



Lesson 1 - Introduction

Not for Lazy Disciples

- Really the title of this section is misleading. Disciples (Christians) of Jesus Christ are not lazy people. By definition disciples of Jesus Christ are dedicated, serious minded, and very studious.
- See handout: Definition of a Disciple
- A disciple's goal in life is to know Christ, know His ways, and to become just like Him. (1 John 2:6; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Hebrews 6:11-12; 2 Thess 3:9)
- The book of Hebrews requires that one is a diligent student of the Old Testament just as he/she must be a student of the New Testament.

Author:

- No identification of the human writer. Not like Peter and Paul's letters where they identify themselves in verse 1.
- (2 Timothy 3:16-17) ALL Scripture is GOD BREATHED.
★ **MEDITATE on this as we make our way through this book.**

Addressees:

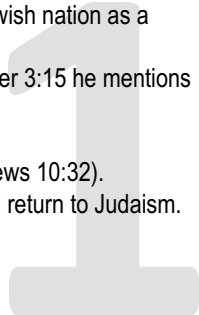
- Not clear from the beginning of the letter like Corinthians, Galatians, or Ephesians, etc.
- It is written to us! (Titus 1:4; 3:15; Mark 13:37; 2 Timothy 3:16-17) It is written for **our** learning. (Romans 15:4)
- Hebrews 1:1-2 – Written to those who have the fathers and prophets as their ancestors – Jewish believers.
- Hebrews 3:1 – shows that this letter is written not to the Jewish nation as a whole but to believers.
- Peter's epistles were written to Jews scattered and in 2 Peter 3:15 he mentions that Paul had written to them.
- These believers were not young in their faith (5:12).
- These believers had suffered persecutions (Acts 8:1; Hebrews 10:32).
- These believers were being tempted to abandon Christ and return to Judaism. The persecution and temptations were great.
- They were a community of a considerable size (13:24).

Purpose of Letter:

- To *assure* these Jewish believers that Christianity superseded Judaism.
- To *assure us* that Christianity is superior to all religions and philosophies.
- The Jewish believers were in a tough position:
 - The Jews had a *divine given* "religion" – unlike the Gentiles around them.
 - The Jews had the knowledge of the One true and living GOD.
 - The Jews worshiped in the spot *divinely* appointed by GOD.
 - Yet, Jewish believers were called on to *forsake* these.
 - They had be taught from their childhood these *truths*.
 - They loved their temple, their ceremonies, their feasts.
 - In the beginning, they were *zealous* to hold on to these things. (Acts 21:20-23).
- But now, with a new high priest, the new believers experienced harsh persecutions:
 - * They were persecuted as transgressors of the *Law*.
 - * Some were stoned to death.
 - * They were subjected to sufferings and reproaches by the religious leaders.
 - * Their goods were confiscated.
 - * BUT, even worse, they were banished from the holy places.
 - * They were not allowed to enjoy the privileges of devout Israelites.
 - * They could not take part in the GOD-appointed feasts.
 - * They were treated as *unclean* and *apostates*.
 - * They were not allowed to enter the Temple. Gentiles had greater rights than they – the Gentiles could at least come into the Court of the Gentiles.
- Questions that might come to their minds:
 - Were *they* right?
 - Were the majority, the Sannhedrin, the priesthood, and rabbis *all* wrong?
 - Had GOD *prospered* them since they had become followers of the crucified One?
 - Did not they temporal circumstances evidence that He was most displeased with them?
 - They had expected a *speedy return* of Christ to earth, but now at least 30 years had passed and He had not come!

Theme of Hebrews: Christ's Superiority:

- Christ is referred to by more than 20 different titles!
- His *superiority* over the prophets: 1:1-3
- His *superiority* over angels: 1:4-2:18
- His *superiority* over Moses: 3:1-19
- His *superiority* over Joshua: 4:1-13
- His *superiority* over Aaron: 5:14-7:18



- His *superiority* over the whole ritual of Judaism: 7:19-10:39
- His *superiority* over all the saints of the Old Testament: 11:1-12:3

Christianity's Superiority over Judaism:

- Christ is **better** than angels: 1:4
- We have a **better** hope: 7:19
- We are under a **better** covenant: 7:22
- The promises are **better**: 8:6
- It speaks of **better** sacrifices: 9:23
- A **better** substance: 10:34
- We look forward to a **better** country: 11:16
- A **better** resurrection: 11:35
- A **better** thing: 11:40

The word "great":

- A **great** salvation: 2:3
- A **great** High Priest: 4:14
- A **great** Tabernacle: 9:11
- A **great** fight of affliction: 10:32
- The **great** recompense: 10:35
- The **great** cloud of witnesses: 12:1
- The **great** Shepherd of the sheep: 13:20

We have:

- A great High Priest (4:14; 8:1).
- An anchor of the soul (6:19).
- A better and enduring substance (10:34).
- An altar (13:10).

Our heavenly Christ (1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2)

- the **heavenly** calling (3:1).
- the **heavenly** gift (6:4).
- to **heavenly** things (8:5).
- the **heavenly** country (11:16).
- the **heavenly** Jerusalem (12:22).
- the church of the First-born, whose names are written in **Heaven** (12:23)

The Epistle is an Exhortation to **STEADFASTNESS**.

- There are *numerous* warnings against *apostasy*!
- Five specific warnings:
 - ① **DANGER** of drifting away. (Hebrews 2:1-3)
 - ② **DANGER** of unbelief. (Hebrews 3:1-4:13)

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- ③ **DANGER** of not maturing. (Hebrews 5:11-6:20)
- ④ **DANGER** of not persevering. (Hebrews 10:26-39)
- ⑤ **DANGER** of refusing God. (Hebrews 12:25-30)

Walking by Faith

- From *outward* symbols, these Jewish believers would now have to *walk by faith*. (Hebrews 10:38; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11)
- What is faith? What does walking in faith look like?

Verbal Inspiration of Scripture.

- In 1:5-9, the author, when quoting from the Psalms, 2 Samuel, and Deuteronomy, refers these utterances to GOD Himself. ("He saith" in vv. 6, 7, 8 and in 3:7 - "the Holy Spirit saith.")

Our Christ

- Christ has Himself purged our sins (1:3).
- He is able to save "to the uttermost" (7:25).
- By His one offering He has "perfected forever the sanctified" (10:14).
- By His blood a new and living way has been opened for His people into the Holiest (10:19, 20).
- He provided an **eternal** salvation (5:9)
- He obtained for us an **eternal** redemption (9:12)
- He secured for us an **eternal** inheritance (9:15)

Topology

- It is here we are taught that the Tabernacle and its furniture, the priesthood and their service, the various sacrifices and offerings, all pointed to the person, offices, and glories of the Lord Jesus.
 - Of the priest: "who served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (8:5).
 - The first tabernacle: "a figure for the time then present" (9:9).
 - Ceremonial Law: "a shadow of good things to come" (10:1).
 - Melchizedec was a type of Christ (7:15).
 - Isaac was a figure of Him (11:9).
 - and much more.

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