

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Hebrews resumes the subject of the book of Acts.

Paul's epistles are a parenthesis in God's administrations. In Acts the kingdom of the heavens is proclaimed, and rejected by the nation of Israel as a whole. Yet there was a remnant who believed. Of these the Hellenists followed the revelations given to Paul and found a new and a celestial destiny. Galatians 6:15. Greek.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision or Uncircumcision is anything, but there is a new creation".

But the Hebrews, associated with the twelve apostles and James, whose destiny is the kingdom as promised by the prophets, are left in a distressing situation due to the national deflection of Israel. What is to become of them during the time that the nation stumbles? The kingdom cannot come until after the fullness of the nations has come in. Romans 11:25-28 Greek.

".... that Israel, in part, has been calloused until the complement of the nations may be entering. And thus all Israel shall be saved...."

That could hardly be during their lifetime. The book of Hebrews deals with the problem of these Pentecostal believers and takes them back to the same position as was occupied by the patriarchs and prophets of old, as explained in chapter 11. They died in faith not having received the promises.

An important distinction between Hebrews and Hellenists will help in understanding this epistle. Both were Jews, of the stock of Israel as to the flesh. Both are brought before us in Acts ch.6. where the widows of the Hellenists were distinguished from the Hebrew widows. Acts 6:1 Greek.

"Now in these days of multiplying disciples, there came to be a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews that their widows were overlooked in the daily dispensation".

Both spoke Greek, but the culture and training of the Hebrews was essentially eastern and according to the tradition of their ancestors. The Hellenists, who were composed mostly of those of foreign lands, were Greek in culture and customs. So distinct were they that they had special synagogues in Jerusalem. The Hebrews were strong for ritual and the religion of their fathers. They are the special subjects of this epistle, as is manifest from the opening strain.

As the faith of the Pentecostal believer rested on signs, wonders and miracles in anticipation of the powers of the kingdom, some fell away when the kingdom did not appear. Their apostasy is dealt with in Chapters 6 and 10. - Passages which have no application in the present administration of grace, but which have hung as a cloud over the heads of those who imagine themselves in a similar position. Saints in Israel were conditionally pardoned. Its continuance depended upon their extension of this pardon to the other nations, as in the parable of the ten thousand-talent debtor. The pardon could be and was withdrawn. It is not in force now.

We have the infinitely higher favour of justification.

Hebrews is the antitype of the wilderness journey of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land.

It brings Christ before us as the true Mediator, greater than Moses, the true Saviour, greater than Joshua, the true Chief Priest, greater than Aaron.

It holds forth better promises concerning the land and the kingdom. Its type is the tabernacle and its ministry, before Israel entered the land.