

STUDY THE BIBLE - 13 (STB 13) "THE BOOK OF HEBREWS"

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In his Epistle to the Hebrews, **if** Paul is writing to backslidden Christians, **which he isn't**, all he has to do is to refer them to his other books he has written to the churches, where there is more than enough correction for sins and sin mentioned. Take your pick - there's lust, idolatry, fornication, tempting, murmuring, factions within the church and so on. If their sin was drifting away from their love of Jesus, we have the epistle to the Ephesians, where supposedly there was no major doctrinal error or major sin.

No, there's something more at stake here.

The Hebrews to which Paul writes were **not** Christians. They were **not** saved. They were **not** in Christ. Before Christ went to the cross, these Hebrews believed **Christ was fulfilling the law** on their behalf, and they were more than happy attending the temple for **animal blood** sacrifices to cover their sins, and Christ had endorsed this. Yes, they believed that Christ was their Messiah and that he would eventually establish some sort of earthly kingdom. As to the how, when, where or why, they weren't quite sure.

But after 30 years, it is now 65AD when Paul writes to them, things hadn't much changed. In fact, persecution from the Romans was on the increase as Emperor Nero was burning the Christians. They were feeling mightily insecure and unsafe, because although they themselves weren't Christians, they had a lot of sympathy for them. They liked Paul and the other Christians as they were friendly, nice and welcoming. What if Paul was just deluded? They were starting to question whether Christ was the Messiah at all, and have serious doubts as to his promises. Their hearts began to grow cold to the idea of Christ. In fact, they were becoming like the many who walked away when Jesus was alive on earth (John 6:66)

They were thinking about going back to the good old days, where at least there was security with the animal sacrifices for sin. But they had been warned by Peter and Paul that this type of on-going and daily blood atoning for sin had finished. They now had to trust on the shed blood of Christ.

Their dilemma. Should they retreat back to trying to fulfil the law themselves and atone for their sins with animal blood, or should they take the 'big leap of faith' and become Christians as Paul urges them to do. They were afraid! Become a Christian and be burned at the stake. **This is the theme of the Book of Hebrews.**

There are three groups mentioned in the epistle to the Hebrews - the **once enlightened** (Heb 6:4) who have become the **illuminated** (Heb 10:32) to which Paul is writing, and who Paul is **now** urging to become **Christians to the saving of their souls** (Heb 10:39). They are being urged to have Christ as their Saviour, not just their Messiah. If they will not get saved, perdition and the fires of hell await (Heb 10:38-39).

The explanation is as follows: God is **light** (1John 1:5) and when God came to **Abraham**, the **first Hebrew**, and his descendants the **Hebrews**, they were **ENLIGHTENED** (Heb 6:4). The Hebrews first brought the light of God into a dark world, and every time **Aaron** lit the lamps in the temple (Exodus 30:8) he was demonstrating this.

When Christ appears on earth as the **Messiah**, he is the actual physical **brightness of God's glory** (Heb 1:3), and is **the light of the world** (John 19). Like a human spiritual light bulb, Christ was the **illumination** (the illuminator or the one who **lights up**) to the world, such that, "the people which sat in darkness **saw** a great light..." (Matt 4:16).

The disciples of the Messiah were also **ILLUMINATED** (Heb 10:32), being told "Ye are the light of the world ...and let your light so shine before men..." (Matt 5:14, 16)

Now Paul urges these illuminated disciples to **take another step forward** and become **"...LIGHT IN THE LORD..."** (Eph 5:8) as Christians.

Chapter 1.

Paul reminds them that the prophets spoke to them in the past, but now Christ is talking to them (v2). Paul gives them Christ's credentials, by comparing him to angels who they hold in the highest regard, as being second only to God. Angels are all throughout the Old Testament and are totally involved in the Jews' daily lives. Paul hopes to get their attention as to the importance of God's Son, Jesus Christ, with Christ having a greater standing with God than the angels

1. The Son is heir of all things (v2) 2. The Son made all the worlds (v2) 3. The Son is the brightness of God's glory (v3) 4. The Son is the express image of God - he is God manifest in the flesh (v3) 5. The Son upholds all things in the universe by the word of his power (v3) 6. The Son purged our sins on the cross (v3) 7. The Son now sits on the right hand of God in heaven (v3) 8. The Son is made better (not created) as the angels have been (v4) 9. The Son has a better name than the angels (v4) 10. The Son is begotten but the angels are not (v5) 11. The Son is to be worshipped by the angels (v6) 12. the Son has an everlasting kingdom, the angels do not (v8) 13. The Son has been anointed but the angels have not (v9) 14. The Son created the

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heaven and the earth (v10) 15. The Son will live forever but the heavens and the earth will perish (v11-12) 16. The Son sits on the right hand of God but the angels don't (v13) 17. The angels will minister to those who receive the Son (v14)

Chapter 2.

Paul urges them to believe the angels with signs, wonders, miracles and gifts (v1-4) Paul calls him Jesus - a man made a little lower than the angels, being made in the flesh (v9) and died for every man (v9). Jesus is the captain of those who get saved and he sanctifies them (v10-12) Jesus destroys the power of death and fear of death (v14-15) Jesus becomes a man (v16) Jesus paid the penalty for sins (v17-18)

Chapter 3

Christ Jesus is counted more worthy than faithful Moses (v1-5) Harden not your hearts through **UNBELIEF**, as you did for 40 years in the desert (v6-19) This is their prevailing and besetting sin (Heb 12:1)

Chapter 4

Paul urges them to overcome their unbelief and have faith and obtain salvation rest (v1-11) Don't try and fake it either but be sincere as God sees what's inside (v12-13) You are not saved therefore come boldly unto this salvation (v15-16)

Chapter 5

Christ is now the high priest (v1-5) Christ is similar to Melchisedec to whom Levi went and offered sacrifices (v 6-11) They were given God's words but haven't progressed and remain on milk like little babies (v12-14)

Chapter 6

Watch out for the **VARIOUS SHIFTS BETWEEN THE THREE DIFFERENT DISPENSATIONS THAT OCCUR IN THE FIRST TWO VERSES!**

This is critical. It is crucial to understanding what the Book of Hebrews is all about!

IF YOU GET THIS WRONG, YOU HAVE TO SAY PAUL WRITES TO BACK-SLIDDEN CHRISTIANS, AND, YOU BECOME A BELIEVER OF THE LOSS OF SALVATION.

This is why the Book of Hebrews is the most misunderstood book in the Bible, and pastors and preachers leave it alone. They don't understand it.

These **eight verses are the most difficult to understand** in the whole Bible.

Use the following diagram as the guide.

Moses
"enlightened"
the past

Christ the Messiah
"illuminated"
the present

Jesus the Saviour
Christian
the future

PAUL writes to the "illuminated"

He warns them **not** go back to the past under Moses

He urges them to go forward **IN** Christ

¹ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,

This is THE DOCTRINE OF THE MESSIAH CHRIST (John 1:41) and the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

let us go on unto perfection;

This is THE DOCTRINE OF PAUL of "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 16:30-31)

not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

² Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

This is THE DOCTRINE OF MOSES AND AARON. Yes, they had these 6 things under Moses.

³ And this will we do, if God permit.

⁴ For it is impossible

Impossible means impossible

for those who were once enlightened,

They are presently illuminated by believing Christ is the Messiah. But previously, they were enlightened under Moses.

They have progressed from being enlightened under Moses to being illuminated under Christ the Messiah.

and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

⁵ And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

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Under Moses and his five books in the Old Testament, they received the law and tasted, were made partakers of, and knew of the world to come.

NOTE: A partaker is not a permanent possessor. There was only ever temporary salvation.

6 If they shall fall away,

They are NOW ILLUMINATED but are in danger of falling away back into Moses.

Yes, this is the loss of a temporary salvation of believing in Christ the **Messiah** and retreating back into another dispensation of temporary salvation under Moses.

to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

By going back into Moses under his laws would mean they scorn and shame what Christ has done for them, that he had shed his blood for them. By doing so, they would declare that they approved of what the Jews did in crucifying Christ, and that they would do the same thing again, if it were in their power.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

Like the earth that is blessed and produces when it is rained upon

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

If you reject the doctrine of perfection in Paul, you will be like the worthless thorns and bushes with prickles, and will be burned in the fires of hell.

Paul assures them of this with a promise and an oath from God (v13-18)

Chapter 7

This is about Melchisedec. An actual man (v1) with no father and mother and no beginning or end (v3) With Levi (the Jewish priests) not being born yet, and therefore still being in Abraham, Abraham, on their behalf gave Melchisedec gifts (v4). This means that the Levi priesthood (representing the law of Moses) is servant to Jesus, as Jesus is like Melchisedec. (v5-11) There must be a change of the law of Moses, and of the Levites, as found in the Book of Leviticus (v12) This new law comes out of Judah, not Levi, in the form of Jesus (v13-25) Unlike many animal blood sacrifices, Jesus dies once for their sins (v26-28)

Chapter 8

Jesus Christ now sits beside God the Father in heaven and is the true minister as the high priest (v1-5) Paul tells them a **NEW COVENANT** that will be made with **ISRAEL, NOT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**, in the seven year tribulation (Zechariah 12:10) (v6-13)

Chapter 9

All the earthly services performed under Moses are now obsolete and done away with, as the blood of bulls and goats **not** being able to purge (wipe away from the guilt) their consciences (v1-14)

They are now under the new testament of **Christ's blood** which will purge their conscience (v15-28)

Chapter 10

The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins but only cover them (v1-9)

Christ's blood offered only once (v10-19). The Messiah believing Jews were coming to the church services and having fellowship with the Christians. Paul urges them to continue meeting with "**ourselves**" (v22-25)

After they came away from Moses and believed in Christ Messiah, they were persecuted by their former friends in the enlightened camp (v32-34). They were still law abiding Jews though.

However, they can have their souls saved if they do what God wants them to do (v35-39).

Chapter 11

An account of all those who have gone before and obeyed God by their faith (v1-40)

Chapter 12

The besetting sin for the Jew has always been **unbelief** (v1) Chastening and correction will come from the Lord as children not as bastards (v(v1-13) Don't be like Esau who got diverted (v15-17) Do not refuse the Lord or you will have his wrath as at Mt Sinai as the Lord is a consuming fire (v18-29)

Chapter 13

The Lord will never leave not forsake you (v5-6) Christians have the **rule** over you as they have spoken the word of God to you (v7), **obey** them (v17) and **salute** them (v24).

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