

Sunday, March 27, 2022 pm

OUTSIDE THE CAMP

Hebrews 13:13

In our online Bible study we have been addressing the book of Hebrews. We are bringing this book to its conclusion. In our text, we find the author bringing to a conclusion his admonition to his audience to NOT go to or return to Judaism. That has been the theme of that book. Tonight, I want to present a lesson based upon this text – I want to talk about going outside the camp.

I. Outside the camp

- a. Throughout the book of Hebrews, the author has established how everything about Jesus is BETTER than that of Judaism. In fact, the word “Better” in our English Bibles is found more in the book of Hebrews than any other book. We find among those things “better” in Christ are 1) Hope, 2) Rest, 3) Testament, 4) Covenant, 5) Promises, 6) Sacrifices, 7) High priest, 8) Country, 9) Resurrection, etc.
- b. Considering these things, why would anyone want to go back to the Law of Moses?
- c. In concluding his book, he makes appeal to the sacrifice of Jesus in contrast to what happened under the Old Law. Specifically, this addressed the sacrifice for sins and how the corpse was taken outside the camp.
- d. Sacrifices outside the camp –
 - i. The consecration of Aaron and his sons to begin the priesthood – Exodus 29 records their consecration. It involved the sacrifice of a bull and 2 rams. The bull was sacrificed as a sin offering (Exodus 29:14, Leviticus 8:17). While parts of it were to be burned on the altar in the camp, the rest of it was taken “outside the camp” to be burned with fire.
 - ii. Sin offerings – Leviticus 4 records the sin offerings to be offered when an Israelite sinned. A portion of the animal was sacrificed on the altar, but the hide and much of the bull was carried “outside the camp” and burned (Leviticus 4:12)
 - iii. The day of atonement – once a year, a special sacrifice was offered for Israel by the high priest. On that day sacrifices would be made, and he would enter the Holiest Place in the tabernacle (& temple) with atoning blood to appear before the LORD. Again, since these sacrifices were sin offering, the bodies were taken “outside the camp” and burned. Leviticus 16:27
- e. Other illustrations outside the camp
 - i. Those unclean – such as lepers – Leviticus 13:46 – they were to remain outside the camp until their sores went away.
 - ii. Leviticus 24:14 – one convicted of blasphemy was taken outside the camp and stoned to death
 - iii. Numbers 15:35-36 – on another occasion, one who violated the Sabbath was taken outside the camp and stoned to death.
- f. The point of noticing all of these passages is to note that outside the camp was a place of curses and rejection. It was a place of separation and isolation. It was not intended as a place of honor.

II. Our context (Hebrews 13:10-13)

- a. The writer begins by noting we have a better *altar*. The altar was where sacrifices were offered under the LOM. The altar of Hebrews 13 is a reference to Jesus Himself, where we come and offer our sacrifices acceptable to God – Romans 12:1-3, Hebrews 13:16 – the sacrifices of the fruit of our lips, etc.
- b. Those who served under the Old Law (the Levitical priests) could not come to this altar. Consider the message of Hebrews, the writer is likely referencing those who rejected Jesus. Understand, that as the book of Hebrews was written, that Old Law had already been nailed to the cross (Colossians

- 2:14), and thus rejected by God as no longer valid. But Levites were still offering sacrifices INSIDE JERUSALEM. To God they were meaningless.
- c. They still carried the bodies of those animals outside of the walls and burned them, in the same way they were burned while the tabernacle was still standing. Outside the camp (or city) is where that which was rejected and cursed BY them was disposed of.
 - d. Vs. 12 - Ultimately, Jesus died “outside the camp.” Luke 23:26 notes that they led Jesus away and came to a place called Calvary (23:32-33). John 19:17 notes that they “*went out to the place called the Place of the Skull*, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. Early tradition places this site west of Jerusalem¹ Based on our text, Jesus likely died OUTSIDE of the city. At the very least, He was treated like or worse than the corpses of those animals that were burned. Galatians 3:13 notes, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” – Jesus died an accursed death. He was REJECTED by the corrupt Jewish establishment.
 - e. BUT, in His death, He sanctified the people – those who surrender to Him – with His blood –
 - i. Romans 5:9 notes that we are *justified by His blood*.
 - ii. Ephesians 1:7, *in Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins...*
 - iii. 1 John 1:7 – *His blood cleanses us of all unrighteousness*
 - iv. Hebrews 9:11-15 actually addresses this in great detail.
 - f. Vs. 13 - *Therefore, let us go outside the camp*.
 - i. This is the Hebrew writer’s point in this final illustration about Jesus. He was WILLING to die as a REJECT from these corrupt religious leaders and their followers.
 - ii. Then to the writer’s audience, he asks, “Are you willing to leave *the camp* too?”
 - iii. This was a challenge to stand up for God and Jesus (whom they knew) and be willing to BE DIFFERENT!
 - iv. He challenges them to be willing to pay the price, even to the point of suffering, so that they could receive an eternal reward (which was addressed in Hebrews 12:22-24, 4:9-11, etc.) in heaven after this life.
 - g. While going outside the camp was associated with cursing, isolation and other things, our text is actually approaching it from the OPPOSITE point of view. The “curse” is in staying IN the camp.

III. **Are we willing to go outside the camp?**

- a. Let us make some application to our lives.
- b. It is no secret that we are living in a world that stands contrary to God. We are continually reminded that this world is NOT our home.
 - i. That was one of the points made in Hebrews. Hebrews 11:13-16
 - ii. John 17:11-16 – as Jesus prayed for His apostles, they are in the world but not OF the world.
 - iii. Philippians 3:20 – our citizenship is in heaven...
 - iv. 1 Peter 2:11 – we are sojourners and pilgrims
- c. Are we willing to be DIFFERENT? Even if it comes with a cost.
 - i. ***Are we willing to leave the way of the majority?***
 1. Realize the God’s people have almost always been a minority –
 - a. The Ark – 8 souls saved out of a countless number (1 Peter 3:20)
 - b. Deuteronomy 7:7 – Israel was NOT chosen because they were more in number, rather they were the LEAST of all peoples.
 - c. Matthew 7:13-14 tells us that the way to destruction is traveled by many, while the way to heaven is traveled by few.
 2. Far too many are more concerned about popularity and being accepted than whether or not they are right.

¹ Negev, Avraham. *The Archaeological encyclopedia of the Holy Land* 1990: Golgotha.

3. We need to be willing to be different, even if it is unpopular. We need to *go outside the camp*.
4. AND we need to stand up for each other (being in minority does not always mean you are alone).

ii. Are we willing to walk away from relationships?

1. Matthew 10:34-37 – Jesus, with shocking language, declared the importance of priority. Now, we know that it is NOT His desire that we walk away from family, but are we willing to do so?
2. If you find yourself in an unscriptural relationship, would you walk away? CF. Matthew 19:8-9, 1 Corinthians 15:33
3. IF a relationship is standing in our way of faithfully serving God, we need to be willing to *go outside the camp*.

iii. Are we willing to leave a life of worldliness?

1. James 4:4 reminds us that friendship with the world is enmity with God.
2. Jesus taught that you have to choose – Matthew 6:24 – you CANNOT serve 2 masters.
3. 1 John 2:15-17 – do not love the world or the things in the world.
4. Colossians 3:2, Christians are to set their minds on thing above, not on the things of this world.
5. We know that the world and its ways is competing for our loyalty, and even our soul. But as we have seen, God will NOT accept that. IF we are to faithfully serve God, we must be willing to *go outside the camp*.

iv. Are we willing to leave denominationalism?

1. Denominationalism by its very definition is divisive. It implies that we cannot understand God's instructions to us alike. And other than a few minimal areas of agreement (and not even all will agree on them) anything you do and how you do it is not important. NOTE: MOST denominations will not say this, but it IS the result of saying, "It doesn't really matter what we believe about..." (fill in the blank – worship, organization, name, morality, salvation, etc.)
2. As we have noted that is NOT Biblical unity. Consider John 17:20-21 – *they may all be one, AS You Father are in Me and I in You.*; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Philippians 2:1-2 – be like-minded, of one love, one accord, of one mind.; etc.
3. It is clear that God wants us to be united by agreement – Ephesians 5:17.
4. Saying that it matters what we believe in a particular area is NOT popular. But will you *go outside the camp*?

v. Are we willing to leave the wisdom of man?

1. We have noted, even recently that wisdom is a good thing. Proverbs 4:5-7 – get wisdom and get understanding. Wisdom is the principal thing. We need the "wisdom that from above" – James 3:17
2. But so often the wisdom of man conflicts with God's wisdom. 1 Corinthians 1:18-21 notes that the wisdom of God is foolishness to man.
3. Yet how many today, will choose the wisdom of man over God – in matters of creation, Biblical inerrancy, morality, compromise and tolerance, etc.?
4. Paul wrote and taught so "*that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*" (1 Corinthians 2:5)
5. When worldly wisdom conflicts with God's wisdom (and perhaps even our own), are we willing to *go outside the camp*?

vi. Are we willing to leave the Old Law (LOM)?

1. Many today appeal to the LOM for authority in many of their religious actions – Sabbath worship, instrumental music, priestly garments, burning of incense, etc.
2. We could devote lessons to showing that the LOM has been brought to its completion through Jesus. This is actually the premise with which we began this lesson – first century Christians not wanting to let go of the Law of Moses. But, as noted, the Law was taken out of the way and nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14). Hebrews 8:7ff explained the need for the “first covenant” to be replaced. Jesus came to fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17, etc.)
3. And while the Old Testament is clearly useful today (cf. Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11, etc.), we MUST keep it in its context.
4. So when it comes to how we worship and serve God today, are we willing to *go outside the camp*?

We could continue with many other examples of this. In summary, we are expected to be different. And at times that means “leaving the camp”, whatever that might be. It is not always easy to do, and at times it comes with great worldly cost, but if we are to secure a home in heaven, it is something we MUST do. Jesus remember, Jesus DID and few suffer as He did. I conclude with Matthew 16:24-26 - What profit is it to a man,... So, are you willing to “go outside the camp”? Think about it!