

New Testament Foundations: Session Nineteen

Hebrews: The Book of Better Things

Authorship

1. The _____ of Hebrews is one of the great mysteries of the New Testament.

Origen

"Only God knows with certainty who wrote Hebrews."

2. The exact _____ of Hebrews is also a mystery, but it does seem likely that it was written before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD.
3. To whom the letter of Hebrews was first sent is another unsolved mystery. However, the _____ evidence suggests that it was written to a local congregation of Jewish Christians.
4. All that is known about the _____ of Hebrews is what can be pieced together from the textual evidence.
- They were a congregation in danger of _____ away from faith in Christ.

Hebrews 2:1

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

- They were a congregation who had faced _____ in the past and were facing it again.

Hebrews 10:32

But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings...

Style

1. Several stylistic elements are prominent in Hebrews.
- It is more like a _____ than a letter.
 - It is the most _____ composition in the entire New Testament.
 - It is filled with _____ from the Old Testament.
 - It is organized in a _____ order that consists of five major theological sections interspersed with five exhortations.

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Theology # 1 | 1:1-14 God's final revelation in Christ is better than His first revelation given through angels. |
| Exhortation # 1 | 2:1-4 Be careful not to drift away through neglecting so great a salvation. |
| Theology # 2 | 2:5-3:6 Christ in His incarnation is superior to the angelic beings and better than Moses. |
| Exhortation # 2 | 3:7-4:16 Be careful not to harden your heart through disobedience and unbelief. |
| Theology # 3 | 5:1-10 Christ is a better high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. |
| Exhortation # 3 | 5:11-6:12 Be careful not to receive the Word and then turn away from it. |
| Theology # 4 | 6:13-10:18 Christ is the mediator of a better covenant in the eternal sanctuary. |

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|-----------------|---|
| Exhortation # 4 | Hebrews 10:19-39 Be careful not to throw away your confidence and shrink back. |
| Theology # 5 | 11:1-40 Faith is the prerequisite to pleasing God and obtaining a good testimony. |
| Exhortation # 5 | 12:1-13:24 Be careful not to reject the discipline of the Lord and come short of His grace. |

- It is characterized by a series of periodic _____ that are consistently translated, “Let us...”

| Verse | Exhortation |
|-------|---|
| 4:1 | Let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. |
| 4:11 | Let us therefore strive to enter that rest. |
| 4:14 | Let us hold fast our confession. |
| 4:16 | Let us with confidence draw near to the throne of grace. |
| 6:1 | Let us...go on to maturity. |
| 10:22 | Let us draw near...in full assurance of faith. |
| 10:23 | Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. |
| 10:24 | Let us consider how to stir up one another. |
| 12:1 | Let us also lay aside every weight. |
| 12:1 | Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. |
| 12:28 | Let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken. |
| 13:13 | Let us...bear the reproach he endured. |
| 13:15 | Let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God. |

Purpose

- I. Hebrews was written to _____ a church in the midst of opposition and persecution. The author motivates them to remain faithful with three exhortations:

- Hold fast to your confession.

Hebrews 4:14

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

- Endure your circumstances.

Hebrews 12:1

...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

- Look to your reward.

Hebrews 12:2

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Themes

- I. The general theme that predominates the book of Hebrews is the unqualified _____ of Jesus Christ, a supremacy that tolerates no challenge.

Hebrews 1:2, 3

...in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

- Hebrews provides us with a clearer understanding of the _____ ministry of Christ.

Hebrews 7:25

Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 4:15, 16

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

- Hebrews provides us with a clearer understanding of the _____.

Hebrews 2:14, 17

Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—Jesus also became flesh and blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could He die, and only by dying could He break the power of the Devil, who had the power of death. Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to be in every respect like us so that He could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. He then could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. (NLT)

- Hebrews provides us with a clearer view of the “_____” new covenant. The New Covenant believer has a better mediator (1:4), a better hope (7:19), a better covenant with better promises (8:6), a better sacrifice (9:23), and a better provision (11:40).

2. Another significant theme in Hebrews is the importance of _____.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.