

BIBLE STUDY FOR EVERYBODY • 5/21/2013

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS: CONNECTING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS *

Jim Turley

Author: KJV says Paul but probably not – different style, vocabulary – *written by an apostle* (2:3) – Tertullian said Barnabas, Luther believed Apollos, Origen said, “God alone knows with certainty”

Recipient: Jewish Christians located outside of Palestine – a Greek speaking community – probably Alexandria, Egypt – not Rome (13:24)

Date: 63-68 AD – Clement of Alexandria quoted from it in 95 AD – *before 70 AD* because of the allusions to Temple sacrifice (8:4; 9:6; 10:11; 13:10)

Theme: **Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of OT Judaism**, and the New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant

Occasion: Believers who had made a *profession of faith* (3:1; 4:14; 10:23) and had evidence of salvation (6:10; 10:32-36; 12:4), but had become *spiritually sluggish* (3:12; 5:11-14) and some had even become *apostate* (6:4-6; 10:26-31) – The writer is calling them to hold fast to their confession (10:19-25)

Characteristic: **The best overview of the history of salvation in the Bible** – quotes the Old Testament 32 times – also the *highest, most scholarly Greek* in the New Testament

A Portrait of the Jewishness of Jesus

1:1-4:13: Christ is pre-eminent **as a revelation of God**

1:1-3: Christ is superior to the *prophets* – He is the *ultimate revelation* about God

1:4-14: Christ is superior to the *angels*

1:14: Definition of an angel: “*spirits sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation*”

2:1-18: Christ is superior in his *suffering*

2:1-13: Danger of drifting away from salvation through *neglect*

2:14-18: We have been delivered from the *fear of death*

3:1-19: Christ is superior to *Moses*

3:2-6, 3:12-15: Danger of departing from God by *hardening our hearts*

4:1-13: Christ is superior to *Joshua*

4:6, 9-11: Danger of abandoning God by *disobedience*

4:12: “Indeed, the word of God is *living and active*, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow, and it is able to *judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*” (NSRV)

* This outline is based on material from *Through the Bible in One Year*, by Dr. James F. Jackson, Senior Pastor, Chapelwood United Methodist Church, Houston, Texas.

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4:14-10:39: Christ is pre-eminent **as a High Priest**

4:14-16: Our *compassionate* High Priest

5:1-10: Introduction of the “*Order of Melchizedek*” theme (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4)

5:11-6:3: Warnings about *spiritual immaturity*

6:4-12: Warning about *spiritual apostasy* – difference between paganism and apostasy: *paganism* is about people who never believed; *apostasy* is about people who once believed and abandoned belief

6:4-6: *This is the best description of an unbeliever in the Bible*

6:13-20: The *certainty of God’s promise* to bless those who have faith in him (Genesis 15:1-21; 22:15-18)

6:19: “*Hope*” is “an anchor of the soul”

7:1-28: Comparison of the Priesthoods of *Melchizedek* and *Aaron* (5:4) – Melchizedek was a prophet, priest, and king (Genesis 14;18) – Abraham paid a tithe to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:20b)

8:1-10:18: Benefits of having *Christ as our High Priest* – we get a better covenant (7:22), a better tabernacle (9:11), and a better sacrifice (9:22; 10:18)

10:19-39: Warnings and exhortations: *a call to steadfastness in faith*

10:24-25: Importance of *meeting together* to stir up one another’s faith

10:26-27: Danger of *intentional* sin, the Old Testament sacrificial system covered only *unintentional* sin (Leviticus 5:14)

11:1-13:17: Christ is pre-eminent **as the pattern of the life of faith**

11:1-3: *Description* of faith

11:4-40: *Heroes* of the faith – Faith *does not always work out* as we had hoped (11:13-16, 35b-40)

12:1-29: The *endurance* of faith

12:1-2: The *face* of faith

12:15: Avoid the “*root of bitterness*”

12:28: “*We are receiving a Kingdom which cannot be shaken*”

13:1-17: Admonitions to *love*

13:2: “Do not neglect to show *hospitality to strangers*, for by so doing some have entertained angels without knowing it”

13:4: “Let *marriage* be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled”

13:8: “Jesus Christ is the *same* yesterday and today and forever”

13:15: “Let us continually offer the sacrifice of *praise to God*, that is, the fruit of lips *that confess his name*”

13:18-25: Closing admonitions and benediction

13:18: “*Pray for us*”

13:20: “Now may the *God of peace*, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, *by the blood of the eternal covenant*, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in

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his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

13:25: God's *final word to believers* is always grace – “*Grace be with all of you.*”

A One-Week Reading Plan for Hebrews

Day 1	Hebrews 1-2
Day 2	Hebrews 3-4
Day 3	Hebrews 5-6
Day 4	Hebrews 7-8
Day 5	Hebrews 9-10
Day 6	Hebrews 11-13
Day 7	Reflection and praying the Scripture