

**HEBREWS**

The book of Hebrews is one the most interesting books in the Bible because more than any other book, it connects the foundational building blocks of the Hebrew Faith to Evangelical Doctrine.

It’s 13 chapters are filled with some of the most memorable verses and phrases in the Bible including;

* “Faith is the substance of things hoped for and evidence of things not seen”
* “so great a Cloud of witnesses”
* “He is the anchor of the soul”
* “the division of soul and spirit”

And many, many, more including one of my favorite verses, which is the title verse of the series;

**Heb 12:2** “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

(or as it reads in the NKJV)

**Heb 12:2** “looking unto Jesus, the **“author and finisher”** of *our* faith.

One of the most unusual things about Hebrews is that scholars are not 100% certain about its authorship.

Who wrote the book?

The author of the letter to the Hebrews remains a mystery because he does not identify himself anywhere in the text the way Paul and other New Testament writers do.

Many believe it was Paul, but others believe it was written by Apollos, Barnabas, Luke or someone else.

*Interestingly, In order for a book to be considered part of the “canon” (list of books in the Bible), it needed to meet three criteria;*

1. *apostolic origin,*
2. *2. acceptance by the church,*
3. *3. consistency with other Biblical writings.*

*Hebrews was not included in the early “canon” because they could not verify its authorship. It was later included in all canons because of its accurate representation of Jesus, the Old Testament, and congruence with all other books of the Bible.*

We believe that it is God-breathed, Inspired, scripture*, “and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” [2nd Tim. 3:16]*

When was it written?

Most likely AD 64–69. because the book makes no reference to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem in AD 70, and the author wrote as if the temple sacrificial system was still in existence.

Hebrews assumes that the reader has extensive knowledge of the Hebrew laws, writings, prophecies, and history. This is why it is called Hebrews, the premise is that most, if not all of the readers are Jewish “believers” in Jesus the “Messiah.”

**Hebrews 2**

“We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.”

Chapter two builds upon what the author put forth in chapter 1. In fact, the two 1st verses could be read in succession.

**Heb. 1:1** NKJV “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **2**has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son,”

**Heb 2:1** NKJV “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.”

“Drift away” from *what*?

“The things we have heard.”

What have we heard?

The things God, spoke to the fathers by the prophets, and in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son!”

He tells us to “*pay the most careful attention” so* that we do *not* “drift away”.

He is referring to the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), and the also the things He spoken to the Apostles by His Son (which are recorded in the New Testament).

Do not drift away from the truth of God’s word. Many have done this and have fallen to ruin. Some have been deceived into thinking they are hearing teaching based on the word of God but the words are not rooted in scripture.

[some actually try to “free their soul, and then get lost in their rock and roll, and drift away...] : )

I remember being on a huge cruise ship and watching as it came into dock. As massive as the ship was, and as powerful as the ship’s engines were, they dock hands still needed to grab the ropes and tie it to the docks. It seemed like such a simple, routine method of securing such a huge modern vessel, but it was completely necessary to keep the boat from drifting away.

Another thing that was completely necessary was that the dock itself was secure. If the dock pilings were not driven deeply into the terrain below the water, the dock itself would drift off into the ocean, taking the ship with it.

The Word of God is that dock, and the Hebrew Scriptures are those pilings that are driven deep into the subterranean surface that secure the words and writings of the Apostles and Prophets.

This is why we cannot jettison or ignore the Old Testament as we approach the Word of God. Everything we believe must be rooted in scripture.

[Example of re-writing statement of faith. Debates are welcome, buy must be based on scripture.]

“2For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, 3how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

4God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.”

The Bible is filled with many wonderful words, signs, wonders and various miracles. Most of those who spoke God’s word through the scriptures were Prophets, Apostles, anointed Kings, and others who recorded the history of God’s people.

Some of the Words were given by angels about God’s word itself, like this one given by Gabriel himself to Mary;

**Luke 1:37“**For no word from God will ever fail.”

5It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. 6But there is a place where *someone* has testified:

*“What is mankind that you are mindful of them,
    a son of man that you care for him?
7You made them a little lower than the angels;
    you crowned them with glory and honor
8    and put everything under their feet.”*

“…there is a place where *someone* has testified…” He is quoting Psalm 8:4-6 here but does not give the scripture address. (that’s okay). For us, it’s more important to know the scripture itself than the location where it is found.  *(There are some very important, popular scriptures we should commit to memory however.)*

““8In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. 9But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

He is saying here that while mankind is made a *“little lower”* than the angels, God has crowned us with glory and put everything under our feet (dominion). The angels are created to serve God and minister to us, but we are created to be God’s children through Jesus Christ.

**Eph. 1:5** “he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.”

“10In *bringing many sons and daughters to glory*, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the ‘*pioneer of their salvation’* perfect through what he suffered. 11Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. 12He says,

*“I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters;
    in the assembly I will sing your praises.”*

*13And again,*

*“I will put my trust in him.”*

*And again he says,*

*“Here am I, and the children God has given me.”*

*[Psalm 22 & Isa.8]*

Not all of God’s “creations”, are God’s “children”. Only those who are “reconciled” to God (2nd Cor. 5), and “given the spirit of adoption” (Romans 8:15).

**1st John 3:1 “**See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”

*Children of God, that is what we are, and* Jesus has brought *“many sons and daughters to glory”.*

 ***John 17:* *22“****I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.”*

*Jesus prayed this prayer in the garden of Gethsemane the night before His death. He gave us the glory of God, so that we many one, as they are one.*

*(Remember: “Unity of the spirit through the bond of peace” Eph. 4:3)*

14Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— 15and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Jesus’ death on the cross “broke the power of him who holds the power of death (the devil), and freed those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

His death on the cross, secured for us eternal life in heaven. There is no need to fear death, in fact it is a celebration of our reward, and the hope of glory to be with Jesus in the place that He has prepared for us!

Paul says;

**Phil 1: 21“**For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

16For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. 17For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. 18Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.<>

Jesus was tempted in all ways, but never sinned. Still He is very sympathetic to us, knowing the struggle we all face with various temptations.

**Heb. 4:15** “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.”

***Verse 17 “in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.”***

This is typical Hebrews language. The writer is stating something very powerful, significant, and impactful here and without a simple understanding of the Hebrew Faith and the word atonement, it would be easily missed.

Atonement in Hebrew is Kippur. This is the once-a-year sacrifice made on Yom Kippur (day of Atonement) performed only by a High Priest in the Holy of Holies of the Temple, for the sins of the people.

The most important elements to the day of atonement were The Priest, and the Sacrifice.

In His death on the cross, Jesus was both. He in service to God gave himself up as a spotless sacrifice for the sins of mankind once and for all.

**Heb. 10:4,10,12,14** “4For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

10we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ

12But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 14For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”

Jesus’ death on the cross provided forgiveness of sins and salvation for us. Without it we would definitely need to fear death because we would die ion our sins and spend eternity damnation bearing the wrath of God.

Because if his body on the cross, and blood that was shed. We have the promise of eternal life in paradise with Jesus, to go with Him to the place he has prepared for us, eternity in heaven for all who believe.

This is why we come to the communion table, humbly, joyfully, solemnly, reverently, and most of all gratefully.