

# HEBREWS STUDY

## Introduction

As we go through this study the following outline will be followed.

- 1:1-3 Jesus is God.
- 1:4-2:18 He is better than angels.
- 3:1-4:13 He is better than Moses and Joshua.
- 4:14-7:28 He is better than Aaron's Priesthood.
- 8:1-10:18 He has a better covenant.
- 10:19-12:29 He has a better way.
- 13 Conclusion

As we consider who the author of the book might be, it seems that it was not Paul.

- Paul does not 'sign' the book or indicate within the book that he is the author.
- When Paul would quote the Old Testament, he would quote both the Hebrew edition and the Greek translation called the Septuagint. This author quote only the Septuagint.
- There is no introduction as found in Paul's epistles.
- In this letter the author states "We heard it" 2:1 from those who heard, the immediate followers of the Lord. The writer puts himself in the second generation of Christians. Paul, on the other hand, claims he received the Gospel directly from Christ. Gal. 1:11-12
- The style of this author is a polished Greek different from Paul's. This epistle is more like an essay than a letter.
- There are words and expressions that occur only in Hebrews or at least not in Paul's writings. For instance in chapter one: 1:3 the word *χαρακτήρ* or 'nature' as it is translated only occurs here. In 1:4 *τοσοῦτω κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων, ὅσω* this expression with the first and last words is an idiom that only occurs in Hebrews, 'as much...as'. And the word *κρείττων* or 'superior' is used only in Hebrews and that 13 times: 6:9, 7:7, 19,22, 8:6, 9:23, 10:34, 11:16, 35, 40, 12:24. In verse six *προσκυνησάτωσαν* or 'worship' is a verb used in Gospels and Acts, but only once by Paul in I Cor. 14:25. In the Greek Old Testament it is used frequently, that is the translation this author draws from. In v. 9 the word *μετόχους* or 'comrades' has six uses in the NT, five in Hebrews and one in Luke. In v.12 *ἐκλείψουσι* or 'end' is found only here and in Luke, but is very frequent in the Septuagint.

Notice that in these examples from chapter one Luke does use some of these expressions which has caused some to think that Luke wrote the book. Apollos, due to his eloquence and prominence, is also thought to be an author. He was an eloquent man, well versed in

the Scriptures. Acts 18:24 He was prominent in connection with the Corinthians. Others also have been suggested such as Barnabas.

The second question is – to whom was the letter written? In 13:22 we read “Those who come from Italy send you greetings.” It would seem that then the letter could be sent to those in Italy and the prominent center there was Rome. We know that in Rome there were seven Jewish synagogues and from these there were Jewish converts who formed their own congregations separate from the already established Roman church(es). They were in fellowship, yet remained in different congregational settings due to their Jewish background. When persecution arose against the Gentile Christians, these Jewish Christians did not face the same persecution, but did assist their Gentile brethren. 10:32-34, 12:4 There was a serious danger that these Jewish Christians would fall back into Judaism from the Christian faith. So this letter was written to bolster them in the one true faith.

### **Jesus Is God 1:1-3**

In verses 1-2 it is pointed out that the Bible has two parts - OT “in various ways, God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets”, NT “in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son.” The letter to the Hebrews bases its message on the Old Testament as it discloses the Son in New Testament times as the fulfillment. The verses of chapters 1-2 show clearly that our Lord Jesus is God.

- V.2 He is the Creator of the world. Jn. 1:3, Col. 1:16
- V. 3 “He reflects the glory of God” Think of a mirror. As you look into a mirror you see yourself. The Father and the Son are one and both God.
- “and bears the very stamp of His nature” Think of our wording in the Creeds: Apostles’ – “His only Son”, Nicene – “being of the same substance with the Father”, Athanasian – “nor dividing the substance.” We get this from Scripture: 2 Cor. 4:4, Col. 1:15, Jn. 14:9.
- “upholding the universe by His word of power” Col. 1:17 Not only was all created through Him, but He keeps it all together and operating normally until the end of time at judgment.
- “He had made purification for sins” He is the Lamb of God who takes away sin as portrayed in the Atonement. Lev. 16:36 Who can do this except God?
- “He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” Jesus resumed the full use of His power that he set aside (Ph. 2:7-8) when He became man. Rom. 8:34, Eph. 1:20-22, 1 Pet. 3:22, Col. 3:1, Heb. 8:1, 10:12, 12:2

### **I Christ Is Better Than the Angels 1:4-2:18**

In chapter one with seven OT references the author points out the superiority of Jesus over angels.

- V. 5 is from Ps. 2:7 The word ‘sons’ is applied to angels. Ps. 89:6, 29:1 But the name ‘son’ in the singular is only applied to Jesus. ‘Begotten’ means He is of the same nature at the Father, God. γεννητός Also it is from 2 Sam. 7:14.

- V. 6 is from Ps. 97:7 in the Greek Old Testament. 'First born' πρωτότοκον is a title meaning He is the possessor of all, as the first born boy in the family inherits the family land. Rom. 8:29, Col. 1:15,18, Heb. 12:23
- V. 7 is from Ps. 104:4. Angels are as fast as the wind and can be as destructive as fire, but Jesus is the King over the angels. They are his servants. The angels are changeable and vary as God desires. The Son is ruler and unchangeable.
- Vv. 8-9 is from Ps. 45:6-7. Throughout Jesus' earthly ministry we saw the angels serving Him.
- Vv. 10-12 are from Ps. 102:25-27 showing how Jesus is the everlasting God. Angels of course are created spirits in heaven as man was created to inhabit the earth.
- V.13 is from Ps. 110:1 which is called the ascension psalm. Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, not an angel.
- V. 14 is a restatement of what Scripture teaches about angels that they do God's bidding as servants. Ps. 103:20 Jesus is the Master who sends them.

#### **2:1-4 A Warning Against Rejecting God's Revelation**

Remember the angels who rebelled? Jude 6, 2 Pet. 2:4 This warning coming early in the letter is a reminder that this was written to Jewish Christians who were thinking perhaps they should go back to the synagogue. The good angels were involved in the giving of the law. Acts 7:5, Gal. 3:19

The message of the Son of God is true and the eye witnesses verify that. 2 Pet. 1:19 God bore witness συνεπιμαρτυροῦντος with signs and wonders... This we read also in Mk. 16:20 that God confirmed the message βεβαιουῦντος with signs. What Jesus is and taught is true. To abandon that is to abandon life. We don't want to be like a reed tossed in the wind. Eph. 4:14, 2 Pet. 3:17 Think what happened to Israel of old. 1 Cor. 10:5-11

#### **2:5-9 The Kingdom was Bestowed on Christ**

Psalm 8:4-6 is quoted telling how during Christ's humiliation He was made lower than the angels in the sense that He became truly human and did not use His divine powers fully. Jesus was 'made under the law' Gal. 4:4 in the sense of lowered Himself and subjected Himself. He has now resumed His full use of His powers. Phil. 3:21 All is now subject to Him.

What joy to read "by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of every man." V. 9 Jesus died on the cross for all. 2 Cor. 5:14-15, 1 Jn. 2:2

#### **2:10-13 Christ as True Man**

In being lower than the angels for the short time of 33 years He had to suffer as true man for men's sins. And coming through that suffering He is the perfect one for us making up for Adam's sin. In v. 10 the word ἀρχηγόν can be translated: pioneer,



chief, leader, author, prince. It is used again in: Heb. 12:2, Acts 3:15, 5:31. Ps. 22:22 is quoted reminding us in that psalm of the suffering Messiah what He had to go through. While in His work on earth, He trusted in the Father and lived and spoke. Two more verses are quoted to remind of this. Is. 8:17-13

### **2:14-18 Christ is Man's True Sacrifice**

God's concern in sending His Son to earth was to save men. The angels who remain in heaven are confirmed in their status after the evil were cast out. God wants to save those who are of flesh and blood. He took on our nature except without sin. The devil caused death by tempting Adam and Eve. Fear first came in as recorded in Gen. 3:7-10. But now His perfect love casts out the fear of death along with all other fears. 1 Jn. 4:18 He did this for us. 2 Tim. 1:10, Col. 2:15, 1 Cor. 15:55,57

In v. 17 we have the word ἱλάσασθαι which means to make atonement for sin by sacrifice to appease the anger of God. What joy to know that now He has done that and is able always to help us. Heb. 4:14-16 He knows exactly what we face for He faced it already and overcame.

### **II Christ is Better than Moses and Joshua 3:1-4:13**



### **3:1-6 Christ as Lord is Superior to Moses as Servant**

Here Jesus is called the apostle and high priest of our confession. Jesus is the apostle as the one sent forth from heaven to save us. Moses was in the house to take care of it, but a servant nevertheless. Jesus is Lord of the house. Think how tragically the Jews of Jesus day appealed to Moses as their great authority. On the Mt. of Transfiguration Moses acknowledged Jesus as Lord. Moses was also part of the 'house' in the sense of the church, which Jesus the Lord is head of and builds day by day adding the living stones into it. Moses was 'in' the house, while Christ was 'over' the house. The encouragement comes to the Hebrews, we are God's house if we hold fast... There was the danger of them going back to the synagogues and not boasting of Christ anymore. One must be firm to the end. It is not enough to say, 'Well, ten years ago I believed.'

### **Christ's Rest is Superior to that of Moses and Joshua**

#### **3:7-11 Don't Harden Your Heart**

'Today' is the day of salvation. Each day should be a day of repentance and faith in God. The illustration of the children in the wilderness is given of how not to be. The idea of hardening we will look at again in Ch. 6 and 10. Israel though receiving so many blessings did not appreciate them and rebelled against the God who saved them. We go back again to the record of the OT that is clearly spelled out. In Num. 14:22 "He swore..." and this was based on the people putting Him to the test ten times. This oath is repeated in Num. 32:10-13, Deut. 1:34-36, Ps. 95. The rest from Joshua was not to be for most of the men of age due to their sin. For us the rest from Jesus is assured though we sin daily and much. Joshua is the Hebrew translation of the Greek Jesus.

Ten is a number of completeness. Notice how the men of Israel completely filled up the cup of rebellion and sin. What follows is what I have traced leading up to the oath of God that they would not enter His rest. I found nine of the ten times. Perhaps you can find the other.

Ex. 15:22 after crossing the Red Sea they went three days into the wilderness of Shur and found no water

v.23 they came to Marah and wouldn't drink the bitter water

\*v. 24 the people murmured against Moses

v.25 Moses threw the tree in and the water became sweet

v.27 they came to Elim – 12 springs and ~~70 palm trees~~

16:1 on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the second month after they left Egypt they came to the Wilderness of Sin between Elim and Sinai

\*v.2 the whole congregation murmured against Moses

v.3 it was a hunger complaint

v.4 manna is promised

vv. 13-14 quails in the evening, manna in the morning

17:1 they moved on to Rephidim – no water

\*v.3 they murmured

v.6 Moses struck the rock with a rod and water came forth

v.7 place was called Massah(Proof) and Meribah(Contention)

v.8 Amalek fought them at Rephidim

19:1 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> new moon after the Exodus they came to the Wilderness of Sinai

24:1 Moses was on Mt. Sinai 40 days

\*32:1 Israel wants Gods

v.20 Israel had to drink the ground up idol on water

v.28 Levi's sons slew about 3000

v.35 a plague came upon the people

Num. 1:1 in Sinai Wilderness

10:11 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 20<sup>th</sup> day since they left Egypt they set out from Sinai

10:33 three days journey

\*11:1 the people complained

v.3 fire burned among them, Taberah(Burning)

\*vv.4-6 more complaints even about the manna

v.31 quail are given

vv.33-34 a great plague comes Kibrothhattaavah(Graves of Craving)

v.35 at Hazerot6h

12:16 they camped in the Wilderness of Paran

13:1f. spies were picked and sent

v.25 after 40 days the spies returned

\*vv.32-33 the ten give an evil report

\*14:1f. the people murmur against Moses and Aaron

\*v.10 the people say to stone the faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb

vv/22-23 the men of age will not see the Promised Land, the Rest

### **3:12-19 It is Necessary to Persevere to the End**

The men of age died in the wilderness because of ἀπιστίας unbelief and ἀπειθειαν

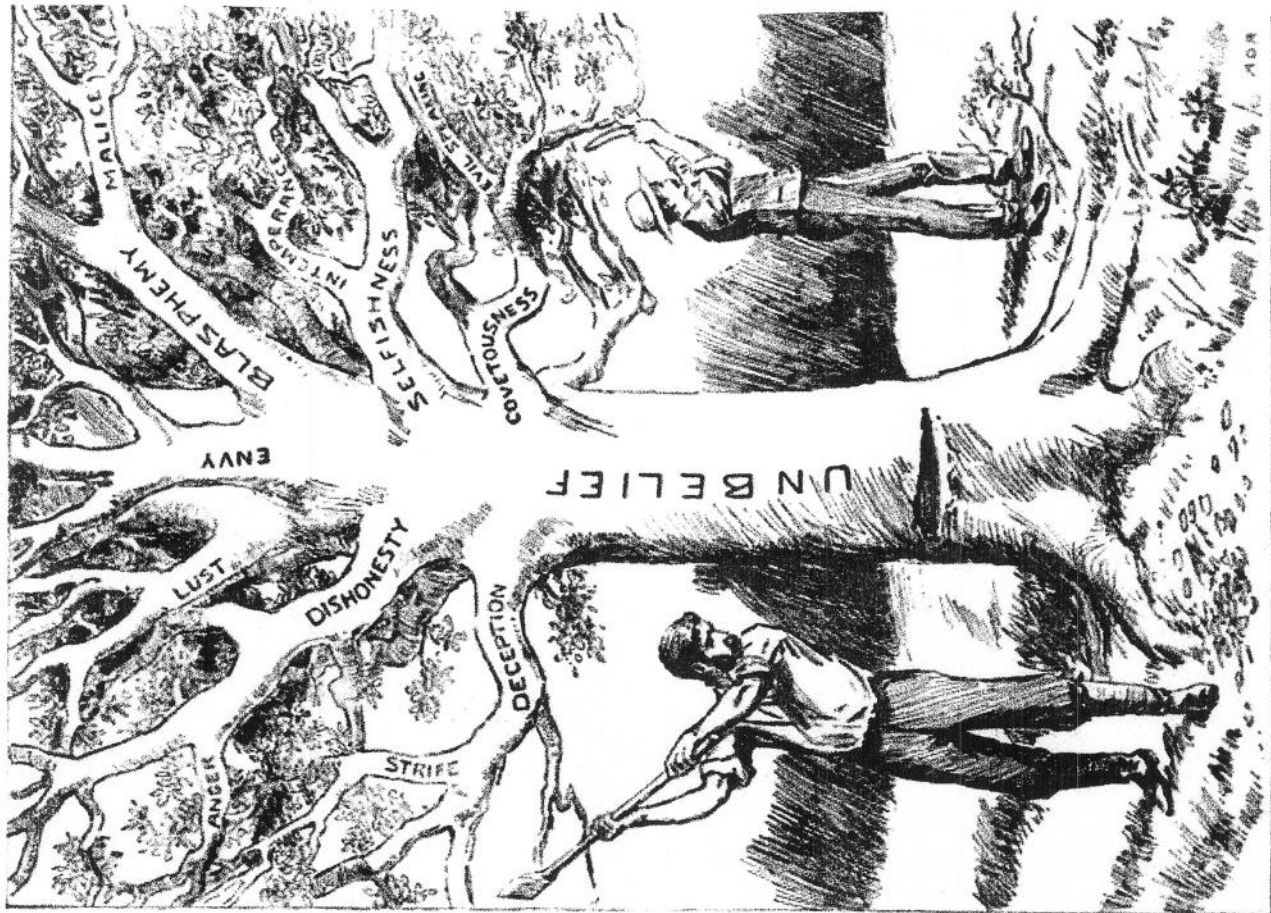
Disobedience. We have the unbelief or distrusting God in Heb. 3:12, 19 and the disobedience that was due to unbelief in Heb. 4:6,11. It is not a pretty picture and should be a lesson for all of the Hebrews who became Christians and for us.

### **4:1-13 Here is the Warning against Missing Christ's Rest as Typified by the Canaan Rest Missed**

The Word did not meet with faith in the hearers in the wilderness and so it did not prosper. Later in the faith chapter we will read that "without faith it is impossible to please God." 11:6 Natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, for they are folly to him. 1 Cor. 2:14 And so they died in the wilderness not reaching the rest. In v. 6 we see it was not only unbelief but disobedience that sprung from unbelief that brought the judgment. And God bore with them ten times. So the warning to the Hebrews in this letter. The heavenly rest comes to those who have faith, a faith based in the Word that follows the Word.

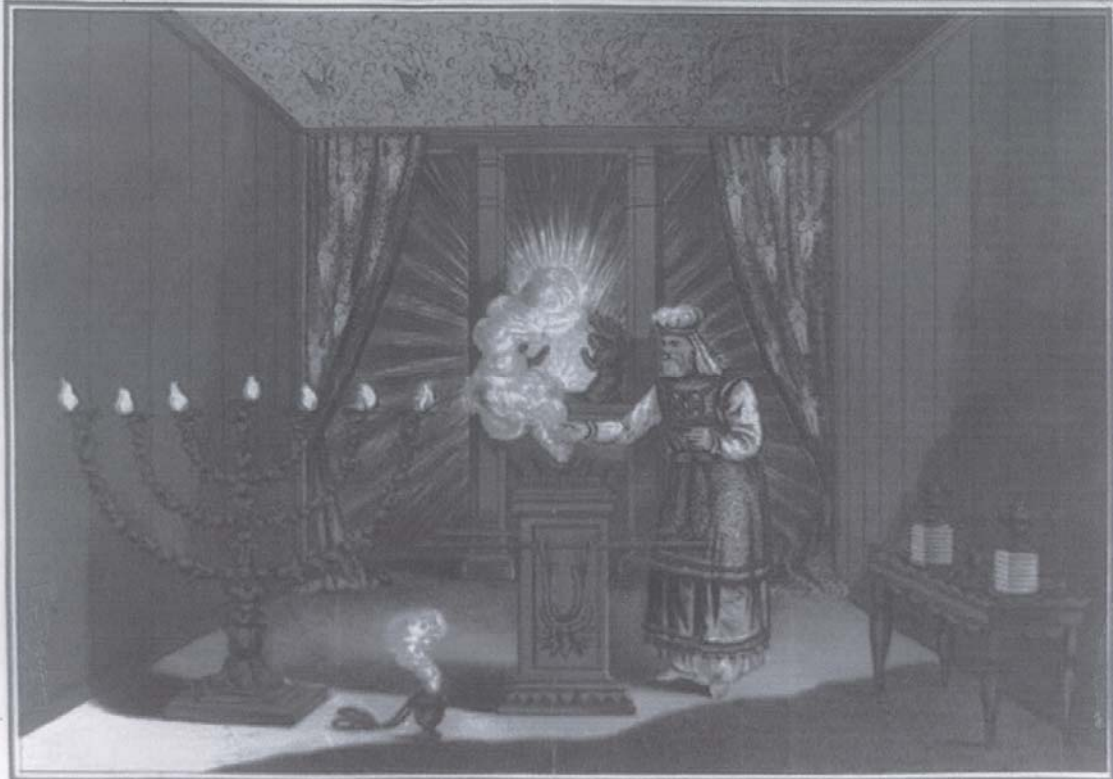


3:19 Loving the things of this world leads to unbelief and unbelief produces...



Verse 12 is that great passage that reminds us of the power of God's Word on the heart. Peter also points out how the Word is living and will be in us also that which keeps us. 1Pet. 1:23 And v. 13 reminds us that God knows what is within the heart as well as elsewhere. It is an amazing act of mercy on God's part that he bore with the children of Israel in the wilderness as long as He did.

### III Christ is Better than Aaron's Priesthood 4:14-7:28



THE HOLY OF HOLIES.

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**4:14-16 Christ is the Way to Approach God**

The earthly high priests after the order of Aaron were just earthly. But Christ has “passed through the heavens” and is at the “throne of grace.” But He is not some distant ruler, as He experienced when on earth exactly what we do. He knows exactly how we are, what we face and how to help us. He is definitely THE Way. Jn. 14:6 There is no other mediator but our Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5

**5:1-10 Christ is God’s Appointed High Priest**

The high priest according to the law of Moses offered sacrifices for his own and the people’s sins. But Christ who was sinless offered the sacrifice for the people the world over. Christ is not in Aaron’s line, but in Melchizedek of Abraham’s day we see Christ pictured. Christ did not exalt Himself but was appointed the High Priest by the Father.



The priesthood was given to Aaron's line despite their sinful nature: Levi, Gen. 49:5-7, Aaron, Ex. 32. The eternal high priest's office was bestowed on Christ because of His sinlessness. The earthly high priest had to offer sacrifices first for his own sin. Lev. 16:6,17 Christ does not and put us first.

Jesus in the days of His flesh, when He lowered Himself to be true man did as we do, but without sin. He learned obedience through His suffering. Jn. 12:27, Mt. 26:38-46 Jesus always obeyed and did naturally what God's will was, since his nature was divine also. Jn. 8:29 Just as He grew in wisdom (Lk. 2:52), so He grew in this obedience through suffering that He might know exactly how and what to do for and with us in this life. He became the source of eternal salvation and its effects upon us in this life.

#### **4:11-14 Exhortation to Lay Hold of Christ and His Redemption**

This points up again the weakness of the people addressed in this letter. They need milk like a child and not meat like one who has grown and developed teeth. Corinth also had problems though of a different nature that made them immature and in need of milk. 1 Cor. 3:2



"The earth which drinketh in the rain . . . thorns and briars . . . whose end is to be burned."—*Heb. vi. 7, 8.*



**6:1-8 A Very Serious Warning is Given**

The desire is to teach the Hebrews more and greater things, but there is a danger that those who once believe can fall away and even fall away to the point of no return. In vv.4-6 we have this explained as it is again in 10:26-31. It is impossible to restore one who has gotten to this point. We cannot look into the heart and see. But it is stated that this can happen. The heart is hardened to such an extent that the person only faces judgment. The Lord alone knows when this is. Our Lord taught about this labeling it the 'sin against the Holy Spirit.' Lk. 12:10, Mt. 12:31-32, Mk. 3:28-29 This has to do with those who believed. John writes of a "sin unto death." 1 Jn. 5:16-17 Peter warns about a last state that is worse than the first. 2 Pet. 2:20-21

Not all who abandon Christ become like this. Peter denied His Lord, but returned. We could think of Judas as a case. We know that with Pharaoh of Egypt there was a point at which he could no longer repent, for God then hardened his heart. This was after six plagues. Ex. 9:12 Here in Hebrews six we are looking at a situation that can happen when one hardens his heart beyond repair and then God also hardens it. They have fallen to such an extent. The warning is illustrated with the field that receives abundant rain, but only brings forth thorns and thistles. It is fit only for burning.

We need to keep being built up in Christ. Eph. 4:12-13 Let us be babes in evil, but in thinking keep on maturing. 1 Cor. 14:20 It is to the mature that further wisdom is imparted. 1 Cor. 2:6

**6:9-12 True Believers are Encouraged**

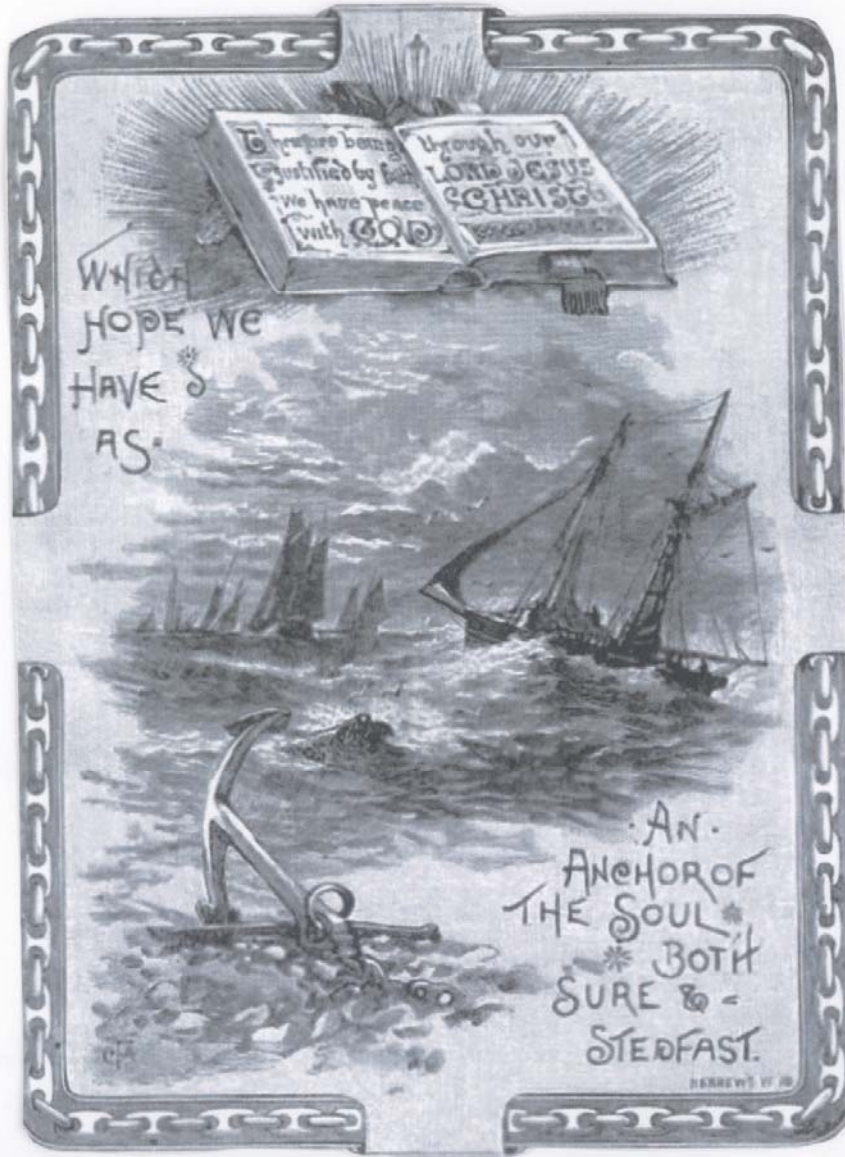
In v. 10 we read of their 'work of love.' We think this letter was written between 65-70. It was in the year 64 that the Emperor Nero of Rome persecuted the Christians. This was the time when the Jewish Christians could help the Gentile Christians who were being persecuted. Because the Jewish Christians were still viewed as Jews and not subject to the persecution, they could assist in love the Gentile Christians. In 10:26-31 after the warning like here, there is the encouragement 10:32-36 mentioning in more detail the 'work of love' and that endurance is needed.

What is needed is not just a flash of love, but love based on His love until the end. And the end has to be focused on or in the meantime the troubles and worries of life will overwhelm. Heb. 3:14, Ph. 1:6, Col. 2:2

**6:13-20 God's Covenant Promise Does Not Change**

When God promised Abraham, He also swore with an oath so that the covenant is sure two times over. In Gen. 12:7 there was the promise of the land. In Gen. 22:15-18 the promise is expanded and confirmed with an oath. What encouragement to those who were wavering. God is not a man that he should lie. Num. 23:19. The counsel of the Lord will stand. Prov. 19:21 God does not change, "Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." Heb. 13:8 So that just like an anchor that holds a ship so the promise in the Word is the anchor for the soul. On earth the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies for the people. Jesus as the great High Priest has entered the Holy of Holies above for us to beckon us there. And He of the promise is our High Priest forever.





#### 7:1-10 Melchizedek – A Picture of Christ

On page eight we had a picture of Melchizedek meeting Abraham after the slaughter of the kings. Gen. 14:17-20 Melchizedek was a real person. And in him we have Christ pictured.

- This man who met Abraham is called the King of Salem, which word means 'peace.' Our Jesus is the bringer of peace. The angels announced that on the fields of Bethlehem. In Gen. 49:10 He is prophesied as the Shiloh, Prince of peace.

- Melchizedek is the Hebrew for king of righteousness. Jesus is our righteousness. 1 Cor. 1:30 His righteousness covers over our sin.
- Of Melchizedek we know nothing of his beginning or ending. So he continues as priest. Jesus is eternal with no beginning and no ending and so continues as our great high priest to speak to God for us. Ps. 110:4
- Abraham gave a tither or tenth to Melchizedek. To Christ as God we give our offerings in abundant measure. Melchizedek was not of the normal line of Levi/Aaron. So our Jesus came forth from Judah.

#### **7:11-19 Aaron's Priesthood was Transitory, While Christ's is Eternal**

Priest after priest had to arise because each in turn died. Christ has risen from the dead and lives eternally. The earthly priests had to offer sacrifice after sacrifice. Christ offered Himself, 'once for all.' The old commandment for the priesthood is set aside for Christ is now the end of the law for righteousness. Rom. 10:4 Christ is our great High Priest forever due to the 'power of the indestructible life.' V. 16 Jn. 14:6, 1:4, 11:25

#### **7:20-28 Christ's Priesthood is Superior in Every Way**



Since death no longer can affect Christ, He lives to make intercession for us. Continually He speaks to the Father on our behalf. Christ identifies Himself with us and pleads our case and intervenes. So, if we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 Jn. 2:21 In an earthly court there is some doubt always as to being exonerated, but not so with our Advocate the Christ. No one convicted Him of sin on earth. Jn. 8:46 So now due to His intervention, we are not condemned. Rom. 8:1 In OT times there were daily to yearly sacrifices for sin. These all pictured what Christ would do on Calvary. Now there is no more need for sacrifice. He has done it once for all. V. 27 Think how the OT high priests went into the Holy of Holies each year for the Atonement that was done once. They each entered and came out proclaiming forgiveness. It was done in a double manner also. Year by year, man by man they did this with the blood of goats... Lev. 16:6-10 By Christ's death once for all on Calvary THE Atonement pictured in OT times has been fulfilled. Zech. 3:9

#### **IV Christ has a Better Covenant 8:1-10:18**

##### **8:1-7 The New Supersedes the Old Covenant**

The old covenant was to Abraham and his faith followers, who were within the nation of Israel as time passed. The old covenant involved possession of Canaan and God keeping His people until the Messiah would be born. This was all a shadow of what was to come. V. 5 Col. 2:17 Now we have Christ and all that it portrayed.





The high priest portrayed Christ. The sanctuary reminded of the heavenly one to come. All sacrifices reminded of Christ's. We have been raised with Christ and now seek the things that are above and not of this earth. Col. 3:1 What we have now is more excellent because Christ has come and fulfilled all. We have Him in reality. The law of the OT was to be used until Christ came. Gal. 3:19

### **8:8-13 The New Covenant is Based on Superior Promises**

Notice that the author uses OT promises for the future. Jer. 31:31-34 For the Hebrews they should grasp that they are carrying on with the truth of God in the fulfillment in Christ. To go back to the old covenant now that the fulfillment in Christ has come would be to abandon Christ and salvation. Think of Ez. 36:25-27 of the new covenant with its sprinkling. Or Zech.8:8, Is. 54:14 and so many more of the future that was now that for the Hebrew Christians. And all is based on the forgiveness of sins in Christ, 'I will remember their sins no more.' V. 12 To go back to the old would be to abandon all of this.

### **9:1-10 Make a Comparison and See How the Levitical Sacrifices were Temporary**

We have pictures of these things on page seven. All of this could not perfect the conscience of the worshiper. It is what these things meant, the fulfillment in the Messiah that perfects the conscience. What did all those things symbolize?

### **9:11-14 We Center our Attention Now on the Heavenly Sacrifice of Christ**

So many in the OT times centered their attention on the earthly and lost sight of the heavenly that was pictured in the earthly. The blood of Christ is superior to the blood of bulls and goats. We have an eternal Spirit who works with us to assure our conscience that we have the eternal redemption. Heb. 10:22, 1 Pet. 3:18 When Christ came to earth the visible Jewish church was centered on 'dead works' thinking that they could be saved by what they did. He came to His own and His own rejected Him because they centered their attention on the earthly, on the shadow, on their own works. The Hebrews here are encouraged to serve the living God, and not be like those in Jesus' day who were like whitewashed graves. They looked good on the outside as whitewash dresses up. But inside they were full of dead men's bones, they were dead spiritually. Just think how the Jews of Jesus' day were so confused accepting the earthly instead of the spiritual in connection with the expression 'a temple, not made with hands.' Jn. 2:19, Mk. 14:58 They would even miss the spiritual for the earthly in OT language. Is. 57:15

### **9:15-22 The New Covenant is Fulfilled in Christ's Death**

Through all OT times think how much blood was shed in sacrifices! Over and over again God taught that there must be the shedding of blood. But when Christ came the High Priest spoke the words but did not mean the truth. It is fitting that one man should die for the people. Jn. 11:50 So now Christ has died. When one dies there is a last will and testament announcing what goes to the heirs. From Christ's death we inherit eternal life. He did not remain dead but lives and reigns to all eternity.

### **9:23-28 Christ Alone is the Sufficient Offering for Sin**

Christ entered the Holy of Holies above and stays ever to plead for us. This is blessed assurance. The earthly Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and temple were copies or representations of the true one above where God is present forever. V. 27 reminds us that we die once and then the judgment. We do not face judgment though, Mt. 25:31-46. We are the sheep. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:1 This passage does remind us that we do not face the 'second death' referred to in Revelation. Jesus will come the second time for those waiting for, longing for, expecting Him with great joy. Are you eager?

### **10:1-18 The Superiority and Finality of the New Love**

The law was a shadow of what was to come. Col. 1:17, Heb. 8:5 The real, the substance, the true good is Christ. Continually the sacrifices were made to remind of the ultimate one, our Jesus. Once it was made no more sacrifices were needed to remind. But even in OT times the cleansing had to be inward. The true believer grasped this. Ps. 51:10,16-17 Here we have Ps. 40:7-9 which words the Messiah speaks when he enters the world for us. Whole-hearted obedience is the sacrifice God desires and alone could the Messiah give that.

In v. 10 the word ἐφάπαξ is used which means 'once for all'. This was in 7:27 and 9:12. It is the reminder that though this letter was written to Jewish Christians that the Savior Jesus is for all the world. 1 Jn. 1:7

Interestingly the OT priest stands to do his ministrations. This is an indication that he was never done. It had to be repeated over and over. But Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father indicating that the work is done forever.

The promise of Jer. 31:33f. was quoted in 8:10-12 and now again. The Holy Spirit shows it and does it, this inward thing.

### **V Jesus Has the Better Way 10:19-12:29**

#### **10:19-25 Our Access to God is the Ground of our Hope**

This is the new, fresh and living Way. Christ died, but rose to life eternal. The temple curtain was torn from top to bottom showing the old way had been done away with. Mt. 27:51 In John 14:6 Jesus says He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Here we read of the baptism which is a cleansing of conscience. 1 Pet. 3:21 The sprinkling hearkens back to the sacrificial blood and forward to the baptism of water. In these verses we have three great exhortations. The Jewish Christians in Rome needed this and we do too. The third exhortation ends in v. 25 with 'go to church.'

#### **10:26-31 There is Judgment for Failing to Hold Firm**

Here we have the warning of 6:6-8 again in different words. This is more serious than as in Gal. 6:1 "overtaken in any trespass." This is the "falling away from the living God" of



3:12. This is a determined, willful sinning that causes one to be cut off. Fire devours God's adversaries. Is. 26:11 If people turn away from God, they put themselves into that group. When the point explained in these verses is reached, it is hopeless. We serve a living God. This is great comfort to those in faith, nothing escapes Him. But it is a dreadful thing for those who deny Him. The living God speaks from the midst of the fire. Deut. 5:26 For those in unbelief and rejection He is a devouring fire, an everlasting fire. Is. 33:14 The living God was mocked by Sennacherib through the words of Rabshakeh with dreadful results. Is. 37:4, 17 For believers it is a joy to fall into the hands of the living God for His mercies are great. 2 Sam. 24:14 This letter speaks positively of the living God in 9:14 for those who serve Him, for those who live in His city 12:22. But for those who spurn, reject, trample under foot there is the warning in 3:12, 6:6-8 and here. After the warning come the words of encouragement.

### **10:32-39 For Those who Endure There is a Future Reward**

One commentator(Lenski) has the following. "Every item fits Rome. Between the years 61-63, during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, this apostle converted a host of Jews in Rome. By the first day's work he converted some fifty per cent of all the leading rabbis and chief men of the seven synagogues(Acts 28:24)... Paul continued this work for two years... Some think that all these converted Jews joined the original Christian congregation. They did not. This congregation which was then some twenty years old, had never had contact with the Jews in Rome. No hostility had ever been aroused. That is why all those Jewish rabbis and chief men came to Paul so freely on his invitation... In 64 Rome was burned, Peter executed... the Christians were blamed for the burning... These were the Christians of the old original congregation, who were long known to all Romans as Christians, many of whom belonged to Emperor Nero's household... newly converted Jews escaped the onslaught. Many of these... became involved only because of their sympathy..."They became involved to the point that they suffered loss of property as they assisted the Gentile Christians who were being persecuted. But they did not face the same persecution as 12:4 the Jewish Christians did not yet face the shedding of blood. This assistance in love was doing the will of God. And through it their faith should be strengthened.

With Hab. 2:3-4 we are reminded of Jesus' words. "By your endurance, you will gain your lives." Ld. 21:19 "For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." Mk. 8:35 And then with v. 39 the author gives the bold statement that we are not of those who shrink back... but who have faith and keep their souls. The Lord's words ring true in any age and for any people, "Blessed are you... rejoice... reward is great..." Lk. 6:22-23 Then follows the Faith chapter that reinforces this statement with the many examples.

### **11:1-3 Faith is Defined**

"Without having seen Him you love Him; though you do not now see Him you believe in Him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy." 1 Pet. 1:8 And of course we have Jesus' words "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Jn. 20:29 We can also say that faith is – knowledge, acceptance and reliance.





#### **11:4-7 The Faith of the Early Patriarchs**

Abel, Enoch, Noah – can you give the examples of their faith. Notice that faith is essential. Without it there is no hope. V.6 When we believe in Jesus, the Father looks at us as His dear children and what we do in faith is pleasing to Him. For the unbeliever even if he seems to do the exact same thing it is not pleasing for he seeks to do it to please God to gain salvation and a good standing with God. Without Christ one cannot have that standing no matter what he does.

#### **11:8-22 Abraham and His Family**

Can you think of other examples of Abraham's faith? What does it mean to be a stranger and an exile on this earth?



Ah yes that God can raise up the dead, that takes faith! But with our God nothing is impossible and so faith conceives. Faith that believes then does. The Jews of Jesus' day did not really know Abraham. John the baptizer warned them. "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits that befit repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham." Lk. 3:7-8 Jesus told the Jews, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did." Jn. 8:39 The lesson is also for these Jewish Christians in Rome facing what they were.



**11:23-28 The Faith of Moses the Deliverer**

Moses' example of faith should stir these Jewish Christians away from a return to Judaism. He does not support a return to Judaism but would accuse them. "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; it is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote of Me." Jn. 5:45-46 As Moses was an example of not 'going back' in his case to Egypt and all its riches and glory, in the case of these Jewish Christians to avoidance of persecution. He had faith, "for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible." V. 27

**11:29-31 The Faith of the Israelites and Rahab**

The two events mentioned here are astounding ones that only could be done by our God. And the children of Israel saw them and recorded them for faith to feed upon. Then consider that Rahab was not an Israelite and yet believed and became one. Another miracle of faith.

**11:32-39 The Faith of the Judges and Prophets**

Give an example of faith for each: Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel. Can you think of any names for the descriptions in v. 33? And then in vv.35-38 the shift is to those who endured the dreadful times and troubles because they had faith. Faith is not just winning, but enduring to the end. Think of that description of these, "of whom the world was not worthy." What does that mean but that their faith soared as if on eagles' wings above the dread and trouble of this world. The Jewish Christians of Rome and the New Testament age of such a great advantage over those of old. The NT Christians have seen the Christ and have heard what He has done. The fulfillment of the coming of the Messiah is no longer only a promise, but a glorious reality.

**12:1-2 It All Comes Down to Christ, and He is Our Example**

The easily besetting sin that lurks to take the Jewish Christians is horrible unbelief. What is called for is patience as James reminds. James 5:7-11 And that has to be centered in Christ. He endured, despised the shame, perfected salvation and is now seated as our great High Priest. And He did this with joy for us! What an example! Moses looked away from the treasures of Egypt to the reward of the Messiah. Heb. 11:26 We must be straining forward to the prize He won forgetting what lies behind, pressing on. Phil. 3:13-14 The Jewish Christians must no look at worrisome persecution but the joyful reward.

**12:3-11 Chastening is for Spiritual Development**

Instead of fearing persecution they should view it as a chastening, a disciplining, an education to enlarge their faith. Previously, they had endured. Heb. 10:32-34 Now they should not grow weary of this. They had not shed blood yet. For the moment all discipline seems painful, but it yields the "peaceful fruit of righteousness." Face facts it is through many tribulations we enter the kingdom. Acts 14:22 And with the test comes the power to endure. 1 Cor. 10:13 If we did not suffer, we would not be Christians. As they did to Jesus, they will do to us. We are under the Father of spirits and live. The life is ours. 1 Jn. 5:11-12, 4:9, Rom. 6:11 Now from this perspective look back at this life's troubles.



**12:12-17 Exhortation to Endurance**

Our Lord promises blessing to the peacemakers. Here the people are encouraged to strive for peace with all men, and this in the face of possible persecution. But what did our Lord say about how to treat our persecutors? By doing this we are focusing on the Christ and His great love that overcomes. "Father forgive them." This is the unique Christian way. It is so easy to become like Esau who focused on a mess of porridge and then became bitter. The Jewish Christians could also lose their focus and let a root of bitterness spring up. This could be to hold it against God that He lets them suffer. And so unbelief results in a return to the relative comfort of Judaism. Deut. 29:19-20 describes this situation as some sin lodged and not removed by repentance. Be faithful until death and the crown of life is ours.

**12:18-29 The Final Warning against Apostasy**

The comparison here is between Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion. Mt. Sinai represents the law and the glory of God in the face of the people's apostasy, moving away from Him. They built a golden calf at the foot of Sinai. Mt. Zion is the NT church with Christ the love giver not Moses the law giver. It was a fearful thing to behold Sinai; it is a blessed thing to behold Zion. Would they go back and forsake the church with its head, Christ, and all the glory of eternal life in heaven? His voice shakes the earth in judgment. Would they want to be a part of the judgment or above it in Christ? Sinai shook. Judges 5:4-5, Ps. 68:8-9 But the kingdom of God, with Christ as the King cannot be shaken. The old earth and the old heaven are subject to this shaking, but not the new heaven and the new earth. The first part of v. 28 is Gospel. Verse 29 is law. Which would the Jewish Christians in Rome choose?

**Conclusion Chapter 13****13:1-6 General Christian Obligations**

As with all the epistles of the New Testament this one also has closing remarks to the people addressed. The exhortation to show hospitality to strangers hearkens back to Abraham entertaining angels (Gen. 18:19) and Lot likewise (Gen. 19:2). This hospitality brought blessing. The Jewish Christians might keep in mind that God's angels would watch out over them. They should continue to help those in prison and ill-treated. Pray for them. Acts 12:5 Visit them. Mt. 25:39 Be as if bound with them and suffer with them. I Cor. 12:26

Love of money was a problem then as it is now. Love of money is a root... 1 Tim. 3:3 Through this craving one is pierced... 1 Tim. 6:10 Jesus warned of mammon. Mt. 6:24 Life does not consist in the abundance of things bought with money. Lk. 12:15 To have the Lord, that is what counts.

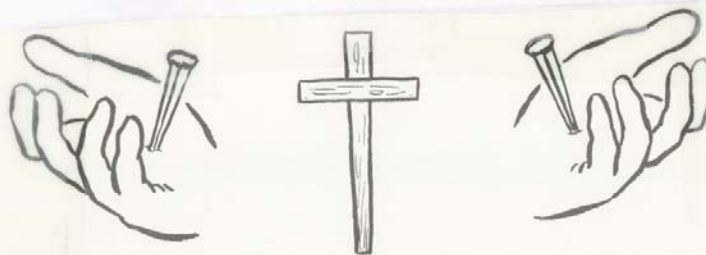
**13:7-17 Listen to the Spiritual Leaders**

Spiritual leaders are mentioned in vv. 7, 17, 24. It is possible that some of the leaders referred to had died and couldn't be giving advice and couldn't be talked to. Yet their lives as examples of Christians lived on in memories of the believers. Bereft of leaders

they might be, but not of Christ who lives forever. And He is the same always. Yesterday – He offered up... v.5:7, Today – He is able to sympathize v. 4:15, Forever – He lives to make intercession 7:25. And Jesus' teaching remain the same so that the anchor of faith is not disturbed. It rests on the same sure foundation as always. Jesus was crucified outside of Jerusalem. These Jewish Christians were outside of Judaism. Don't go back in to the old temple and synagogue that have no meaning any more. Bear His reproach and suffer with Him. Rom. 8:17, 2 Cor. 1:5, 4:10, Phil. 3:10, 1 Pet. 4:13" Do good and share' are encouragements in the face of impending trouble. But that is after all what Jesus did. And it may well be a sacrifice to praise God in the face of what was coming.

### 13:18-25 Personal References and Benedictions

V. 18 is one passage that does infer a personal relationship with these people as do vv. 22-24. So in the close of this letter the author does get personal, yet overriding all is the lordship and grace of Christ. He it is upon whom their and our hope rests.



### What Jesus Has Done for His People

He descended that we might ascend (John 6:38; John 14:3).  
 He became poor that we might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9; James 2:5).  
 He was born that we might be born again (John 1:14; John 3:2).  
 He became a servant that we might be sons (Phil. 2:7; Gal. 4:6, 7).  
 He had no home that we might have a home in heaven (Matt. 8:20; John 14:2).  
 He was hungry that we might be fed (Matt. 4:2; John 6:50).  
 He was thirsty that we might drink of the wells of salvation (John 19:28; Isa. 12:3).  
 He was wearied that we might rest (John 4:6; Matt. 11:29).  
 He was stripped that we might be clothed (Matt. 27:28; 2 Cor. 5:4).  
 He was forsaken that we might not be forsaken (Matt. 27:46; Heb. 13:5).  
 He was sad that we might be glad (Isa. 53:3; Phil. 4:4).  
 He was bound that we might go free (Matt. 27:2; John 8:32-36).  
 He was made sin that we might be made righteous (2 Cor. 5:21).  
 He died that we might live (John 19:33; John 5:24, 25).  
 He will come down that we may be caught up (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).