

Epistle of First Peter XII

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What we're going to do is finish up 1-Peter 3:22 and then we'll get right on into the fourth chapter, which talks about suffering and the difficulties of overcoming while you're in the world. It's talking about Christ and that everything that we do is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- That's why we have *hope*
- That's why we have *love*
- That's why we have *faith*
- That's why we have *salvation*

This is what Peter is talking about here, how that Christ is at the right hand of God, and with Christ at the right hand of God, we do not need to hold back in fear; we do not need to hold back with being able to wonder if we're going to be saved, because Christ is going to save us—without a doubt.

1-Peter 3:22: "Who has gone into heaven *and* is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been *put in* subjection to Him." There is not one thing—*not one thing*—that Christ cannot overcome. There is not one thing that we need to worry about as far as being able to have Christ with us, even though it's in our sufferings and our sufferings may be very prolonged and very difficult.

Let's go to Colossians the second chapter and let's see why Christ was made over all principalities. And this is really something for us to understand. You're not to worry about those who are in the world. You're not to worry about Satan and his demons. Obviously, *we need to stand with the full armor of God*, that is absolutely true. We will see exactly what was the thing that conquered all of that; because the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His death conquered more than just sin. Put Him in a situation that was more than just having overcome. Put Him in a situation then where He showed that, as God in the flesh, that He could overcome Satan the devil; He could overcome the principalities; He could overcome the powers; He could overcome the rulers and the darkness of this world. And that's very important to know.

God *is* God, which Christ was before He became human. He could overcome all of them with very little difficulty because God is all powerful—right? Then if He came and took on the form of an angel—which Heb. 2 says He didn't take on the form of an angel, but was made lower than the angels—He still could probably overcome all the angelic hosts and all the angelic beings, and all that Satan the devil has done. But God did it with a handicap. Now, those of you who play golf, you understand a handicap. That is, if you receive the

handicap, your opponent says, 'I'm so much better than you that I'm going to give you a ten stroke handicap.' Now, for most of us that would be great. So, what God did, He gave Himself a handicap, as it were. He became a human being. Took upon Himself 'the law of sin and death' and being filled with the Holy Spirit was able to overcome everything. So therefore, He defeated Satan the devil in a position, you might say that was inferior to Satan the devil—Satan being a spirit being, Christ in the flesh being the Son of God, was in an inferior position as far as power of His being was concerned. Yes, He had all power from God the Father.

We find it here in Colossians 2:15, and it talks about how He overcame every one of these things. After it says 'nailing it to His cross'—that is *the consequences of sin*: "After stripping the principalities and the powers... [He took away the power of sin from them. And that's why we are free from sin. We don't have to yield to it. We don't have to give into it. Yes, we have to overcome it. But He spoiled them.] ...He made a public spectacle of them... [In other words, Satan thought that when Christ died that that was his victory. But when Christ died and was resurrected, that was God's victory!] ...*and* has triumphed over them in it [the crucifixion]." Then it goes on with the rest of it there.

Colossians 1:16—this reiterated again: "Because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the body, the church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence" (vs 16-18). Why? *Because Christ humbled Himself to endure the suffering of the cross!*

So therefore, in that humility, and in being able to remain totally faithful to God the Father and having never sinned, He conquered *all* of the principalities, *all* of the powers, and was raised to sit at the right hand of God. So when we come to Christ, we have tremendous power there for us—and that's what Peter is trying to tell us here; and it was all put in subjection to Him.

Let's see a little bit more about this. Let's go to the book of Acts, and let's follow through several things in the book of Acts, to show how that Peter and the apostles preached *Christ at the right hand of God*. That symbolizes the utilizing and having the very power of God Himself.

Acts 2:25: “For David speaks concerning Him, ‘I foresaw the Lord before Me continually; for He is at My right hand, so that I may not be moved.’ In this particular case David is saying that God was right there to be with Him [Christ] at his right. So the reason that Peter is saying this for us is so that we know that Christ is for us and that He, yes, can be on our right hand, just as David said.

Verse 33: “Therefore, having been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this that you are now seeing and hearing.” That has to do with the Feast of Pentecost.

Acts 5:29—so we get the whole context of what we have here. “But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said... [While they were still preaching in the name of Jesus when the priests and the scribes and all of those authorities of Jerusalem at the temple ordered them not to.] ...‘We are obligated to obey God rather than men.’”

That’s why Peter again is saying here that we have an appeal to God, through Christ, for a good conscience; because Christ is at the right hand of God. Peter is consistent in everything he teaches and preaches here.

He answered and said, v 30: “We are obligated to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed by hanging *Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel” (vs 30-31). This shows how the whole operation and summary of God is working in our lives through repentance, through forgiveness, through God’s love, through God’s grace and so forth.

Hebrews is a very interesting and powerful book in the way that it was written, the way that it is presented, the way that it lays out for us the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and what Christ has done and how He did it being at the right hand of God, our High Priest forever and ever.

Hebrews 1:3: “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person... [that is of God the Father] ...and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins...” That’s a very interesting phrase. You look at it. Christ is the One Who created all human beings, so therefore, He alone can purge our sins. When He went through the crucifixion and He died on that cross, He did it alone by Himself. That’s why Jesus said, ‘Eloi, Eloi, la’ma sabach’thani’ that is ‘*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*’—because he had to do it absolutely, utterly alone to purge our sins!

That’s why he’s writing here: “...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high” (v 3). In other words, before the very throne of God, the right hand of God the Father, the greatest Being that there is in the whole universe, the God

- of all character
- of all love
- of all power
- of all life

and Christ is sitting right there at His right hand!

Verse 13: “But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet?’” No, God didn’t say that to any of the angels at any time.

Hebrews 4:14 talks about the high priesthood of Christ. It would be an interesting study; just go through the whole Bible. If your Bible study gets a little bored once in a while, just get out your hand-dandy concordance and get a topic and go all the way through it. Go through the whole Bible concerning the *right hand*:

- the right hand of man
- the right hand of David
- the right hand of God
- the right hand of Christ

—and so forth. And it’s so important. Remember, it’s so very important! This is interesting when you understand it.

Remember the mother of James and John came to Jesus and said, *Lord, will you grant me just one thing. Just one little thing for my boys, please?* ‘Well, what is that?’ *Will You grant that one sit at Your right hand and one sit at Your left hand!* And He said, ‘You don’t know what you’re asking for. My Father’s going to give it to whom He decides.’ So it’s really quite a powerful thing when you understand it.

Hebrews 4:14: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens... [up into the third heaven] ...Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*.” This is why then we can have a good conscience; because we can go to God and have Him blot out our sins, clean our conscience, clean our mind, let His Holy Spirit work in us.

Verse 15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet *He* was without sin.” You just think on that—*in every way He was tempted! Everything!* Jesus had to had have the ‘law of sin and death’ within Him in order to be tempted.

So, don’t ever feel that there is a sin that you

have that is so great that Christ can't understand it; that Christ cannot realize what your temptations are. And for each one of us, it's going to be a little different, because we're all different human beings. But you see, the thing is, Christ knows and He understands, so He's able to help.

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." When we really understand it, that's all the time; and it's not just part of the time. ***We need God's grace all the time!***

Let's go to Hebrews 7. In the whole theme of the book of Hebrews is that Christ is raised to be our High Priest in heaven above. This is very important because this was written to prepare everyone for the destruction of the temple, the ending of the Levitical priesthood; so there had to be something greater than what was there to replace it. And that's why Christ ascended into the heavens above.

Hebrews 7:25: "Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him... [In other words, ***with out a doubt there is not one thing that is too difficult for Christ to intervene to help you with and save you to the uttermost***] ...[that] come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is Holy*, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens; Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests [on earth], to offer up sacrifices day-by-day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people; for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself. For the law makes high priests *of* men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the law, *the* Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest*" (vs 25-28). So Christ is the High Priest Who is consecrated forever.

Hebrews 8:1: "Now *here* is a summary of the things being discussed: We have such a High Priest... [ever-living, sinless, undefiled, exalted into the heavens, at the right-hand of God.] ...Who sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.... ['the Majesty' is the greatest expression of glory that is used in the book of Heb. to define the glory of God the Father] ...A minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up, and not man" (vs 1-2). So that's why it's so tremendous, brethren; why it's so absolutely fantastic what Jesus Christ has done to be at the right hand, to be our High Priest.

Let's come to Hebrews 9:24—this whole theme is that now since the temple and the priesthood, which are on the earth, are going to

come to an end. Since they have served their purpose and Christ has ascended into heaven, now we have a greater High Priest, now we have a greater system than was under the Old Covenant—here again, it's reaffirmed.

Hebrews 9:24: "For Christ has not entered into the Holy places made by *human* hands, *which are mere* copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself..." In other words, when God gave the instructions to David on how to build the temple, that was just a type of the temple of God in heaven above. But, He has entered into heaven itself.

"...**now to appear in the presence of God for us...**" (v 24). On our behalf. Now, how is He on our behalf? There are some people who come along and they just love to put a guilt trip on the brethren. They just love to get up there and lambaste their sins and talk about their sins. Sure, we don't need sin, that's correct. But Christ came that you can have that guilt trip removed from you, not put upon you. That's why there's repentance. The whole operation of Christ is repentance and forgiveness of sin, not advocacy to condemn you for your sins.

Remember what we learned during the Feast of Unleavened Bread: ***To those who are in Christ Jesus, there is now no condemnation!*** Why? *Because:*

- Christ is our *High Priest*
- He is our *Passover*
- He is our *Sacrifice*
- He is our *Advocate*

He understands every one of us and everything that we experience and go through

You need to have that kind of confidence when you come before God. There are going to be times when you come before God, you're just going to have to go to God and say, 'God, I don't know. God, just forgive me for my very thoughts and mind and heart. Christ is there in this capacity.'

Let's back up just a little bit, 1-John, the first chapter, to show us exactly how this whole thing operates. I know this is a little repeat from the Days of Unleavened Bread, but it's very important because it fits context here about Christ's High Priesthood for us.

1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin"—and the Greek there is *every sin*—every single sin that you have. I know that there are some ministers who will not baptize people unless they just bore in on you and say, 'Have you repented of every sin? Have you recalled every sin?' Well, we have to repent of our sins, but you have to go one step further; you have to repent of your sinful nature, and what sin, in you,

does. Because I'm sure there are some sins that you have committed in the past, before you were baptized, that you don't even remember that you did. And for a minister to come along and say, 'Unless you remember it, it isn't forgiven.' *That's not so!* The blood of Christ cleanses us from *every* sin.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin... [as Job did] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.... [then Job, at the end, had to repent; and he did it by]: ...If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.... [That's every unrighteousness.] ...If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (vs 8-10).

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [Shall we sin that grace may abound?] Paul said, 'God forbid!' So John is writing this that 'we sin not.' ...And yet, **if** anyone does sin... [Because you know we are—I know I am; you know you are. Exactly what it is you don't know because tomorrow isn't here yet.] ...**we have an Advocate** with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous."

- He is *advocating* for us!
- He is not up there pointing the finger of condemnation.
- He is *advocating* for us!
 - He has *given His Spirit* to lead us.
 - He *leads us to repentance* through His goodness and His grace!
 - He is *advocating* to God the Father for us!

And furthermore, v 2: "And He is *the* propitiation for our sins..."—which means that it is the continual atoning that Christ gives; and it goes on and on and on and on. That's why it's important where Peter wrote and said: 'Who's gone into the heavens and is at the right hand of God. Angels and authorities and powers being put in subjection to Him.' In other words, there is no power on this earth; there is no demon; there is no spirit; there is no angel; there's no authority in the world *that can come and take you from Christ*. That is true, they may kill you, but *they can't take you from Christ*.

1-Peter 4—because this becomes very important for us to understand how then we react to the different things that we go through; we react to the different things that we suffer, because of being a Christian. Let's just read through vs 1-6 and then we'll come back and go through the Scriptures which relate to it.

1-Peter 4:1: "Consequently... [in light of what I just said] ...since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind; because the one who has suffered in *the* flesh has finished *living* in sin."—and that's what it

means. Some people think that that refers to Christ, but that is not true. That refers to *you* living in sin. Because if you have suffered in the flesh—which you have; not only has Christ suffered for us, but if you suffer in the flesh—then you realize the terribleness of sin and you don't want to continue living in it.

Verse 2: "To *this end*: that he no longer live *his* remaining time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the past time of our lives is sufficient to have done the desire of the Gentiles, *when* we ourselves were walking in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference in your behavior*... [because you're not converted] ...they... [your former friends and associates] ...are astonished *that* you are not carousing with *them* in the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they are slandering you. *But* they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and the dead. And for this purpose the Gospel was preached to those who *have* died, so that, although in the flesh they may in fact have been judged according to men's *standards*, on the other hand, they might live according to God's *will* in the Spirit" (vs 2-6).

He's saying other people have died who have gone through the same thing that you have gone through, and they survived; they live God's way; they've entered into their rest and they are now waiting the resurrection.

Let's go to v 1 again, and we'll pick up on the things that are there for us: "Consequently, since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind..." Let's go to Philippians 2:5, which is a very basic Scripture and shows the whole kind of mind that we ought to have.

I remember one man saying, 'Well, the Bible doesn't mean that we have a spirit mind the same as Christ.' *No!* It means to have the same *attitude of mind* that Christ has, as He gives it to you through His Holy Spirit; and to understand about His life—as is recorded in the New Testament—to understand how He thought and how He acted and how He lived His life.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus." Then he goes on to show what Jesus did; how far He was willing to go for the salvation of mankind. So likewise, we need to determine—with the mind of Christ in us—how far we are going to go, so that we can make it to the end and be in the resurrection. That's what it's talking about. He said that He gave up everything.

Verse 6: "Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God... [that is He was existing as God] ...But

emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant [slave]; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (vs 5-8). That’s what it’s talking about here in 1-Peter: ***Arm yourself with this mind;*** because Christ has suffered. If you have suffered and you arm yourself with the same mind, then are you not going to be able to do the same as Christ did? Are you not going to see that even suffering is better than sinning? That’s the whole purpose of 1 Pet. 4:1.

Now let’s see how this is carried on, also, in Romans, the twelfth chapter. This shows us what kind of mind that we need to have. How we need to have this mind. There’s one thing that is different with our mind than the mind of Christ. We still have a carnal mind up here. And the truth is, that spiritual things cannot be retained in a carnal mind. That’s why you need the Spirit of God. That’s why all the giving of the law, without the Spirit of God, is eventually going to result in total disaster; because you need the Spirit of God, you need the Spirit and mind of Christ in order to do it.

Romans 12:1—the Apostle Paul preached the same thing: “I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy... [that is not unclean and sinful] ...*and* well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world...” (vs 1-2). That’s the same thing that the Apostle Peter is talking about. All those that you’ve left, in the former way of your living, people are wondering: why did you do that? Peter is using the example that, hey, they were really rotten and debauching Gentiles. God still called them! God is no respecter of persons.

Verse 2: “**Do not conform yourselves to this world...**”

- Don’t worry about what the world thinks.
- Don’t worry about what the world does.
- Don’t let it come along and ‘conform’ you to this world; to this society; to this way.

“...but **be transformed**... [let your mind be changed and ‘transformed’] ...by the renewing of your mind...” (v 2). How is your mind renewed?

- with God’s Spirit
- with prayer
- with study
- fasting

—that’s all important. But if your mind is renewed, as you really focus in more on loving God; if you’re loving God and believing God, then all of those other things will come along; and you will have your mind **renewed!** Of course, we have a lot of things to have our mind ‘renewed’ from. And today we have

so many things that are against us. They’re just impacting upon us through television, through movies, just through people in the world and everything, that it becomes a difficult thing. So that’s why 1-Peter 4 is very important for you. Now, here’s what you do when you have your mind ‘renewed’ then: “...**in order that you may prove what is well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God**” (v 2)—so that we live our lives according to the will of God and not the will of man.

Now, let’s go to Ephesians 4:23, and we’ll see the same thing. We are to be ‘renewed’ in our mind, and it’s a constant renewal. We, as human beings—as we found during the Days of Unleavened Bread—have to put out the sin with the power and help and strength of Christ. How? *By confessing our sins* and ‘He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.’ With that then, we are to put in Christ; and with the power of God’s Holy Spirit, we are to be renewed in mind.

Ephesians 4:23: “And that you be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**... [It goes right down into your heart and mind and soul and spirit and being, *and changes your mind*. That’s what conversion is all about.] ...and that you put on the new man... [or the new person] ...which according to God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (vs 23-24). What God is doing *in you* is re-creating Himself beginning in the ‘spirit of your mind’ with His Spirit to create in us that true Holiness, “created in righteousness and the Holiness of Truth.” So that’s why we need to be armed with the same mind as Jesus Christ has.

Let’s take this one step further. Let’s go to 1-Corinthians 2—and this becomes so very, very important. I’m real excited about what we’re going to do when we finish 1-Peter. We’re just about there. We’re just about ready to finish it off; but we’re going to be able to look at the Word of God now with a whole new perspective. Not that it’s going to be something that we haven’t understood partially, but:

- It’s going to give us a greater and deeper appreciation for what Christ has done.
- It’s going to give us a more profound understanding of the miracle of the New Testament.
- It’s going to give us a greater spiritual insight into God’s way.

That’s why 1-Corinthians, the second chapter, is so very important.

1-Corinthians 2:7: “Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery... [It’s hard for the carnal mind to understand it.] ...*even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory... [God’s plan, before the world even

existed, was for everything to transpire to have Christ be our Savior.] ...which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory)” (vs 7-8). Now there are two ways you can look at this:

1. ‘princes of this world’ can refer to the physical human being who is in the office of ruler or leader—or,
2. it can be the power behind the throne, the principalities, the prince of this world—or the princes of this world—who are what? *The demonic beings which run this world!*

Now viewed in that particular sense, Satan would not have crucified Christ had he known what it was going to do. But Satan thought that ‘if I get Him,’ and ‘if I kill the Son of God, God’s plan is over with.’ *No! It was the beginning of it!* Those are the two ways to understand that verse.

Verse 9: “But according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*’” That is a very profound verse.

Let’s go to Romans 8:28—this will tie in with the suffering and things that we go through. And again, every time you read what the Apostle Paul has written to tell us something, it is all based on the love of God. And that’s why it’s so profound, brethren. I don’t think we can ever say it enough, but I think if we really focus in on it—of really loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and being, that that is going to help us more than anything else.

Romans 8:28: “And we know that **all things** work together for good... [he’s talking about all the suffering and difficulties here in Rom. 8—right?] ...to those who love God... [Notice how that ties right in here with 1-Cor. 2:9 that love God.] ...to those who are called according to *His* purpose.” God has a purpose! God has a plan! And it’s so fantastic that of ourselves we can’t think of it; of ourselves we can’t visualize it; of telling all kinds of stories one to another, or reading whatever other men have written, our ears cannot hear it. But God has done something above and beyond.

1-Corinthians 2:10: “But God has revealed *them* to us...” It’s the only way it can come:

- by God’s calling
- by God’s forgiveness
- by God’s mercy
- by God’s grace
- by God’s Spirit and begettal

that He puts into our mind—that’s tremendous! “...God has revealed...” (v 10). That’s why the Bible is so fantastic! There is so much in this Bible that we can study and re-study and dig deeply into it; and the

more we dig into it, the deeper we go, the more profound it becomes—because God reveals it to us. And that’s the whole purpose of why we study and drink in of God’s Word.

“...revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God” (v 10). Brethren, I think it’s something that if we look at that and just think about that for a minute—what are the deep things of God? Too many times we go to the elementary things, we don’t go beyond—***the deep things of God.*** Let’s pray and hope that God will lead us more deeply into the understanding of His Truth, more profoundly into the understanding of His way.

Hold your place here and let’s come to Hebrews 6, because this becomes important for us to realize. God has so much for us that it is, as Paul is saying here, ***mind-boggling!*** Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ...” When I first read that, I thought: Why is Paul saying, ‘leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ’? It doesn’t mean in the Greek what it expresses. The Greek means: ***let us go beyond the principles.*** In other words, let’s not *stay stuck* in this rut of the basics of Christ; but we have many things to learn.

Let’s come up here to Hebrews 5:9, so we get the flow right down to chapter six. “And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec; concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing” (vs 9-11). That’s what the Apostle Paul was saying: You’re stuck in a rut because all you do is just stick to the principles of Christ, the Foundation. If you’re going to build a house, do you not need more than just the foundation? ***Yes, indeed!*** If you build a house, have you left the foundation? ***No, you build on it!*** That’s why the Apostle Paul is saying here: ‘Let’s go beyond the principles of Christ.’

Verse 12: “For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, ***but instead*** you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God...” That’s what we need to really focus in on, brethren, not just go back to the basic principles over and over and over again. As I’ve said several times in the past, when you come to a house you don’t go and say, ‘Let’s me look at that foundation, boy, that’s a really good looking foundation.’ The owner is saying, ‘What about the whole house?’ So it’s the same way with us. We have to what? ***Grow up into Christ!*** We are to what? ***Come to the ‘fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ!’*** That has to be down into the deep things of God.

Now let's come back to 1-Corinthians, the second chapter. This is tremendous. Let's hope we can do that, brethren. Let's hope that, *with God's Spirit*, that He will:

- bless us with His Spirit
- bless us with His understanding
- bless us with Christ in us
- bless us with the profound meaning of His Word

to understand the deep things of God; the profound things of God.

Now, let's come back here to 1-Corinthians 2:11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him?..." Human beings are the only physical beings that can think. An animal doesn't think. An animal doesn't have choice. But human beings do, and they think. For example, you take a cow: A cow eats grass or hay or a grain. That's all it knows! It operates by law of instinct. It does not operate by thought and choice. That's why human beings are so profoundly different than any other animal that God has created.

(go to the next track)

The other day when I was driving along Hwy 25, going out of Hollister, there're some pastures over there and here all these cows and one starts heading to go get a drink, and the other one follows to go get a drink. One goes over here and starts munching on the grass; they're all munching on the grass, and there's just this little wire fence there and the animals have no sense at all as to what to do. I saw in one of these documentaries where it was showing how the lions came in, and at the waterhole devoured one of these cow-like creatures (I forget what they're called) but the others didn't understand what was going on. They just stood there, looked blank, and the commentator made a comment. He said, they are so dumb they don't even realize what's going on.

As human beings we're a little different. Someone dies; we understand death. We have a funeral—right? What other creature has a funeral for the death of their own? *None!* Human beings are totally different. We have the spirit of man in us to give us intellect, to give us intelligence, to give us choice; but then *God gives us His Spirit* on top of that.

1-Corinthians 2:11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God." That's why all the theology in the world over here, that all men have ever done concerning God's whatever, *cannot come to the knowledge of the truths of God by their own thoughts and intellect*, because it's not in them to do anymore than for the

dumb cow over here to make a choice. God has to reveal them. That's why we have the Bible. That's why the Word of God is so profound.

Verse 12: "Now we have not received the spirit of the world..." That's why it's so profound, brethren, that we see one of the big Churches of God making the greatest mistake in the world it has ever made. They are trying to please men. If you please men, are you going to please God? In order to do that, do they not have to preach another gospel? *Yes, they do!* They are busily going down the road to apostasy and heresy. That's a shame when there's so much here for us to learn. They are going back and inviting in the spirit of this world, which comes from whom? Who is the 'prince of the power of the air, that spirit that now works in the children of disobedience'? *None other than Satan the devil—correct?* We haven't received that.

But we have received: "...but the Spirit that *is* of God... [We've received the Spirit which is of God—from God the Father Himself!] ...so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God... [Even the 'deep' things—right? *Yes, indeed!*] ...which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the Holy Spirit in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*. But *the* natural man... [that is the one without the Spirit of God] ...does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him... [or they're a bother unto him, or they restrict his movement, restrict his behavior] ...and he cannot understand *them*... [Isn't that something? He can't even know or understand them] ...because they are spiritually discerned.... [here is the point we need to come to, brethren]: ...However, the one who is spiritual **discerns all things**... [you're able to make a proper judgment and assessment of everything] ...but he himself is discerned by no one" (vs 12-15).

That's what Peter's talking about here: Those that you have left, after you've repented and gone God's way, are coming back and judging you and saying, 'why don't you do this; why don't you do that; you used to do this; you used to do that.' So no one is going to judge you—why? *God is going to judge you!*

Now, this is also very important and profound when it comes to interaction between members; interactions between ministers and members. A minister cannot judge you in place of God. He may have make a judgment based on your behavior, if you're sinning; but no one can judge your heart—*God alone judges your heart*. So that's what he's talking about here.

"...but he himself is discerned by no one. For who has known *the* mind of *the* Lord? Who shall instruct Him?.... [No man! No man!] ...But we have

the mind of Christ” (vs 15-16).

So when Peter says, ‘arm yourself with the same mind’ what he’s really telling us is something so profound, which is the whole fullness—the fullness, as it were—of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ. To be armed with the same mind, to be filled with the Spirit of God. Now, you’re not going to get it by your works. You’re not going to get it by your power. You’re not going to get it by having come to God and coerce Him, and say, like Job, ‘God, I’ve done this’ and ‘God, I’ve done that’ and ‘God, I’ve done the other thing.’ No, God is going to give it by His grace. That’s why the Apostle Paul perhaps had more deep and profound understanding, because **he saw the greatness of God**, and the *greatness of the magnitude of sin*.

Let’s go back to Romans, the seventh chapter. This is what he’s talking about: let us go beyond the principles—that is the basic foundation. This is very hard for some people to understand, so let’s see if we can; let’s see if we can understand it, with God’s Spirit; let’s see if we can understand it with His Word—and what he is saying here. He had a tremendous experience. Paul was a Pharisee—correct? Paul knew the laws of God—correct? Paul knew all the traditional laws of Judaism, the Pharisaic version—correct? *Yes!* So much so that he said that he was blameless. But when God called him, something profound happened, and he explains it here:

Romans 7:7: “What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin?... [No! The law *defines* sin. The law itself is not sin.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law.... [That’s the function and purpose of the law, to tell us what sin is.] ...Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, ‘You shall not covet’.... [He understood that, in principle—even as a Pharisee. But when Christ came something else happened more profound.] ...But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me [all manner of concupiscence (KJV)] ...every *kind* of lust because apart from law, sin was dead” (vs 7-8).

Has that ever happened to you? Has it ever happened to you that your mind, after you’ve been converted with the Spirit of God, just kind of went wild with sin—in your mind? You really didn’t want it. But what was happening? God was showing you the exceeding sinfulness of sin; because it is deep. “...wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, for without law, sin is dead” (KJV).

Verse 9: “For I was once alive without law... [that is, the *true* understanding of spiritual profundity of God’s law.] ...but after the commandment came... [of repentance—when the

commandment came and knocked him off his donkey on the way to Damascus and he was converted] ...sin revived, and I died.... [How did he die? *By baptism*, that’s how he died!] ...And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life, **was found to be unto death** for me” (vs 9-10). That’s quite a thing—isn’t it? To really understand that, that is deep and profound! Why? **Because the law cannot save!** The law defines! The law, because of transgression, kills! That’s why sin is **exceedingly sinful!**

Let’s go to Mark, the seventh chapter, and let’s understand where sin comes. It’s not just defined outwardly, because if it weren’t for the actions of human beings, there would be no sin in the world—correct? But people **choose** to sin! And they have the ‘law of sin and death’ within them, which compels them to sin. And this is what Paul is talking about. He never really understood that all of that comes from within until God called him. And how was he able to understand that? *With the mind of Christ*: ‘Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ.’ It confirmed what Jesus said here:

Mark 7:21: “For **from within**...”—and that’s why Jesus said to the Pharisees, ‘They’re like whited-sepulchers outside, but within you’re full of dead men’s bones and rottenness’; because all your pseudo-righteousness on the outside **doesn’t change the inside**. In order to be a Christian, you must be converted, you must have your mind changed, and then you understand it from within.

“...out of the hearts of men... [you know why you need the mind of Christ] ...go forth evil thoughts... [that’s why the Apostle Paul understood that sin became ‘exceedingly sinful’; because that’s where it originates.] ...adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile...” (v 21-22). Like reading the headlines in your paper—right? *Yes, indeed!* Go pick up your paper you got this morning or last night and read it.

“...licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness... [and the Greek there is ‘anoetos’ if I could put it in the English; it means *idiotic behavior*.] ...All these evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man” (vs 22-23). And that’s what Paul was dealing with back here in Rom. 7—very important for us to understand it. We can’t grow to have the mind of Christ until we understand the profoundness of sin and the results of it within us. And then the profoundness of the Holy Spirit to help us overcome and the magnificence of Christ’s sacrifice to bring that forgiveness. This is what Paul was talking about.

Romans 7:10—He said: “And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life... [Didn’t God say that: ‘Oh, that they would keep My commandments always, that it be well with them’—

right? *Yes!*] ...was found *to be* unto death for me... [Why? *Because he understood the deepness of the sinful nature within him.*] ...because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*" (vs 10-11). His own carnal mind was deceiving him. But the commandment was right there, active and in motion—***the wages of sin is death; sin is the transgression of the law—right?***

Verse 12: "Therefore, the law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and just and good." Nothing that God does is evil or wrong. No, the law is not sin, ***it is our behavior and transgression of the law that is sin***—which is deeply rooted in our very heart and mind and soul and being. That's why he says this.

Verse 13: "Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? [No!] MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin..." This is the whole thing: the more deeply you are converted, the more profound that sin becomes in your mind; because God will expose it for what it is there, and that's the struggle that goes on.

Therefore, the more of God's Spirit you have, and the more of God's love that you have, the more that God is going to reveal these things to you so that you can have them removed from within by conversion. It's not going to come because of your behavior. It's going to come because of God's Holy Spirit, so that ***He can change your behavior.*** Because what is part of you, you cannot get rid of yourself, but something greater than you must get rid of it, which is Christ and His Spirit.

"...in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good, was working out death... [Therefore the law is good because it defines what sin is and you see where you're wrong—you see that? you comprehend that?] ...so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful" (v 13).

That's why Christ said, we'll cover a little later, the Sermon on the Mount. The *spirit of the law* shows that hate is murder. Lust is adultery; covetousness is thievery. That's why the Apostle Paul said that 'the law, with the Spirit of God in him, now reveals the ***exceedingness*** of sin.' Then you can begin to discern your own vanity. That's hard, and your own covetousness. So that with the Spirit of God the true motive, the true intention of God, is built in you through the Spirit of God. When that happens, there's this inner fight that

"...sin might be exceedingly sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual... [Yes, it's acting all the time—*isn't it?*] ...but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin" (vs 13-14). He's just saying, 'Of myself I am so sold under sin there is no hope for me ***without Christ.***'

The Protestants have a solution to the problem. They say, 'No one can keep the commandments perfectly, so therefore, you don't have to keep them.' That is illogical. I hate the word 'logical' because human logic gets you in trouble when you try and use human logic to understand spiritual things. But that is not correct, spiritually then, let's put it that way.

"...I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin.... [Here he was an apostle for 20 years. He was a minister of God. Here he was preaching to other people—right? *Yes!*] ...Because what I am working out myself, I do not know.... [He really didn't want to do those things! He really didn't want himself to do it, but he did!] ...For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what I do*" (vs 14-15).

How many times has that happened to you? How many times have you really, really felt something as a desire of will:

- to do something
- to love someone
- to say something nice to someone
- to pray
- to study
- to know God's Word

—and you don't do it! That's what the Apostle Paul was saying. He said he desired to do, but he didn't do it.

Verse 16_[paraphrased]: "For what I will I don't do, but that which I hate, I find myself doing. For what I hate, that I do." Now, that's quite an admission. He could have said, 'I'm an apostle of God, called of Christ, I live a perfect life, live like me.' *Nonsense!*

This is part of the mind of Christ: that you have the humility that comes from Christ, because Christ is exposing this kind of behavior in our minds and in our hearts and we can repent of it. So why? ***That every sin and every unrighteousness can be wiped away.*** That's why God is doing it. And I'll guarantee you one thing that's for sure: no one in the world, without God's Spirit, is having this inner conflict. They may have all kinds of other conflicts, but not this one.

How is God going to solve this problem? This is one of the deep things of God, v 16: "But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.... [It is telling me what is right, and it's telling me what is wrong.] ...So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me.... [That's why we have talked about the 'law of sin and death'—sin dwells in every human being by inheritance, by their very nature, which is from within as Christ has said.] ...Because I fully understand that there is not

dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good....” (vs 16-18). When you come to understand that, you’ll be just like Job.

Hold your place here and let’s go back to Job 42. It is very important what Job did, when he came to understand it; and we can, too, the lesson is there for us. After God came to Job, when Job said, ‘I’ve done this. I’ve done that. I’ve done the other thing. I’ve fed the poor. I’ve taken care of the needy. When I came into the room I was so important that they all stood and bowed before me. When I spoke they listened. So God, it’s not fair that You’re doing this to me.’ So God came down and said, ‘Job, tell Me something:

- Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
- Where were you when I stretched out the heavens as a span?
- Where were you when I created these things?

And I’ll tell you something, Job, that if you can now clothe yourself with majesty—that is by your own personal being save your own hide—I will tell you, you can save yourself.’

Job 43:1: “And Job answered the LORD, and said... [notice his humble attitude now; quite a difference from all the arguments that went on before] ...‘I know that You can do all things, and that no thought can be withheld from You. *You asked*, “Who is he who hides counsel without knowledge?” Therefore, I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea, which I did not know. Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, “I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me.” I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You.... [that is spiritually, I understand] ...Therefore, I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes” (vs 1-6).

You see how that consciousness and awareness came to Job. That’s exactly what the Apostle Paul is talking about in Rom. 7. He saw that sin was ***exceedingly sinful***; because he understood the profundity of it. People who don’t have the Spirit of God, they don’t see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. ‘Why, a little sin is good.’ What’s the Bible say? *A little leaven leavens the whole lump!* Whoopee! they’ve got to have more. When you have God’s Spirit and you’re convicted of it, this is what you go through.

Romans 7:18: “Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good.... [except the Spirit of God] ...For the desire to do good is present within me... [yes, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak—so he had the will, it was present with him] ...but **how to work out that which is good, I do**

not find.” That is, of himself, of his own resources, of his own mind, of his own thoughts, how to do that which is truly good, ‘I find not.’ Now what does he mean, *good*? Is that just feeding someone who’s hungry? Is that taking care of someone who doesn’t have a home? Is that *good*? What definition of *good* are we talking about? What is *good* before God? Now that’s what we’re talking about: ***the goodness before God***; the good that is truly good. In other words, that which is going to be good for all eternity, ‘I,’ Paul says, ‘of myself I find not!’

Verse 19: “For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me*” (vs 19-20). In other words, that is not his motive.

Just like you, when you sin, you don’t say, ‘I’m going to set out and do this sin.’ No, you don’t determine to do it. You don’t set your mind to do it. You may willingly give into it. Temptation may come along and you slip in it. You may have a temper, which a lot of people do, and it just keeps coming on. You hate it. You don’t want to do it. It’s not your desire to do it. ***But you do!*** So, it’s not you. As the Apostle Paul said, “It is not I that do it, but sin that’s dwelling in me.” And all of us have the sin dwelling in each of us.

Verse 21: “Consequently, I find this law *in my members*... [just like the law of gravity] ...that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.... [and in spite of that, he says] ...For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man... [Yes! It is Holy; it is righteous; it is just; it is good. You delight in the Word of God by the inward man, yes! That’s your whole thought in mind and desire—isn’t it? *Yes!*] ...But **I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind,** and leading me captive to the law of sin... [the law of sin right in you; that’s what it’s called. The Apostle Paul said it’s ‘the law of sin.’] ...that is within my own members” (vs 21-23).

Now, this is a dilemma, so he says, v 24: “O *what a wretched man I am!*.... [I’ll tell you one thing, when you come to the point of really deep conversion and repentance, you’re going to feel this same way.] ...O *what a wretched man I am!*.... [Because that all the way we are before God, without Christ. That’s what he’s saying.] ...Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ.... [He’s going to be delivered.] ...Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the law of God with *my mind*; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin” (vs 24-25)—part of his very being.

This is something we need to also grow

more in deeper understanding, too, brethren, Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...” Who are going through this same struggle; who are having this same problem; who are overcoming the sins that are within. And how do you overcome the sins that are within?

Let’s go to 2-Corinthians 10—this is one of these things, brethren, that’s so important. You are not going to overcome the inward part of your mind by the external keeping of the Law. ***You must, with the Spirit of God and Christ in you, overcome the internal sin of your being!*** That’s why it’s so important. That’s why Paul said, ‘The law is here, it’s spiritual and just and right and good; but the law outside of my mind cannot change my mind.’ ***Only the Spirit of God can change your mind. Only God can convert you!*** God’s Law defines what is right and wrong. God’s Law can lead you to a certain amount of conversion—or that is change of behavior—but ***only God’s Spirit can convert the mind.*** Then what do you do when you find yourself entrapped in this horrible enigma?

2-Corinthians 10:4^[transcriber’s correction]: “(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal... [You’re not going to do it by any positive thoughts. You’re not going to do it by doing good. You’re not going to do it by carnal means and methods] ...but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds).”

The biggest stronghold is right up here in your mind, where sin dwells! That’s the biggest *stronghold*. And then the imagination of the *heart* is what you need to overcome. And you can’t overcome that without the Spirit of God—and then you do this, with the Spirit of God.

Verse 5: “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” That’s how you do it. You bring it into the ‘obedience of Christ’:

- by repentance
- by prayer
- by yielding to God
- by thinking on His Word
- by growing in grace and knowledge
- and to realize that this is all accomplished by the grace of God

No other way! You are saved by *grace*! Now, we do have to keep the commandments of God. But you are not saved by law-keeping. Remember that!

What did Christ tell the rich man? When the rich man came and said, ‘Good Master, what should I do to have eternal life?’ And Jesus said, ‘Keep the commandments.’ And the young man said, ‘Oh, I’ve done that all my life. What else should I do?’ Christ said, ‘Go sell all that you have and come and follow

Me, and you’ll have treasure in heaven.’ Then the disciples came and said, ‘How’s that going to be?’

He said in another parable: ‘I want to tell you something. A man has a servant working out in the field. He does what he’s supposed to do out in the field. And his servant comes in and he says, ‘You fix me something to eat and then you will eat.’ And after he has done all of those things, does he thank the servant for what he did? *No!* So likewise are you, ‘When you have done all that you are commanded, you are unprofitable servants.’ Now, that’s a tough saying. Why are you unprofitable servants? *Because you haven’t let Christ, in you, bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*’ That’s why! So when Peter says, ‘Arm yourselves with the same mind that Christ has, that is saying a lot—isn’t it? *Yes, indeed!*’

“...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ... [That’s why Christ, in you, is the only hope of glory] ...and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled” (vs 5-6).

Let’s come back to Romans, the eighth chapter; now you see why there is no condemnation, because ***you, of yourself, cannot overcome yourself.*** Christ, ***in you,*** and ‘bringing every thought into captivity,’ with the Spirit of God, ***can overcome yourself.*** Profound difference.

That’s why he says, here, Romans 8:1: “...*there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh... [We’re not out here just living our lives the way that we used to. We are converted. We are changed! And growing in grace and knowledge.] ...but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death” (vs 1-2). Though we have this struggle going on with the ‘law of sin and death’ within us, Christ has freed us from it, that ***we don’t have to be burdened down to obey it*** in the lusts thereof, as we ‘bring every thought into the captivity to Christ.’

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the law to do... [the law can’t convert; the law cannot empower; the law can only define and bring death] ...in that it was weak through the flesh... [why was it ‘weak through the flesh’? *Because of the ‘law of sin and death’ within us*] ...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh... [to be exactly as we are] ...and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

If Christ condemned sin in the flesh, who has to overcome our sin within us? ***Christ in us!*** Oh, we have our part. *Yes, indeed!* But Christ has to be the activating, motivating and guiding and empowering force, with His Spirit, to do it.

Let's go to Romans 6:10: "For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also... [that is: calculate, figure, estimate, understand] ...you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body..." (vs 10-12).

That's what Christ in you does; that it doesn't 'reign in your mortal body'; you see it for what it is, you understand the evilness of it; you understand the power of it; it is there working to pull you down—but *you don't let it reign* over you. *Why? Because you have the mind of Christ within you!* And 'bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, that's how you do it.

That's why it's so profound. That's why it is the deep things of God that we are looking to. The deep things that we need to grow into. And so that's why the Apostle Peter said, 'Let us be armed with the same mind.'

Let's go back and read 1-Peter 4:1 again: "Consequently, since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind..." *Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Peter 3:22
- 2) Colossians 2:15
- 3) Colossians 1:16-18
- 4) Acts 2:25, 33
- 5) Acts 6:29-31
- 6) Hebrews 1:3, 13
- 7) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 8) Hebrews 7:25-28
- 9) Hebrews 8:1-2
- 10) Hebrews 9: 24
- 11) 1 John 1:7-10
- 12) 1 John 2:1-2
- 13) 1 Peter 4:1-6, 1
- 14) Philippians 2:5-8
- 15) Romans 12:1-2
- 16) Ephesians 4:23-24
- 17) 1 Corinthians 2:7-9
- 18) Romans 8:28
- 19) 1 Corinthians 2:10
- 20) Hebrews 6:1
- 21) Hebrews 5:9-12
- 22) 1 Corinthians 2:11-16
- 23) Romans 7:7-10

- 24) Mark 7:21-23
- 25) Romans 7:10-18
- 26) Job 42:1-6
- 27) Romans 7:18-25
- 28) Romans 8:1
- 29) 2 Corinthians 10:4-6
- 30) Romans 8:1-3
- 31) Romans 6:10-12
- 32) 1 Peter 4:1

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- Hebrews 2
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