

## Thought for Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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### Hebrews 8:1-13

The interesting thing in this passage is the fifth word, ‘we,’ ‘*The point of what we are saying is this...*’ the writer is not saying these are his own thoughts but that they are the thoughts of all the disciples. The writer isn’t going off on his own wave length, whoever the writer is, they are affirming the truths they, and the other disciples, have come to understand. High priests have a job to offer sacrifices on behalf of the people. It was an important role in the Old Testament, especially in relationship to the sacrificial system. It was the high priests job to make sure he did his job correctly, so that those he is representing felt they were receiving forgiveness. For the Old Testament high priests that was an ongoing affair, whether annually, monthly or weekly. There was always another sacrifice to be made for someone. You may remember in Luke 2:22-24 we read; ‘*When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord’), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: ‘a pair of doves or two young pigeons.’*’ For the priests this could have been almost a daily sacrifice. Okay, I am not talking about the high priests sacrifices, they were your special sacrifices, as at The Day of Atonement, which you can read about in Leviticus 16, especially verses 6-22. This was an annual event. It is as if you go to the high priest, he offers whatever sacrifices are necessary, and your sins are forgiven. The problem is that five minutes later you could sin again and you have to wait to go through that whole procedure again, which could be a week, a month or a year later. With Jesus, being our high priest, he paid the sacrifice himself, once for all time. Now, of course, that doesn’t mean that just because Jesus has paid the ultimate sacrifice we are free to sin. In fact Paul in his letter to the Romans explained it this way; Romans 6:1-4; ‘*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*’ And verse 15; ‘*Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!*’ Paul goes on in Romans 7:14-25; ‘*We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!*’ As we come back to our reading in Hebrews 8 we see the writer quote from Jeremiah 31:31-34; ‘*The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant.*’ That new Covenant was installed through Jesus Christ our Lord as he ate with his disciples the evening before he was to die on the cross, paying our final sacrifice. Matthew 26:28; ‘*This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*’ Going back to Hebrews 8:10 we also see the prophecy of Jeremiah 31; ‘*I will put my laws in their minds and write*

*them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.*' And verse 12; *'For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.'* That is the truth we hold in our hearts. When we come to the Lord with repentant hearts and ask him to forgive us; *'He will forgive our wickedness and will remember our sins no more.'* It is done for, once for all time, and He will remember our sins no more. Last week as I looked at Hebrews 7, I looked at the laws that were given by God, to Adam and to Moses. The Jewish leaders decided to surround those laws with 613 religious laws, but the Jews couldn't keep them. I also said that we have so many laws in the country, which we don't keep, whether intentionally or not. If we go to court because we have broken a law, then we have to endeavour to show either remorse, or try to prove our innocence. When we put our trust in Jesus, he knows everything we do and have done, and what we are going to do in the future. More importantly, Jesus knows our hearts, so if we come to him with repentant hearts, he will forgive us, 2 Chronicles 7:14; *'if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.'* That is the promise of God, you have the choice to believe it or not. I pray you will put your trust in Jesus, our great high priest. Amen.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,  
Trusting only Thee!  
Trusting Thee for full salvation,  
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee for pardon,  
At Thy feet I bow;  
For Thy grace and tender mercy,  
Trusting now.

I am trusting Thee for cleansing  
In the crimson flood;  
Trusting Thee to make me holy,  
By Thy blood.

I am trusting Thee for power,  
Thine can never fail;  
Words which Thou Thyself shalt give me  
Must prevail.

I am trusting Thee to guide me,  
Thou alone shalt lead;  
Every day and hour supplying  
All my need.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;  
Never let me fall;  
I am trusting Thee for ever,  
And for all.