A PASSAGE THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT
PART TEN

The Letter to the Hebrews

by Jeff S. Smith
Printing Instructions

1. Download the booklet and open it in Adobe Reader.
2. Print ONLY the ODD pages.
3. Now FLIP THE PILE OVER so the blank sides are ready.
4. Print ONLY the EVEN pages.
5. Fold the pages in the middle and staple twice along the spine.

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6. (13:17) Are church rulers (certainly elders are meant) accountable for their service? To whom?

Answer: Elders are accountable to God for their service.

7. What are our responsibilities to them?

Answer: We should submit to them that they might serve happily.

8. (13:18-25) What does the writer ask them to do regarding his word of exhortation in this letter? Why?

Answer: He asks them to bear with it because it is full of correction.

The Epistle to The Hebrews
Authorship: Uncertain

The book of Hebrews is clearly a letter, but it lacks both the sender’s and addressee’s names. It is not a circular letter like the General Epistles and reads more like a series of sermons on the superiority of Christ than anything else.

Even those in early church history were uncertain about the author of Hebrews, but the mention of Timothy’s name (13:23) gives credence to the conclusion that the apostle Paul is the writer. Too, the writing style is Pauline at times, but a hint of Greek background has led some to favor Apollos as the author. Barnabas, Luke, Silas, Aquila or Priscilla have all been suggested as possible writers as well. This, however, must remain a secret thing that belongs to God and in the end, the book is consistent with the rest of the New Testament and its place in the canon is unquestionable.

Jewish Christians are addressed in the book -- those who had come to Christ from a Hebrew background and were now faced with persecution and pressure to renounce Jesus and return to Mosaic worship. The letter employs very dramatic language to persuade these saints that Christ and his new testament are so far superior to Moses that they should consider it an honor to endure persecution and remain faithful. The alternative would bring acceptance by Jewish kin but rejection by God and a sentence of hell.

Deep doctrinal discourses are often interrupted by very practical commandments regarding various aspects of the Christian’s life, including sexual morality, prayer and contentment. The writer chides his audience for their dullness of hearing and encourages them to grow in their knowledge.

The message throughout the letter, however, is one of comparison between old and new. The new covenant of Jesus Christ is better than the old covenant of Moses; the letter is in some ways a counterpart to the letter to the Romans. The key word to understanding Hebrews is “better.” The Hebrew Christians were in danger of reverting to the law of Moses, giving up their faith, and falling away.
Lesson 13: Exhortations
Hebrews 13:1-25

1. (13:1-3) How can brotherly love continue?

2. (13:4) How has modern society’s acceptance of multiple marriages and free sex changed God’s standing?

3. (13:5-6) How can covetousness cause us to distrust God?

4. (13:7-9) Who are the likely objects of this remembrance?

5. (13:10-16) What did it mean for a Jew to go “outside the camp” to be with Jesus?
5. (12:18-24) In one word, describe the reaction of Israel to the presence of God and his authority. What should be our response to Christ and his authority in the New Testament?

Answer: They were in awe and we should be the same.

Lesson 1: Spoken Through Jesus
Hebrews 1:1-14

1. Who wrote the book of Hebrews? To whom was it written?

2. (1:1-4) By whom did God speak unto the fathers in times past? By whom has He spoken in these last days?

2. List seven things said about Jesus in verses 2-3.

   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
   e.
   f.
   g.

6. How does the writer describe the church of Christ?

7. (12:25-29) How does the writer characterize our service in the ideal?

8. Why should we strive to serve God acceptably?
3. (1:5-14) This passage is composed of a number of Old Testament quotations which predicted certain things about the Messiah, which were fulfilled in Jesus. How do we know that Jesus is higher than the angels?

Answer: The passage states that Jesus is the Son, which is a higher position than the angels occupy, and that he sits at the right hand of God. He is worshiped and ministered to by those creatures.

4. To what event does this “begetting” refer (Acts 13:32-35)?

Answer: The resurrection of Jesus Christ, not his birth.

5. What phrase in verses 8 and 9 solidifies our knowledge that Jesus was and is deity?

Answer: God calls Jesus “God.”

6. What tells us of the preexistent nature of Christ?

Answer: He is said to have existed before the foundation of the Earth.

7. What is the role of angels toward believers?

Answer: They are ministering servants sent to aid the heir of salvation.

8. How do they accomplish this work?

Answer: It is not terribly clear, but we know that they minister to us and that their special work is as messengers.

Lesson 12: Suffering
Hebrews 12:3-29

1. (12:3-11) How should the Christian respond to God’s chastening?

Answer: He should not despise the chastening of the Lord or be discouraged for God allows it out of love. Understand he is performing perfectly in the Father/child relationship. Respect Him and be subject to Him. Realize the profit that comes from chastening and be trained by it.

2. (12:12-17) What two things should Christians pursue? Which is more important and should take precedence over the other?

Answer: Christians should pursue peace and holiness, but neither is more important than the other.

3. How can a Christian be made to fall short of God’s grace?

Answer: He can trip over a root of bitterness and be defiled by sin.

4. Explain the lesson in Esau’s negative example.

Answer: Esau mortgaged his future for the present by selling his birthright for some stew. We make the same error by trading heaven for indulgence. The time for repentance will expire when the inheritance is being distributed in the day of judgment.
3. (11:32-40) Why did such people not accept deliverance?
Answer: They were interested in a better resurrection and would have forfeited that by recanting their faith in order to save their lives.

4. (12:1-2) What two things are we instructed to lay aside? To whom should we look for encouragement and example?
Answer: We should lay aside our sin and every weight that we might run with endurance and look to Christ.

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Lesson 2: So Great A Salvation
Hebrews 2:1-18

1. (2:1-4) What can we do to prevent ourselves from drifting away?
Answer: We must give more earnest heed to the things we have heard and been taught through our Master.

2. What will happen if we fail as Christians to maintain our loyalty to Christ?

3. How has God borne witness that this word is true?
Answer: He bore witness through signs, wonders, miracles and gifts done by the apostles and other inspired men.

4. (2:5-9) How and why was Jesus “made lower than the angels”?
Answer: He was made lower through his incarnation in human flesh so that he could taste death in order to make grace possible for all men.
5. Was his death foreknown by God before his nativity (First Peter 1:17-21)?

Answer: Yes.

6. (2:10-13) How was the captain of our salvation made perfect? How is Christ made unashamed to call us his brethren (cf. John 17:17)?

Answer: He was made perfect through sufferings and can call us brethren when we are sanctified by Christ through the word of God.

7. (2:14-18) How is man's attitude toward death changed because of the work of Christ?

Answer: Where men were formerly afraid of the mystery of death, Christ's work has made the other side knowable and even desirable.

8. How is he particularly qualified to be the high priest of our faith?

Answer: He himself was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Lesson 11: Hall of Faith
Hebrews 11:1-12:2

1. (11:1-3) How does the writer describe faith?

Answer: Is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

2. (11:4-31) Complete the following chart of members of the Hebrews 11 catalog of faith:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSES</th>
<th>CHARACTER</th>
<th>COMMENDATION</th>
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<td>5-6</td>
<td>Enoch</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Noah</td>
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<td>Abraham</td>
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<td>Moses</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Rahab</td>
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6. What good works are neglected by those who forsake assembling with the saints?

Answer: They fail to consider one another in order to stir up love and good works. They fail to exhort one another so much more as the day approaches.

7. (10:26-31) What kind of sin is forsaking the assembling? What loss results from willful sins?

8. What crimes are committed in willful sin according to verse 29?
   a. trampling Christ underfoot
   b. counting the blood of Christ a common thing
   c. insulting the Spirit of grace

9. What will become of Christians who fall into this condemnation?

Answer: They will be judged by God and face the fearful prospect of vengeance at the hands of a living God.

10. (10:32-39) Summarize what these Christians had suffered in their walk with Jesus so far.

Answer: They had been made a spectacle by reproaches and tribulations, become companions with brethren so abused, and accepted the plundering of their goods.

11. Why had they suffered these things with endurance?

Answer: They knew they had a better and enduring possession in heaven.

Lesson 3: Better Than Moses
Hebrews 3:1-19

1. (3:1-6) What is the difference between Moses and Jesus?

2. What does the word “apostle” mean? How is Jesus an apostle?

3. How do we remain in Christ’s house?

4. (3:7-15) How does this passage teach that apostasy is possible?
Lesson 10: Let Us
Hebrews 10:1-39

1. (10:1-4) What was the primary shortcoming of the Old Testament sacrifices?

2. (10:5-10) According to verse 5, for whom was the body prepared?

3. (10:11-18) What did the priests of the Old Testament do daily? What did Christ do after offering one sacrifice for sin?

4. (10:19-25) What can we now enter? How?

5. List the three commands that begin “Let us” in this passage.
   a. 
   b. 
   c.
5. What four things are specifically mentioned which Moses sprinkled with blood?

a. book (19)

b. people (19)

c. tabernacle (21)

d. its vessels (21)

6. (9:23-28) Where has Jesus gone now? What does he do there?

Answer: Jesus is in heaven where he appears before God for us.

7. What happens to men after they die? Reincarnation? What should be the attitude of the living toward Christ’s return?

Answer: They are reserved for judgment. The living should eagerly await his return because it means salvation.

Lesson 4: High Priesthood of Christ
Hebrews 4:1-16

1. (4:1-10) What attitude is necessary lest we fall short of God’s promised rest?

2. Why does the gospel not benefit all who hear it?

3. How is a hardened heart expressed today (cf. Ephesians 4:17-19)?

4. At what point may the Christian retire from life’s good works?

5. (4:11-13) What type of effort is required to enter that rest?

7. What happens to men after they die? Reincarnation? What should be the attitude of the living toward Christ’s return?
Lesson 9: Appointed to Die
Hebrews 9:1-28

1. (9:1-5) What were the two main parts of the tabernacle? How were they separated?

2. (9:6-10) What was the Holy Spirit indicating by sending the high priest into the second part alone once a year?

3. (9:11-15) What promise does the work of Christ hold for those who lived before his incarnation?

4. (9:16-22) Did the New Testament take effect before the cross? Why or why not?

6. How does the writer describe the power of God’s word in these verses?

Answer: It is as powerful as a two-edged sword which can pierce to the division of soul and spirit and lay bare even the thoughts and intents of the hearts of men.

7. (4:14-16) Why can Jesus sympathize with our weaknesses?

Answer: He lived on Earth and faced temptation himself, though he responded perfectly every time.

8. What opportunity does this afford us in time of need?

Answer: We can approach the throne of grace boldly to find help.

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Lesson 5: A Superior High Priest
Hebrews 5:1-14

1. (5:1-4) What limitations of character did human high priests have under the law of Moses?

2. Did one make himself a high priest?

3. (5:5-11) According to which order is Christ a priest?

4. Why was Jesus heard?

5. How did he learn obedience?

6. How did Jesus become the author of eternal salvation?
7. Why was the author reluctant to explain the priesthood of Melchizedek to this audience?

Answer: They had become dull of hearing and were unprepared to deal with a difficult subject like this one.

8. (5:12-5:14) What was their shortcoming?

Answer: They were not growing beyond “milk” knowledge and were thus unable to handle such a meaty subject as Melchizedek. They should have been teachers by this time.

9. How does one gain the ability to discern right from wrong?

Answer: Exercise, that is applying God’s word to every decision of morality.

Lesson 8: Covenants

Hebrews 8:1-13

1. (8:1-6) What is the main point of this discussion?

Answer: Christ is such a high priest who is seated at the right hand of God and is a minister of the sanctuary and true tabernacle of the Lord.

2. What is one reason that Christ’s new covenant is better than the old covenant of Moses?

Answer: It is established on better promises and is not merely the copy or shadow of the heavenly things as was Moses’s law.

3. Of what were the Old Testament things mere shadows and copies?

Answer: The heavenly things.

4. Why are patterns important?

Answer: Patterns from God are important for he tells us exactly how he wants things to be. To do otherwise is to build an unfitting ark.

5. (8:7-13) What was wrong with the old covenant?

Answer: It had shortcomings in that it could never remove anyone’s sins forever.
4. How does this principle establish the importance of the silence of God regarding authority?

Answer: The writer appeals to God's silence as an implicit condemnation of Jews serving as priests under the old law.

5. (7:18-25) Through what do we draw near to God?

Answer: Through our hope which is in the new commandment.

6. What does Christ ever live to do?

Answer: To make intercession for the saints who come to him.

7. (7:26-28) How did Jesus make offering for our sins once for all?

Answer: He offered up himself as an extraordinary and perfect sacrifice.

Lesson 6: Hope
Hebrews 6:1-20

1. (6:1-3) List the elementary principles identified in this passage.

a. repentance from dead works

b. faith toward God

c. baptisms

d. laying on of hands

e. resurrection of the dead

f. eternal judgment

2. Since they are elementary principles, it should be simple to say a few things about each. Do so.

a. repentance from dead works: necessary to salvation (Acts 2:38)

b. faith toward God: necessary to salvation (Mark 16:16)

c. baptisms: only one in force today, water immersion for remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Ephesians 4)

d. laying on of hands: practice whereby spiritual gifts were imparted in age of miracles

e. resurrection of the dead: promise that all will be raised as Jesus was to face judgment

f. eternal judgment: decision of God to reward or punish according to a man's works
3. (6:4-8) What was the danger in falling away?

Answer: They would forfeit their eternal inheritance in heaven for a life of less peril now.

4. (6:9-12) What did the writer require of these Christians?

Answer: He wanted them to continue to be zealous for well doing and not to become sluggish or tired.

5. (6:13-20) How firm should our faith be?

Answer: We have seen that God deals faithfully; our faith ought to hold like an anchor.

6. By what two things did God confirm his word?

Answer: The promise of blessing and an oath that he would fulfill.

7. Into what has Jesus gone to minister for us? What promise does this hold for us?

Answer: He is our forerunner to God's presence behind the veil.

Lesson 7: Melchizedek

Hebrews 7:1-28

1. (7:1-10) List three mysterious things said about Melchizedek which also apply to Jesus.

   a. 

   b. 

   c. 

2. List three things that show Melchizedek was greater than Abraham.

   a. 

   b. 

   c. 

3. (7:11-17) What change was necessitated that Christ could become a priest? Why?

   a. 

   b. 

   c.