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A Guide to the Systematic Study of the Bible

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### The Chapters of Hebrews

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## **Hebrews**

#### **SECTION OUTLINE ONE (HEBREWS 1)**

Hebrews opens with a discussion of Christ as the selected one and the superior one.

- I. CHRIST, THE SELECTED ONE (1:1-3): The Father has chosen his Son to minister in four all-important areas.
  - A. Revelation (1:1-2a)
    - 1. In the Old Testament, God revealed himself through his messengers (1:1).
    - 2. In the New Testament, God revealed himself through his Messiah (1:2a).
  - B. Creation (1:2b-3)
    - 1. The Son made the universe (1:2b).
    - 2. The Son maintains the universe (1:3b).
  - C. Representation (1:3a): Jesus is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of God's being.
  - D. Purification (1:3c): Jesus died to cleanse us from our sins.
- II. CHRIST, THE SUPERIOR ONE (1:4-14): Christ is superior to the angels in three important ways.
  - A. In regard to his relationship (1:4-7): The Father has declared Jesus to be his unique Son.
  - B. In regard to his reign (1:8-12)
    - 1. It will be a righteous reign (1:8-9).
    - 2. It will be an eternal reign (1:10-12).
  - C. In regard to his reward (1:13-14): The Father has promised to make Jesus' enemies his footstool.

#### **SECTION OUTLINE TWO (HEBREWS 2)**

This chapter contains a warning from Christ against drifting away from the faith and a discussion of the work of Christ.

- I. THE WARNING FROM CHRIST (2:1-4): This warning has to do with God's salvation.
  - A. The command (2:1-2)
    - 1. Don't drift from God's message of truth (2:1).
    - 2. Don't disobey God's message of truth (2:2).
  - B. The communicators (2:3): This salvation was preached by both Jesus and his apostles.
  - C. The confirmation (2:4): The gospel message was confirmed by signs and wonders.
- II. THE WORK OF CHRIST (2:5-18)
  - A. His sovereign ministry (2:5-8a)
    - 1. Christ created all people (2:5-6a).
    - 2. Christ cares for all people (2:6b-7).
    - 3. Christ commissioned all people (2:8a): Adam was put in charge of God's original creation.
  - B. His submissive ministry (2:9a): Christ agreed to come to earth and become "lower than the angels."
  - C. His saving ministry (2:8b-10)
    - 1. The rebellion (2:8b): Sin caused people to forfeit their control over nature.
    - 2. The redemption (2:9b-10): Christ died on the cross for everyone.
  - D. His sanctifying ministry (2:11-13): Christ now lives to make us holy.
  - E. His subduing ministry (2:14-15): By his death Jesus broke the power of Satan, who once held the power of death.
  - F. His sympathizing ministry (2:16-18): Having once suffered, Jesus is now able and willing to help those who are suffering.

#### **SECTION OUTLINE THREE (HEBREWS 3)**

Jesus is compared to Moses and is declared to be greater than Moses. A warning is given from the Holy Spirit against the sin of unbelief.

- I. THE WORTHINESS OF THE SAVIOR (3:1-6): Jesus is compared and contrasted to Moses.
  - A. The comparison (3:2)
    - 1. Jesus was faithful to God (3:2a).
    - 2. Moses was faithful to God (3:2b).
  - B. The contrast (3:3-6)
    - 1. Moses was a faithful servant in God's house (3:5).
    - 2. Jesus is the faithful son over God's house (3:3-4, 6).
  - C. The conclusion (3:1): Jesus is greater, so fix your eyes on him.
- II. THE WARNING BY THE SPIRIT (3:7-19): This warning has to do with the terrible sin of unbelief.
  - A. The example of unfaithfulness (3:9-11, 16-19)
    - 1. Israel's sin in the wilderness (3:9-10): They allowed unbelief to turn their hearts against God.
    - 2. Israel's sentence in the wilderness (3:11, 16-19): An entire generation died in the desert and did not enter the Promised Land.
  - B. The exhortation to faithfulness (3:7-8, 12-15)
    - 1. When you hear God's Word, heed God's Word (3:7-8, 15).
    - 2. Encourage one another daily (3:12-14).

#### **SECTION OUTLINE FOUR (HEBREWS 4)**

God promises rest for his people.

- I. THE PROMISE OF GOD (4:1-11): This promise involves the rest that God has prepared for his people.
  - A. The whereabouts (4:3b, 5-6, 8-10)
    - 1. God's Old Testament rest (4:3b, 5-6): This was the Promised Land, which Israel failed to enter due to unbelief.
    - 2. God's New Testament rest (4:8-10): This is the place of his perfect will, which is available for all believers.
  - B. The way (4:2-3a): "Only we who believe can enter his place of rest."
  - C. The witnesses (4:4, 7)
    - 1. Moses spoke of these rests (Gen. 2:2) (4:4).
    - 2. David spoke of these rests (Ps. 95:11) (4:7).
  - D. The wisdom (4:1, 11): Guided by godly fear, we are to do our utmost to enter into this rest.
- II. THE POWER OF GOD (4:12-13)
  - A. What it is (4:12a-b)
    - 1. Its definition (4:12a): It is the spoken and written Word of God.
    - 2. Its description (4:12b): It is living, active, and sharper than any double-edged sword.
  - B. What it does (4:12c-13)
    - 1. It exposes all thoughts and desires (4:12c).
    - 2. It exposes all humankind (4:13).
- III. THE PRIEST OF GOD (4:14-16)
  - A. Who he is (4:14a): He is Jesus, the Son of God.
  - B. What he is (4:14b-15): He is our great High Priest.
    - 1. He once was tempted in all areas (4:15).
    - 2. He now can help us in any area (4:14b).
  - C. Where he is (4:16): At the very throne of grace.

#### SECTION OUTLINE FIVE (HEBREWS 5)

Christ, the great High Priest, is compared to Aaron, the first high priest.

- I. THE REQUIREMENTS IN REGARD TO THE PRIESTS (5:1-10): The author of Hebrews compares and contrasts the high priestly ministries of both Aaron and Christ.
  - A. Comparisons (5:1-4)
    - 1. Both were selected by God from among men (5:1a, 4).
    - 2. Both were appointed to represent people before God (5:1b).
    - 3. Both were to pray and offer up sacrifices (5:1c).
    - 4. Both were to demonstrate compassion (5:2a).
    - 5. Both experienced infirmities of the flesh (5:2b-3).
  - B. Contrasts (5:5-10)
    - 1. Only Christ is called God's Son (5:5).
    - 2. Only Christ was given an everlasting priesthood (5:6a).
    - 3. Only Christ was made a priest after the order of Melchizedek (5:6b, 9-10).
    - 4. Only Christ cried out to God in Gethsemane "with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could deliver him out of death" (5:7-8).

#### II. THE REBUKE IN REGARD TO THE PEOPLE (5:11-14)

- A. The frustration (5:11-12a)
  - 1. The author has much to say, but his readers are slow to learn (5:11).
  - 2. They should be teachers but instead need to be taught (5:12a).
- B. The food (5:12b-14)
  - 1. Baby believers can be fed only milk (5:12b-13).
  - 2. Mature believers can easily digest solid food (5:14).

#### **SECTION OUTLINE SIX (HEBREWS 6)**

The author of Hebrews challenges his readers to strive for spiritual maturity and writes about how such maturity may be obtained.

- I. THE APPEAL FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (6:1-12)
- A. The author's challenge (6:1-3): The writer of Hebrews issues a twofold challenge to his readers.
  - 1. Don't go backward (6:1-2): He urges them to stop going over the same old ground again and again.
    - a. In the importance of turning from sin and toward God (6:1)
    - b. In the importance of baptism, the laying on of hands, the resurrection, and judgment (6:2)
  - 2. Do go forward (6:3): Push on to maturity in Christ.
- B. The author's concern (6:4-8): He warns in regard to a dreadful situation.
  - 1. The impossibility in this situation (6:4-6)
    - a. The who (6:4b-5): Those who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit and have tasted of God's Word.
    - b. The what (6:6a): After experiencing this, they turn from God.
    - c. The why (6:4a, 6b): These people cannot be brought back to repentance, for they crucify the Son of God all over again.
  - 2. The illustration for this situation (6:7-8): The author refers to a piece of land to illustrate his point.
    - a. When the land is fruitful, it is blessed (6:7).
    - b. When the land is fruitless, it is cursed (6:8).
- C. The author's confidence (6:9-12): He is confident his warning does not apply to his readers.
- II. THE ANCHOR FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (6:13-20): This desired maturity is assured.
  - A. Because of the Father's promise (6:13-18)
    - 1. God promised to bless Abraham, and he did (6:13-15).
    - 2. God promised to bless us, and he will (6:16-18).
  - B. Because of the Savior's priesthood (6:19-20)

#### **SECTION OUTLINE SEVEN (HEBREWS 7)**

The author identifies and equates the priesthood of Jesus with that of Melchizedek.

- I. A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (7:1-3)
  - A. The person of Melchizedek (7:1a, 2b-3)
    - 1. Who he was (7:2b): His name means "king of justice," and he was also the "king of peace."
    - 2. What he did (7:1a): He was both priest and king over the city of Salem.
    - 3. Where he came from (7:3): There is no record of either his birth or his death.
  - B. The preeminence of Melchizedek (7:1b-2a)
    - 1. The battle (7:2a): Following the defeat of his enemies, Abraham met Melchizedek and paid tithes to him.
    - 2. The blessing (7:1b): Melchizedek blessed Abraham.
- II. A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (7:4-28): The author lists the various characteristics of Jesus, who, according to the Father's decree, is to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek (see Ps. 110:4). Thus, his priesthood would be:
  - A. Royal (as was that of Melchizedek) (see 7:1)
  - B. Superior (7:4-10)
    - 1. To whom? (7:5-7): To Levi, founder of the Levitical priesthood.
    - 2. Why? (7:4, 8-10)
      - a. Abraham was the ancestor of Levi (7:9).
      - b. The yet unborn Levi thus tithed to Melchizedek while still in the loins of Abraham (7:4, 8, 10).
  - C. Independent (7:11-15)
    - 1. Independent of the law (7:11-12).
    - 2. Independent of the tribe of Levi (7:13-15): Christ came from the tribe of Judah.
  - D. Everlasting (7:16-17)
  - E. Guaranteed (7:20-22): The Father himself took an oath concerning this.
  - F. Continuous (7:23)
  - G. Permanent (7:24)
  - H. Holy (7:26)
  - I. All-sufficient (7:18-19, 25, 27)
  - J. Flawless (7:28)

#### **SECTION OUTLINE EIGHT (HEBREWS 8)**

The author discusses the threefold security of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant.

- I. ITS SANCTUARY IS SUPERIOR (8:1-2).
- A. The place is better (8:1): It is located in the heavenly sanctuary.
- B. The priest is better (8:2): Jesus himself ministers in this sanctuary.
- II. ITS SACRIFICE IS SUPERIOR (8:3-4).
  - A. The Levitical priests offered up animals in the earthly sanctuary (8:4).
  - B. The Lamb of God offers up himself in the heavenly sanctuary (8:3).
- III. ITS SECURITY IS SUPERIOR (8:5-13).
  - A. The old agreement was mediated by Moses (8:5, 7-8a).
    - 1. It was ruined by Israel's sin (8:7-8a).
    - 2. It was written on dead stones (see Ex. 32:15).
  - B. The new agreement is mediated by Christ (8:6, 8b-13).
    - 1. It is restored by Jesus' sacrifice (8:6, 8b-9).
    - 2. It is written on living hearts (8:10-13).

#### **SECTION OUTLINE NINE (HEBREWS 9)**

The features that relate to both the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries are discussed in this chapter.

- I. THE REVIEW OF EACH SANCTUARY (9:1-15)
  - A. The earthly sanctuary (9:1-10)
    - 1. The information (9:1-7)

- a. The objects in the Tabernacle (9:1-5): The author describes the location of the gold lampstands, the incense altar, etc.
- b. The overseers of the Tabernacle (9:6-7): The duties of both priests and the high priest are listed.
- 2. The illustration (9:8-10): The Holy Spirit used the many regulations surrounding the use of the Tabernacle to illustrate the fatal weakness of the earthly Tabernacle-namely, its sacrifices could not cleanse the hearts of the people.
- B. The heavenly sanctuary (9:11-15): This sanctuary is superior to the earthly one in four areas.
  - 1. The person offering the sacrifice (9:11): It is Jesus Christ himself.
  - 2. The preciousness of the sacrifice (9:12b): He offered his own blood.
  - 3. The permanence of the sacrifice (9:12a): It was done only once and will last for all time.
  - 4. The power of the sacrifice (9:12c-15): It brings about eternal redemption.
- II. THE RATIFICATION OF EACH SANCTUARY (9:16-28): Both sanctuaries had to be purified and ratified by the blood of a sacrifice.
  - A. The earthly sanctuary (9:16-22)
    - 1. The sprinkler of this blood (9:16-19a): Moses.
    - 2. The source of this blood (9:19b): An animal.
    - 3. The summary of this blood (9:20-22): It could never take away sins.
  - B. The heavenly sanctuary (9:23-28)
    - 1. The sprinkler of this blood (9:23): Christ.
    - 2. The source of this blood (9:25-26a): Himself.
    - 3. The summary of this blood (9:24, 26b-28): Here the author gives us a threefold summary of the Savior's work.
      - a. He once appeared to die for us (9:26b-28a).
      - b. He now appears to pray for us (9:24).
      - c. He will appear to rule over us (9:28b).

#### **SECTION OUTLINE TEN (HEBREWS 10)**

This chapter begins with a comparison and concludes with a challenge.

- I. THE COMPARISON (10:1-18): Here the blood of earthly lambs is compared with the blood of the heavenly Lamb.
- A. The inferiority of earthly lambs (10:1-4, 11)
  - 1. The frequency of these sacrifices (10:1-3, 11a): The priest had to offer up animals again and again.
  - 2. The failure of these sacrifices (10:4, 11 b): They could never take away sin.
- B. The superiority of the heavenly Lamb (10:5-10, 12-18)
  - 1. The purpose (10:5-10): Jesus came for one purpose-namely, to offer up himself.
  - 2. The permanence (10:12, 14): His offering was once for all time, never to be repeated.
  - 3. The patience (10:13): "He waits until his enemies are humbled as a footstool under his feet."
  - 4. The purification (10:15-18): Someday he will purify the hearts of unbelieving Israel.
- II. THE CHALLENGE (10:19-39): This challenge is in the form of a fourfold exhortation.
  - A. Approach the throne of God (10:19-22): Christ's sacrifice allows us to boldly petition God's throne.
  - B. Advance the people of God (10:23-25): Believers are to be kind and helpful to each other.
  - C. Avoid the judgment of God (10:26-31).
    - 1. The contrast (10:26-29)
      - a. A reminder of how God once punished those who rejected the Law of Moses (10:26-28)
      - b. A reminder of how God will punish those who reject the Lamb of God (10:29)
    - 2. The certainty (10:30-31): We are assured God will judge his people.
  - D. Acknowledge the faithfulness of God (10:32-39).
    - 1. His past faithfulness (10:32-34): The author urges believers not to forget God's care for them during a former period of suffering.
    - 2. His permanent faithfulness (10:35-39): Whatever the present and future holds, they can

depend on his continuous care.

#### **SECTION OUTLINE ELEVEN (HEBREWS 11)**

This is the famous faith chapter.

#### I. THE EXPLANATION OF FAITH (11:1-3, 6)

- A. Its nature (11:1-2)
  - 1. "It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen" (11:1a).
  - 2. "It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see" (11:1b).
- B. Its necessity (11:3, 6)
  - 1. With it people in the Old Testament were approved by God (11:2).
  - 2. With it we are able to believe the power of God (11:3): This is especially true in regard to his creative power.
  - 3. Without it we are unable to please the person of God (11:6).

#### II. THE EXAMPLES OF FAITH (11:4-5, 7-40)

- A. Who they were (11:4a, 5a, 7a, 8a-11a, 12, 17-18, 20a, 21a, 22a, 23a, 24, 27a, 28a, 31a, 32): Sixteen people of faith are named, and many others are referred to as well.
  - 1. Abel (11:4a)
  - 2. Enoch (11:5a)
  - 3. Noah (11:7a)
  - 4. Abraham (11:8a, 9, 12, 17-18)
  - 5. Sarah (11:11a)
  - 6. Isaac (11:20a)
  - 7. Jacob (11:21a)
  - 8. Joseph (11:22a)
  - 9. Moses' parents (11:23a)
  - 10. Moses (11:24, 27a, 28a)
  - 11. The people of Israel (11:29a, 30a)
  - 12. Rahab (11:31a)
  - 13. Gideon (11:32a)
  - 14. Barak (11:32b)
  - 15. Samson (11:32c)
  - 16. Jephthah (11:32d)
  - 17. David (11:32e)
  - 18. Samuel (11:32f)
  - 19. All the prophets (11:32g)
- B. What they did (11:4b, 5b, 7b, 8b, 11b, 19, 20b, 21b, 22b, 23b, 25, 27b, 28b-30, 31b, 33-35a)
  - 1. Abel gave the Lord an acceptable offering (11:4b).
  - 2. Enoch left the earth without dying (11:5b).
  - 3. Noah survived the great Flood (11:7b).
  - 4. Abraham inherited a land (11:8b).
  - 5. Sarah bore a son through a barren womb and began a nation (11:11b).
  - 6. Abraham believed that God could raise the dead (11:19).
  - 7. Isaac and Jacob both predicted the future (11:20b, 21b).
  - 8. Joseph anticipated the Exodus long before it happened (11:22b).
  - 9. Moses' parents defied the king of Egypt (11:23b).
  - 10. Moses forsook the pleasures of sin (11:25).
  - 11. Moses left the land of Egypt and was not afraid of the king (11:27b).
  - 12. The people of Israel kept the Passover (11:28b).
  - 13. The people of Israel crossed the Red Sea (11:29).
  - 14. The people of Israel shouted down a city (11:30).
  - 15. Rahab protected some Hebrew spies (11:31b).
  - 16. The prophets and judges subdued kingdoms, shut the mouths of lions, quenched flames, escaped the sword, exchanged weakness for strength, put enemy armies to flight, and a few even raised the dead (11:33-35a).

- C. What they endured (11:35b-38)
  - 1. Terrible torture (11:35b)
  - 2. Ridicule (11:36a)
  - 3. Cruel flogging (11:36b)
  - 4. Imprisonment (11:36c)
  - 5. Stoning (11:37a)
  - 6. Being sawn in two (11:37b)
  - 7. Death by the sword (11:37c)
  - 8. Extreme poverty (11:37d-38)
- D. Why they endured (11:10, 13-15, 16b, 26, 35c)
  - 1. They saw the invisible City of God (11:10, 13-15, 16b).
  - 2. They believed that suffering for the sake of Christ was better than having all the riches of this world (11:26).
  - 3. They looked forward to their own resurrection (11:35c).
- E. What they received (11:16a, 39-40)
  - 1. In the past (11:16a, 39): The earthly and temporary approval of God.
  - 2. In the future (11:40): The heavenly and eternal approval of God.

#### **SECTION OUTLINE TWELVE (HEBREWS 12)**

The author compares a godly life to a great race and explains to his readers the reasons behind God's discipline. He again warns against the sin of unbelief.

- I. THE CONTEST (12:1-4)
  - A. The race (12:1): We are to faithfully run the spiritual race God has marked out for each of us.
  - B. The role model (12:2-3)
    - 1. Who he is (1 2:2a): We are to fix our eyes on Jesus, the start and finish of our faith.
    - 2. What he did (12:2b-3): He endured the opposition of sinners and died on the cross.
    - 3. Why he did it (12:2c): Because of the joy he knew would be his.
    - 4. Where he is now (12:2d): At God's right hand.
  - C. The reassurance (12:4): The readers are informed they have not suffered as Christ suffered.
- II. THE CHASTENING (12:5-13): Divine discipline is the theme of this passage.
  - A. The relationship (12:7b-10)
    - 1. The disciplinarian (12:9-10): The heavenly Father himself.
    - 2. The disciplined (12:7b-8): All believers. As earthly fathers discipline their children, so the heavenly Father disciplines his children.
  - B. The reminder (12:5a): The readers have forgotten Solomon's words concerning this in Proverbs 3:11-12.
  - C. The reaction (12:5b-5c, 7a): Believers are urged to respond positively to discipline.
    - 1. Negative reactions (12:5b-5c)
      - a. "Don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you" (12:5b).
      - b. "Don't be discouraged when he corrects you" (12:5c).
    - 2. Positive reaction (12:7a): "Remember that God is treating you as his own children."
  - D. The reasons (12:6)
    - 1. To prove we are his children (12:6b)
    - 2. To prove his love (12:6a)
  - E. The rewards (12:11)
    - 1. Discipline produces righteousness (12:11 b).
    - 2. Discipline produces peace (12:11a).
  - F. The renewal (12:12-13)
    - 1. "Take a new grip with your tired hands and stand firm on your shaky legs" (12:12).
    - 2. "Mark out a straight path for your feet" (12:13).
- III. THE CHALLENGES (12:14-17)
  - A. The author's exhortation (12:14-15)
    - 1. "Try to live in peace with everyone" (12:14a).

- 2. "Seek to live a clean and holy life" (12:14b).
- 3. "Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief rises up among you" (12:15).
- B. The author's example (12:16-17): Esau is held up as a tragic example of what not to do.
  - 1. He was immoral (12:16a).
  - 2. He was godless (12:16b).
  - 3. He despised his birthright (12:16c-17).
- IV. THE CONTRASTS (12:18-24): Two mountains are contrasted.
  - A. Mount Sinai (12:18-21)
    - 1. The person (12:21): Moses.
    - 2. The principle (12:18-20): The law of God.
  - B. Mount Zion (12:22-24)
    - 1. The person (12:24a): Christ.
    - 2. The principle (12:22-23, 24b): The grace of God.
- V. THE CAUTION (12:25-27): The author solemnly warns his readers about the terrible results of unbelief.
- VI. THE CONSUMING FIRE (12:28-29)
  - A. Our God is a coming King (12:28).
  - B. Our God is a consuming fire (12:29).

#### SECTION OUTLINE THIRTEEN (HEBREWS 13)

The writer of Hebrews concludes with words about love, leaders, legalism, and lordship.

- I. A WORD ABOUT LOVE (13:1-6)
  - A. Positive (13:1-4): Whom we are to love.
    - 1. Each other (13:1)
    - 2. Strangers (13:2)
    - 3. Prisoners (13:3)
    - 4. Our spouse (13:4)
  - B. Negative (13:5-6)
    - 1. What we are not to love (13:5a): Money.
    - 2. Why we are not to love it (13:5b-6): We are to be satisfied with what we have.
      - a. God has promised never to forsake us (13:5b).
      - b. God has promised to be our helper (13:6).
- II. A WORD ABOUT LEADERS (13:7, 17-19, 22-25)
  - A. The author tells his readers to honor and obey the spiritual leaders of their church (13:7, 17).
    - 1. Let them serve as role models (13:7).
    - 2. Submit to their authority (13:17).
  - B. The author tells his readers to pray for the spiritual leaders outside their church (13:18-19, 22-25).
    - 1. He refers to himself (13:18-19, 22).
    - 2. He refers to Timothy (13:23-25).
- III. A WORD ABOUT LEGALISM (13:9-11): What altar and sacrifice should the believer be associated with?
  - A. Negative (13:11): Not the altar in the Tabernacle.
  - B. Positive (13:9-10): The altar at Calvary.
- IV. A WORD ABOUT LORDSHIP (13:8, 12-16, 20-21)
  - A. The Shepherd of the fold (13:8, 12, 20-21)
    - 1. Who he is (13:8): He is Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
    - 2. What he has done (13:12, 20-21)
      - a. He once redeemed us (13:12, 20).

- b. He now equips us (13:21).
- B. The sheep in the fold (13:13-16)1. We are to live for him down here (13:13, 15-16).
  - a. We are to suffer for him (13:13).
  - b. We are to sacrifice to him (13:15-16).
    - (1) The sacrifice of our words (13:15)
    - (2) The sacrifice of our works (13:16)
  - 2. We are to look forward to living with him up there (13:14): This world is not our home.