

'The Eternal Covenant' — Hebrews 13:20-25
Basil Howlett - Carey Baptist Church – 2 March 2008

In verses 18-19 the writer of this 'short' letter asked his readers to pray for him: now he tells them of his prayer for them. We would expect him to pray for them. because many of them were tempted to drift away from the Lord back into their old Jewish faith.

1. A wonderful description of the God to whom we pray. He's the God of peace,

- He himself has complete peace.
- He has made peace between us and himself. At one time there was enmity between us. He was angry with our sin and we were hostile to him. He dealt with our sin by allowing his Son to shed '*the blood of eternal covenant.*' He dealt with our hostility by changing our hearts by the Holy Spirit.
- He has given us peace of mind.
- He delights to see his people living in peace (Hebrews 12:14, Romans 12:18).

He's also the God of power.

2. An amazing description of Jesus Christ through whom we pray. The great Shepherd of the sheep.

- He was willing to die for us (John 10:11). He shed his blood to deal with our sin. The resurrection proves that he did this to the complete satisfaction of God and so secured for his people all the blessings of the eternal covenant.
- He sought us and brought us into the fold of God.
- He cares for his sheep. He feeds us from his word, guards us from harm and will never abandon us (John 10:27-29, Psalm 23).

3. The actual prayer the writer prays for these people. That God will equip us with every good thing we need to do his will.

- Knowledge and understanding of God's word.
- Wisdom and discernment
- Faith and trust
- Courage and boldness (verse 23)
- Patience and gentleness
- Humility and teachability (verse 22).

We don't deserve any of these '*good things*', but God gives them to us through Christ, to whom we must give all the glory (verse 21).

The writer concludes by greeting their leaders and '*all God's people*' and by conveying greetings from Italian Christians. His final comment at the very end of this remarkable 'short' letter is that his readers might experience God's grace. That alone will keep them loyal to Christ,