver us, Lord, from being objects that bring dishonor to the name of the triune God. We thank Thee for the gift of the Scriptures and for the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and we pray as we reflect on the word of God tonight that we may have the sense of the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Again we thank Thee for the blessings of life through Christ.

And we pray in his name. Amen.

[Message] We continue now our series of studies in the Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy. And last week you may remember we looked at the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and used as one of the passages for reflection, Luke 1:26-28. Now when we think about the ministry of the death of Christ there are so many passages in the New Testament which we might turn that I confess to you I really had a little bit of difficulty picking out one that might suit our purpose of this particular series, and finally decided, with a sense of not knowing if this is the absolutely perfect passage at least it's fitting, and we are turning to Hebrews chapter 10. I am going to read verse 1 through verse 18 for here we have the atoning work of the seed of Abraham and all that that means. In our next study we are going to talk about the coming of the Holy Spirit and then talk about

the church of Jesus Christ before we reach the consummation of our series and some studies that have to do with the last things.

But now after you turn to Hebrew chapter 10, let me read the eighteen verses which are so important for the epistle to the Hebrews. If you love this epistle as I love it, you no doubt know if you read it many times that this is the climax of the argument that the author gives us and, therefore, it's something of significance for understanding all that high priestly ministry of our Lord entails. Verse 1,

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things can never would these same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshippers once purified would have no more consciousness of sins.”

Now that, I think, is a mistranslation the word “consciousness” because it seems to me the idea of having no more consciousness of sins is not true to the meaning of the word first of all, and it's not true to our experience, secondly. The word is a word that means “conscience” not “consciousness.” And so the idea of having no more conscious of sin would be no more sense of condemnation because of sin and, I think, is the idea. Not that as we as believing individuals have not consciousness of sin. If you have any doubt about that go back and read Romans chapter 7:13 through verse 25 by the Apostle Paul, and you'll see that it is not only common but it's part of the living of the Christian life to have a consciousness of our sins. So we're taking it in the sense of conscience of sins that is conscience of blame or culpability because of sin that has been taken away by the death of the Redeemer.

But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when he came into the world he said, “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire but a body you have prepared

for me in burnt offerings, in sacrifices for sin you have no pleasure.’ Then I said, ‘Behold I have come in the volume of the book that is written of me to do you will O God.’” Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offerings, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin you did not desire not has pleasure in them which are offered according to the law.” Then he said, “Behold I have come to do you will O God.” He takes away the first so that he may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offerings of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins but this man after he had offered one sacrifice for his sins forever sat down at the right hand of God. From that time waiting until his enemies are made his footstool for by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. But the Holy Ghost also witnesses to us for after he had said before.

Now, you may remember in one of our studies we went back and talked about the three unconditional covenants that is the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the New Covenant. They are the backbone of the biblical teachings those unconditional covenants. Covenants that are sure to be fulfilled, their fulfillment depends upon the character of God. This is the reason why I chose this passage because now we have the citation from Jeremiah chapter 31, the passage of the New Covenant which the author makes reference to. He says, “‘This is the covenant’ verse 16, ‘which I will make with them after those days,’ says the Lord, ‘I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds and I will them.’” Then he adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more. Now, where there is remission of these there is no longer an offering for sin.

Some of the men in the audience sat in a Bible class for men that I have been teaching for several years at least a couple of times a month and one of our studies a couple of years ago was the Epistle of the Hebrews, and so I hope those of you that were in the class will pardon me for saying what I am going to say now because I said it so

many times in that class. But I've said many times not only there but other places that Hebrews, this great epistle, hangs upon three great Old Testament passages, Psalm 110, so often used by the author for in Psalm 110 the new priesthood after the order of Melchizedek is set forth. Jeremiah 31 in which the New Covenant is set out and Psalm 40 in which the new sacrifice that is the sacrifice that satisfies the demands of God is set forth. That is the passage that is cited here in verse 5 through verse 7.

Some years ago I read something by Mr. Spurgeon that I sometimes think about when I repeat things that have to be repeated and yet I know that there are some in the audience who are possibly saying “I've heard that from him a number of times.” Well Mr. Spurgeon helped me out once when I read something that he had said. Because he got up one morning and he said to his audience in London “I am going to have to repeat a truth which is sounded forth from this pulpit many hundreds of times.” But he said, “I am not going to make any apologies for our repetitions seeing that the truth to be preached is one which cannot so often be proclaimed. If you lift up your eyes at night to the stars what a wonderful variety of celestial scenery is there. The astronomer can turn his telescope first to one quarter of the heavens and then to another and find an endless change in the sublimities which meet his gaze.

“Such are the doctrines of the gospel. They are full of variety and beauty and glory and yet in the heavens one or two conspicuous constellations are more often regarded by the human all that all the rest put together. The mariner looks for the Great Bear, the Pointers and the Pole star. Or if he should cross the equator he gazes on the Southern Cross. Though the stars have often been looked upon it's never thought to be superfluous that practical men should still observe them.” And so he went out to talk about the doctrines of atonement and justification as being just like these guiding stars and that we ought to frequently point them out and make sure that our children know them and that all who listen to us. Whatever else they may be mistaken about that they may be sure and be clear about these things because they are the guides of men to the

haven of freedom and eternal rest. And surely the work of the Lord Jesus in his priestly atoning work is something that everyone should be sure to have in our mind, your mind, plainly and clearly and deeply. So I'm not making an apology just telling you that we're doing this again because we need it.

Each of these three passages which have to do with the new priesthood, the new covenant, the new sacrifice tell us about something that is final. In other words, the new priesthood is the final priesthood; there will not be another priesthood. The new covenant is the final covenant; there will not be another covenant that follows that covenant. And the new sacrifice is the final sacrifice; there is not another sacrifice that will follow it. They are final sacrifices, final covenants, it's a final covenant and a final priesthood. No replacement of them is anticipated, as you read in verse 12, “That this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat then at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Now I recommend that you read through the Epistle to the Hebrews constantly, of course, because it is such a great epistle. I've often wondered about the man who wrote this. No one knows really who he was. There are some men who like to say Paul wrote it, there are some who like to say Apollos wrote it, there are some who like to say Barnabas wrote it, and there are some other guesses also but no one really knows. Now what is so interesting about it to me is that there should be someone in the early church who had so mastered the teaching of the word of God in these areas that he was able to write such a magnificent treatise as this and not be one of the apostles. It really gives us an interesting insight into the character of the earliest church that is the church taught by the apostles. They were deeply taught and this is one of the evidences of it. So the author then lets us know that there is a complete and final priesthood, covenant, and sacrifice. I'd like to turn to the passage and stop here and there and make some points that I think need to be made.

First of all, he talks about what maybe called the will of God as exhibited in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He starts out by telling us something that we ought to know because one of our series, one of our studies in this series has been that believers are not under the Law of Moses as a code. Now, I think, you can see from this that the author, at least so far as the ceremonial law, would surely agree and if you'll remember I made the point that there isn't anything in the New Testament that indicates that the law is not a unity. The Apostle Paul does not know any such division as moral law, civil and social law, and ceremonial law. To him it was law and the New Testament writers equally speak of the Law of Moses as law. They don't say they're under this part of the law, you're not under this part of the law, you may distinguish this part from the other but it's the law.

Here, of course, in the context of priesthood he is talking about the ceremonial law. He says “For the law having a shadow of good things to come.” That's one of the things that we all learn when we begin to study the New Testament and the ceremonial system. We learn that the ceremonial system was in God's marvelous wisdom, his infinite wisdom, set out as a giant series of illustrations of what the Lord Jesus Christ would do, ultimately. If you want to find biblical illustrations for the ministry of Christ you find in the ceremonial law, in the sacrifices, the priesthood, the offerings they all pointed forward to him. It was a shadow of the good things to come not the very image of the things the law pointed beyond itself to the reality in Christ and his saving work. He says the law can never with these same sacrifice which they offer continually year by year make those who approach perfect, of course not. The very fact that they are repeated indicates that they didn't do the job in the first place. They have to be repeated.

Now, there are so many illustrations of this in our society where service seems to be so missing in so many ways you yourself have many illustrations of buying something that is suppose to work and then having to take it back and having it fixed then taking it home and finding out it's not fixed and having to take it back. The very fact that you do

have to take it back indicates that it wasn't fixed. And so the very fact that the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over was a clear indication of the fact that they did not do their job. The Day of Atonement had to be repeated every year. As soon as the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement were over the festival was complete at that point Israel became guilty again and would have to look forward to the next year of doing the same thing. In fact their guilt was never assuaged by the ceremonies that were only a ceremonial way of teaching concerning the Lord who was to come.

As a matter of fact, everyday was like that. In the morning the burnt sacrifice of the lamb was an indication as soon as the sun came up it was necessary for sin to be taken care of. And then as the day went on the evening came and the evening sacrifices had to be carried out. Again the same thing, constant teaching that Israel was a nation of sinners. That was so important, so important for you and I today to realize as well that through the days we reveal the fact that the sin principle still dwells within us though we stand in a position of righteousness in the Lord Jesus Christ. So a shadow of good things to come, coming events cast their shadow before them in the ceremonial system of the Mosaic Law. He says would they not have ceased. Repetition reminds us that there is no remission of sins. The Romanist in the Mass in which we have something that constantly reminds us of the same kind of thing should at least bring home to them the fact that the way they understand the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ dims the glory of the finished work of the son of God.

Now, he adds in verse 4, well after saying there is a remembrance of sins every year “For it is not possible” in the original text that's rather emphatic “not possible is it that the blood of bulls and goats could turn away sins. But what ritual could not do the Lord Christ did.” And so not the author characteristically turns to one of the passages of the Old Testament in order to make his point, “Therefore, when he came into the world” it's interesting isn't it that he writes as if the Lord Jesus is a pre-existent being. He doesn't say when he was born, much less when he was created, but when he came into the

world. You know the Lord Jesus, I think, only once said that he was born. It was always “I came” or something similar. One time he said he was born but he had also used the expression came when he was talking to Pilate, if you’ll remember a person who might not have understood what he was talking about, and so that only time did he speak of himself as being born. He came, the pre-existent son of God.

The author of the epistle looks at him in that way, “Wherefore when he came into the world” he said. In other words he finds in the psalm, the 40th Psalm, verse 6 through verse 8, he finds words that the Lord Jesus Christ has in his own mouth. “When he came into the world he said.” You can see the assumption there of his pre-existence, the assumption of his incarnation verse 7, “Then I said behold I have come in the volume of the book it is written of me. And then an assumption in verse 12 of his ascension to heaven, “But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down at the right hand of God.” Psalm 40, it is a marvelous psalm, it is one that we don’t have time to study, of course, but perhaps you remember some of the parts of it. The point that it makes is this that saints do not live under unbroken blue skies. Sometimes we think that if we become a Christian that’s what we should experience. We should have unbroken blue skies everything marvelous everything wonderful. But that is not true. The experiences of life are not like that. There are some of us that pass through our life with remarkably little suffering, there are others that pass through life as Christians with remarkably great degrees of suffering. We have such in Believers Chapel. You know some of them. You know the suffering that they have undergone. The suffering that stretches over the years not just for a moment of two but over the years. The path that God has for each of us is different.

I had lunch today with an individual who is concerned about his wife. And her physical condition is such that portends some rather difficult times that lie ahead. So some of us live under what may be called unbroken blue skies for a time, sometimes for a lengthy time, but most of us live under changeable April ones. And in the sunlight and in

the storm the point of the psalmist of Psalm 40 is that the way of trust is the way in which we are to pass through those experiences.

Now, evidently, the author of the psalm, Psalm 40, had experienced a remarkable deliverance. He begins with you know words of something like that. In verse 1 he says, “I waited patiently for the Lord and he inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the horrible pit out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock and established my steps. He has put a new song in my mouth praise to our God many will see it and fear and will trust in the Lord. Blessed the man who makes the Lord his trust who does not respect the proud nor such as turn aside to lies. Many O Lord my God are your wonderful works which you have done and your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to you in order. If I would declare and speak of them there are more than can be numbered.” How can he express his gratitude for the deliverance that has been given him in his experiences? He cannot express his gratitude by sacrifices. The Old Testament makes that very plain. Sacrifices do not ultimately satisfy God. Sacrifices are required but it's not the sacrifice that ultimately God desires. He wants the sacrifice but he wants the sacrifice with a heart of love and trust in Him. Sometimes missed in the Old Testament but there are many passages Amos, Hosea, a couple of the Psalms, Micah they all make the point that the sacrifices themselves do not please God if that's all that the worshipper is doing offering sacrifice.

And, incidentally, that's one way in which Judaism today has sought to justify salvation by works. That is, they look and say these passages in the Old Testament tell you that the sacrifices do not, ultimately, satisfy God. Obedience satisfies him and so, therefore, we obey and we will have justification and our relationship with God through the works that we do. Whereas, the biblical method is to say that it's true that the sacrifices do not satisfy the Lord if the heart is not an obedient trusting heart. Ultimately, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who satisfies that law for us representatively and consequently

Israel now a religion of works a kind of religion in which everything is bound up in what one does has missed the boat at that very point.

But the psalmist makes the point “sacrifice and offering you did not desire but a body you have prepared for me you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings in sacrifices for sin, but I have come in the volume of the book that is written of me to do your will O God.” Psalm 40 is a typical psalm. The reason we know it’s a typical psalm is because later on the psalmist confesses his sin. And so the psalm cannot refer to our Lord directly in the fullest sense but typically. In other words David expressing thanksgiving for the deliverance that was given to him goes far beyond his own experiences by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and utters by divine inspiration truth that applies ultimately to only the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many such passages in the Old Testament typical psalms and are, ultimately, seen as only in David’s great son who is to come and this is one of them.

There is a great practical application for this that you don’t want to miss. Sometimes we as believers if the church of Jesus Christ thinks we can satisfy God by attending the Lord’s Supper, by the activities that we engage in a local church. The attendance at the Sunday school classes, the attendance at the meetings, the meeting of the meetings that have to do with have to do with church activity, so we become so involved in our activities that our relationship to the Lord is a relationship that doesn’t really exist in a practical sense. We are carrying out things we feel we must do and we find ourselves relying upon those things that we do as things that will be pleasing to the Lord. Now, of course, if we do those in the spirit in which the Lord is the concern of our hearts and out of love and trust in him we seek to please him that’s different. But I know in my own experience many times I’ve done things, many times, I have done things that people would look upon as being works that should be pleasing to the Lord stand up behind the pulpit and preach the word of God but not pleasing to the Lord if my heart is not really a trusting heart in him. So ordinances, activities, I don’t deny that they are important but the way in which we do them is certainly important.

Some years ago, many years ago now, I was going through theological seminary and I had heard Carl Armerding give a series of messages on the epistle of the Hebrews. And in the course of the messages he told a story of Hudson Armerding, his son who was just a little boy and Hudson later as president of Wheaton College as many of you know, but he was just a little boy and he said I was in my study one day and the ice cream man came down the street ringing the bells. And he said Hudson rushed into my office and stood by my desk and he said I just knew he was there looking for a nickel, you see how long ago this was a nickel would get an ice cream cone. And he said I just waited, I waited as the bells got louder and louder and then as the bells trailed off and finally went around a place around the corner and you couldn't hear them any more, then I turned to Hudson and said, “Well what's on your mind?” and he said, “Well nothing Dad just you.” He said at that point I would have emptied my pockets and given him everything I had. There is a great difference between a personal loving relationship that's what I think our Lord wants. And so that's what he talks about here.

Now the author of the epistle expounds on this about and says previously saying, verse 8 “Sacrifice and offerings, burnt offerings for sin you did not desire nor had pleasure in them which are offered according to the law.” Then he said “Behold I come to do your will O God he takes away the first that he may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” In other words the offering system is been done away with. There has not come through the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ the atoning work which is the means by which we have been sanctified. Notice how he puts it that the offering of the body of Jesus Christ has once for all. That launches him into verses 11 through 14 of a discussion of the work of Christ. It would be nice if we had a day or two to talk about this but let me just mention the high points. What he says is that there is a complete provision in the son's one penal vicarious priestly offering. Complete provision in the son's one penal vicarious priestly offer. Every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same

sacrifices which can never take away sins. But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down at the right hand of God. Verse 14, “For by one offering he has perfected forever those that are being sanctified.”

At the end of verse 10, the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, “Every priest standeth daily.” The author does not give indication that he knows of the temple. He reads the Old Testament in the light of the Mosaic record and he thinks of the tabernacle. And so he thinks of the ceremonies that have to do with the tabernacle and he sets forth the significance of them. “Every priest standeth daily.” The priestly treadmill of sacrifice performed, I believe, as Moffett called them the Levitical drudges. Think of it, over and over again the sacrifices were offered every day in the morning and in the evening. The whole system of the feasts through the years then upon every occasion of sin, all kinds of sin, sin offerings, trespass offering, peace offering, meal offering, burnt offering, and other offerings as well, drink offerings, red heifer offerings, all the offerings over and over which required an individual slay an animal bring it to the tabernacle having the priest lay his hand upon it and told him that his indemnification with the animal in the sacrifice and receiving the priest the statement of the forgiveness of sins. The daily ritual surely would have left its impress upon anyone’s mind who thought about it at all.

Now, if that’s true let’s think for a moment about today. What’s the relation of the mass to the sacrifice of the cross according to the Church of Rome? The victim is the same, the sacrifice is the same, the manner of offering alone is different in the case of the mass it is an unbloody offering. How does the Church of Rome try to avoid the charge of repeating our Lord’s sacrifice? Well the Church of Rome says that the mass does not repeat the sacrifice of our Lord but it only continues our Lord’s sacrifice. It is still one sacrifice but it has been continued down through the years. The contrast in Hebrews, of course, is between continued sacrifices on the one hand and a sacrifice offering once for all. Continued sacrifices are the kind of sacrifices of the Mosaic Law as we said

continued constantly. The moment a sacrifice has been offered there is need for a new sacrifice. One in the morning there is a need for a new one at night. On at the Day of Atonement another Day of Atonement is necessary. The Lord was laying upon every Israelite the conviction that they as a people and as individuals were sinners, were sinners. That is the greatest revelation that could ever come from God to the human heart that we are sinners. Because it is only then that we flee to the cross of Jesus Christ and we don't forget that either. Once we've become Christians we just learn more deeply what our sin really is and what it ultimately means.

Now, if that is true and then if I may also say something else, that system in the Old Testament was a system of priestly activity that was not only commended by God but guaranteed by his inspired word. In other words, Israel received a sacrificial system indisputably from the Lord. Now, if these offerings that were given to Israel and the priestly ministry by the Lord himself, if these offerings were of no service to the taking away of sin, its clear that the offerings of so called modern priests have not authority and validity whatsoever. No Roman priest can say there is Scriptural support for my priesthood. There is none. All of those whose priestly ministry was determined by the Lord God set forth in Scripture through the inspiration of the Spirit as from the Lord if even they could not remove sins without sacrifices how can a modern priest today by what he does remove sins? If Jerusalem has not sacrifice in all her flocks that can remove sins what can it help us to look to Rome or to any other place for that matter for the forgiveness of sins? If Aaron's seed cannot put away sin, shall we find to use Mr. Spurgeon's term “shall we find forgiveness from the shavelings of anti-Christ? Oh no the only means by which sin may be forgiven is by one priest, great priest, the Lord Jesus Christ and his offering.”

This man sat down the priest, the priest Chupin, often told this that the priest didn't have any chairs in the tabernacle they never sat down. They got up in the morning incidentally they left their home among the tribe of Levi, they went to the tabernacle they

engage in the priestly ministry they stood up as far as we know offering over and over again went home at night sat down at home but not in that tabernacle. They were carrying on a continuous ministry, “Every priest standeth daily.” But this priest, this priest, of a different tribe of the tribe of Judah because he is the king priest after the order of Melchizedek our author has told us, this priest has offered one sacrifice which did all of the millions of sacrifices previously could not do and then sat down. Incidentally, he didn’t have to go home either because he sat down in his home in heaven.

You ask one of those priest Mr. Spurgeon said asks one of those priests where they live, “Well we live over there in the tribe of Levi in the abode over there,” but this priest is one who sits down in heaven because it belongs to him, the second person of the triune God. “Every priest standeth daily.” This man sat down, his offering is of its own kind of *sui generis* its of its own kind its unique, its alone it’s a lone star among the stars, it’s a solitary rock in the ocean like Bass Rock in Scotland off the coast of Scotland, it stands by itself that offering.

I guess when you look at various things you know what is *sui generis*. If you’re a golfer you know that Nicklaus is *sui generis*. If you think about baseball you will think that Nolan Ryan is *sui generis*. If you don’t think that Nolan is then Babe Ruth was. Or if you are thinking about basketball, Michael Jordan is *sui generis* or football Walter Payton as a running back, *sui generis*.

Our Lord’s offering is the offering *sui generis*. There is no other offering for sin. No other way of salvation except through the death of the seed of Abraham. And further he goes on to say, “For that one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” Perfected forever what does that mean? Well that means that they are perfectly qualified for access to God, forever. Perfected, they have the access that is total complete and final, forever. Not a thousand years, forever. Never to be turned out of the New Covenant, always a member, always a member of the family of God, always in the status guaranteed by the word of God and the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are

some great passages someone ought to preach a second message on each one of these texts but we want to try and finish.

In verse 15 through verse 18, this is a very interesting passage in which he talks about the witness of the Holy Spirit after talking about the work of Christ, he says, “But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us.” How does he witness to us? Well I know that some people might say, “Well he witnesses to us in that he brings a conviction in our hearts.” Yes, that is true no doubt about that. I suggest, however, that in this case is what he means is the spirit witnesses in the word. The reason I say that is because he now cites from Jeremiah, chapter 31. The Holy Spirit is a witness to us. Where do we find our ultimate place of rest for eternal salvation. It’s in the word of God and what the word of God says about the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, that’s our ultimate hope. That’s our ultimate haven of rest, the word. So the Holy Spirit whom he regards as the author of scripture witnesses to us for after that he had said before, “This is the covenant that I will make with him. After those days, says the Lord I will put my laws in their hearts and in their minds I will write them.” Then he adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

It’s amazing that he says he will remember their sins no more. You mean to say that the Lord is actually forgotten my sins. He’s forgotten an awful lot if he has forgotten my sins. Well in one sense no and in another sense yes because, of course, he is omniscient. He knows all of these things long before came to pass. He knew exactly what would happen after they had happened, after I’ve had them all washed away in the blood of Christ. He, of course, knows what they were. He doesn’t know less than I do and I remember them. But the sins in which he doesn’t remember them is that he doesn’t remember them as sins that condemn us. In that sense, they are forgotten. God has no remembrance of them. In other words, when sins are truly repented and confession is made, those sins are forgotten so far as their condemnation is concerned. Now how often have you done what I’ve done? Ask God for forgiveness for the same sin more than

once. How often have you done that? Don't raise your hands. I know you've done it. If you're seeking to walk with the Lord, I know you've done that. But really in the light of the scriptures if we truly have acknowledged our sin, truly acknowledged it, truly confessed it, we are given by God the right to believe that they have been forgiven. And that, of course, glorifies the greatness of the work of the son of God that they could be forgiven the sins that I have been guilty of.

Finally in verse 18 he says, “Now were remission.” Incidentally, I don't have time to talk about this I wish it were possible, but what he has done with the covenant, the New Covenant, is to cite the first part of it but then to skip the part in between and come to it's climatic statement because he wants to lay stress on that ear. Then he adds “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” Now verse 18 says, “Now where there is remission of these there is no longer an offering for sin.” No more remembrance, no more offering, no more conscious of sins.

“This truth,” as Mr. Spurgeon also says, “Might well make David dance before the ark of the Lord.” No more offering for sin, forgiven, gloriously forgiven, for sins that we have committed. Other passages in Scripture tell us that we are established positively in the possession of the righteousness that satisfies the claims of infinite eternal God in heaven. What a magnificent thing it is to be justified before God. There is not an amen in this congregation. I hope there is one within your heart; it should be within your heart always. One of the commentators said, “This is the last, in fact, I want to cite that word he says, “It's the last, the decisive word of the argument of this epistle. This is the last decisive word of the argument the eight, ten chapters have reached their climax, now where there is remission of these there is no longer any offering for sin.” This is the offering that unmask the mask this is the offering that impoverishes penance for penance is just another way of saying we must do a little bit to be forgiven. In other words, we take away from the glory of Jesus Christ's saving work all of his saving work; it's a thing that empties remorse. Protestants sometimes fall into the habit that we must feel remorse

for our sins in order to be saved. No, No, what you are really doing is to suggest something that I must do as well as well as what Christ has done and so in that sense, in that sense, we detract from the glory of the son of God.

If you feel that you are a sinner don't wait to you feel remorse to go the Lord. If you feel that God has pointed out to you that you're a sinner flee to him immediately and receive the forgiveness of your sins. And if it is a genuine forgiveness there will flow remorse to some extent until you realize how great that forgiveness is.

Well let me close by saying what he stressed is the finality of the redemptive work, it's perfect, its eternal. Phillip was right, we've found him at whom Moses and the prophets did write. And incidentally, modern theologians like to talk about the uncomfortable only. What do they mean by that? They mean that if anybody theologian or common Christian talks about salvation being born through Christ and to have to preach that to the general populace makes us uncomfortable because what we are suggesting is that there is salvation only in one person. Does that make you uncomfortable? No, it doesn't make me uncomfortable except I must confess in the presence of some of my non-believing friends to have to say, “Jesus is the way to truth in life, no man cometh under the Father but by him.” Sometimes you have to overcome that sense of that uncomfortable only and express the truth. But here is the sacrifice final, perfect, eternal there is no other way to the Lord God.

Now last time I read you some words from H.A. Ironside and I'm going to read another experience that Dr. Ironside had because it fits in. It fits in also with something I heard on the radio today as I was coming home. H.A. Ironside was a Bible teacher among the Christian brethren, and also he founded a Christian bookstore in San Francisco or Oakland that was a very large Christian bookstore one of the largest on the West coast, The Western Book and Tract Co. He was the one who was the manager of it and owner of it I believe in the beginning. He had a lot of interesting experiences because he was with the Salvation Army, he also ministered among the Indians, he was out working

among the average person on the streets talking about the Lord, preaching on the street corners, he had all kinds of experiences that were most interesting. This is one he talks about. He says, “He was sitting at his desk which commanded a view of the entire store when he observed the most singular looking individual enter the door and walk up the center aisle toward the office. He was a tall lean figure with long iron gray hair worn Buffalo Bill style, a grizzled beard that almost reached to his waist and a fanatical eye that would challenge attention anywhere. He said I scented a heretic of some kind and the closer he came the stronger the scent for evidently belonged to the great unwashed.

He came briskly up the steps that separate the shop from the office and he stood over me for a moment or two when I was writing for I felt an instinctive aversion which I had difficulty in overcoming. Suddenly, he broke the silence by saying, ‘I perceive sir that you are evidently a truth seeker.’ ‘Not at all,’ I answered, ‘I’m not a truth seeker. I already found him who is the way the truth and the life.’ ‘Do you mean that you have nothing more to learn that you know all truth?’ ‘No but I know him and whom has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge so I am no longer searching for truth but seeking to get better acquainted with the truth as it is revealed in the Lord Jesus.’ ‘Well sir I am always seeking the truth and I am ready to learn from anyone that can teach me.’ ‘Yes well I believe I was reading of you the other day,’ Dr. Ironside said. ‘Me, pray where did you read of me?’

“He said, ‘In my Bible in 2 Timothy 3:7 it speaks of those who are ever learning and are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.’ ‘That has reference to me sir,’ the man said. ‘Well I thought you said you were always seeking, so I presumed you have never yet attained the knowledge of the truth.’ He looked at me rather severely and said, ‘I don’t think you have any idea who I am?’ ‘I do not,’ I said, ‘I do not recall having met you or heard of you before.’ ‘Well,’ he declared very impressively, ‘I am one of the one hundred forty-four thousand.’ It was hard to keep from showing my amusement but I inquired as politely as I could, ‘Which tribe please?’ ‘Tribe what do you mean?’ ‘Well my

Bible tells me that the hundred forty-four thousand would consist of twelve thousand out of each of the tribes of Israel to which of these do you belong?’ ‘The Lord knows sir, I do not.’ ‘Then you cannot blame me if I do not accept your own unsupported statement that you belong to that mystic company?’ He paused for a moment in deep thought and then explained ‘Do you know that the first resurrection has taken place already?’ ‘No,’ I answered, ‘I do not.’ ‘But it has sir and now my resurrection body is no more subject to death.’”

You know this morning I was coming from Royal Lane, I don’t think it has anything to do with Royal Lane and Preston, but was listening to KRLD, and there is a group of people who were advertising a meeting called, it sounded like the flame. And these individuals have a new way of life by which you never die. And they went on to say it’s a matter of the way you look at life. You look at life in the way they want to tell you to look at life you will not die. And if you want to know about that you can come to the meeting and pay six hundred dollars and they will tell you about it. [Laughter] I thought of this particular incident.

“He was almost vehement as said this and I wondered if I was dealing with a madman, but I ventured to inquire as blandly as I could, ‘Is that it that you have with you?’ ‘It is sir this body is now immortal and glorified.’ Dr. Ironside said ‘I am very much disappointed if that is so.’ ‘Why do you say that sir?’ ‘Because I thought resurrection body would be very beautiful, I never dreamed it would look like that.’ The change in the resurrected man was startling, he said, his eyes flashed, he swung his arms in indignation and began to call out fearful maledictions on my head. For a glorified man his language was amazing earthly and carnal. He shook the dust off his feet and went on to find out he was one of the Christian Israelites.”

Well, we don’t have any hope of that kind of life in this life. We look forward to the life that is to come and we know that we have life in the presence of the Lord by virtue of that perfect eternal sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think it is so interesting to

me that this author concludes this particular account by referring to the New Covenant. And he refers to the New Covenant as a covenant that has been consummated, ratified and as you can know it was ratified at the Last Supper when the Lord Jesus took the wine and said, “This cup is the New Covenant in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of their sins.” In the death of our Lord on Calvary’s cross, the New Covenant has been ratified. And so I ask you if that covenant has been ratified shall not the Abrahamic and all of its promises even inclusive of the land, the Davidic covenant, the king and throne eternal do we not have reason to believe that they will also be fulfilled as set forth in Holy Scripture? I believe that we do.

Our time is up. If you’re here tonight, of course, and you’d never believe in our Lord, we hope that this great passage and its appeal may touch your heart that you may turn to him.

Let’s close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for these magnificent passages from Holy Scripture, so comforting to us, so uplifting, and so encouraging. And we know, Lord, that if it is true we have received forgiveness of our sins forever, then as redeemed individuals that should be reflected in our lives. May it be so.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.