

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS STUDY GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Comment: One of the most important things to discover about any Book of the Bible and especially about The New Testament is why it was written and to whom. It appears that every book in the New Testament was written because the recipients were in the midst of some struggle, conflict or confusion about their Christian faith, or with some teacher or group who claimed to be proponents of the truth of the gospel. Each book was written to address or clarify one or more issues facing the church or individuals to whom they were addressed. The Book of Hebrews is no different.

Without knowing who the author is talking to (or about), many Christians apply passages to themselves that are not intended for the faithful in Christ and become confused about the basis of and the security of their own salvation. Chapters six and ten are especially difficult if one does not realize to whom the message is addressed.

Before we ask those questions and look into them, I would recommend you possess a good study Bible. The best I have found that is still in print is the Zondervan NASB Study Bible. I recommend reading the introduction to the Book of Hebrews prior to doing the study as well as filling out the first question in this guide. Do more if time allows.

Finally, I would suggest you work in pencil. Have a good eraser handy. Changes are inevitable.

So here are three very important questions to ask. Work on one each week, more if you are able. Perhaps the most important is the question,

1. “When the author speaks of ‘we’, ‘us’ ‘you’ or ‘our’, or quotes passages containing one or more of those words, of whom is he speaking (or addressing) and how is he employing these terms? For example, does he ever use an “editorial” ‘we’? Write your conclusions in the space below. For help and indications of this see Hebrews chapter (in bold) **1**:2, 5, 9-12; **2**:3a, 3b; 4-5, 8a, 8b, 9; **3**:1, 3, 6,7-11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19; **4**:1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16; **5**:11a, 11b, 12; **6**:1, 3, 4, 6, 9-12, 18a, 18b:-20, **7**:4, 26; **8**:1, 8; **9**:14, 24; **10**:10, 19- 25, 26, 30, 32-36, 39; **11**:3,32, 40; **12**:1-10, 12-13, 14-17, 18-29; **13**:1, 3-25.

Some of the above may not be as relevant as others. Work through them all however. Assistance and the answers are available at the end of the entire study guides.

Additional hint: Note the title of the book. It might help to take some paper (a yellow pad or such) make columns or rows and define the answer after each verse you employ. You can then organize or collate the answers into a brief list. This is up to you.

I recommend you read the immediate context of each passage as well as it will help. Then supply your basic answers or conclusions below. Again, first create a list of whom he is addressing, speaking to or including. Second, make a note how he uses these terms. In other words, for example, when he uses the word “we” whom is he including? Do you know why? This will be some work and take time but it is worth it and the key to properly understanding and interpreting the book.

The second most important question is:

2. What are the specific issues or concerns the author is dealing with among his readers? In other words, what are they struggling with or resisting? Feel free to expand your previous list. Note their struggle as you are able to glean it from the given texts.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. What is the key point of the chapter?

2. Why did the author write this chapter? In other words, what was the intent he had in so doing as it is read by those to whom it was sent?

3. What does beginning this way say about the recipients of the letter?

4. In verse 3, what did Christ's single sacrifice accomplish? Include in your answer, "For whom" and "For how long"? How do you know? Feel free to note other scripture in support of your conclusion. (You might wish to check John 1:29 and I John 2:2 as well as others as you consider your answer).

5. Considering verse three, is there, then, anymore need to seek forgiveness for sins? Why or why not?

6. Is there anything more mankind can do to atone for his sins?

Why then, do the Catholic and most Christian churches insist that one must confess his sins to be forgiven or do some deed, or first forgive others or do penance in order to be forgiven?

7. If I John 1:9 came to mind, read both the introduction to I John and chapter 1:5-10 in the letter and ask yourself the following questions. A. Could John be using the word “we” in an “editorial” sense rather than in a personal sense. B. If John is speaking about believing Christians then how is it that such believers would, in verse 8, “say” they “have no sin” since it was because of their sins they came to Christ in the first place? If the “we” includes Christians then it must also include John Himself! If so, then John is a liar and the truth is not in him either is it?

Therefore, how is it that verse 9 can apply to Christians? Work on this if you are confused, it is important, even critical.¹

8. Is forgiveness the same as salvation? If not, what is the difference and why?

¹ To either help you or confuse you more, note that often Christian pastors and teachers apply Matthew 6:12-15 to Christian believers. Is the teaching there true of believers under the New Covenant? If not, why not? If so, then what about Paul’s counsel in Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 2:13, 3:12-13, etc.

9. Beginning with verse four, the remainder of the chapter (and much of chapter two) is spent on contrasting the place of “angels” with that of the “Son” of God. Why do you think the author feels compelled to bring this up and spend so much time on it?

10. What do verses 8-12 say about the Son’s identity?

11. In the discussion about whom the author is addressing, why would he bring up Jesus “sitting down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”² and spend so much time on “angels” if he were writing to Gentiles?

² For more on this and the answer see: 8:1; 10:11-13 and 12:2.

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CHAPTER TWO

1. What is the "reason" that causes the author to underscore how much closer attention must be given to the message God has spoken in Christ?

2. In verse 3, how can the word "we" apply to Christians who have come to salvation, including the author, and then be warned (warning himself of course) about neglecting "so great a salvation"? Explain what is going on here?

3. Verses 3 and 4 tell us something about the relationship of the author and those with him with the early disciples/apostles. What is it?

4. In verse 5, the author notes that God did not subject the "world to come" (of which we are speaking) to the angels. What verses already read could refer to the "world to come?"

5. Verses 6-8 are a quote from Psalm 8. In it we read how God gave dominion over creation to mankind. What is the author suggesting in the last sentence of verse 8?

6. Psalm 8 is definitely about God having given dominion to man over the creation, man who is "made for a little while a little lower than the angels". But in 9 and the following verses, the author attributes to Jesus (superior to the angels) as seen lower than the angels. What is meant by this?

7. How is it that it became possible for God to experience suffering?

8. Christ's death was for whom? _____

9. What does it mean that "the author of our salvation" is perfected through suffering? (For a hint, see 17-18)

10. In verse 14 the author states that Christ rendered the devil powerless. What does he mean by this?

11. What does the author intend us to understand by verse 15? i.e. How does Christ's death free those subject to slavery through fear of death? What slavery?

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CHAPTER THREE

1. The first few verses find commentators split over to whom they are addressed, namely, either to believing Christian "brethren" or to the Jewish "brethren" who have been addressed to this point in the epistle. Consider both sides and then state your conclusion and why.

2. The argument moves from Christ as supreme above the angels to His being supreme above Moses. List reasons the author summons to underscore his argument.

3. In verse six (and 14), it could be argued that, "To be a member of Christ's house is dependent upon 'holding fast to one's confidence and hope' (to the end)." Is there another way to properly understand this verse and, if so, what would it be and why?

4. What is the point of emphasizing the idea of "God's rest" in this chapter and chapter four? To help, perhaps you might consider what "God's rest" represents.

5. How does one enter God's rest and what is it that would prevent this?

6. Would it be proper to correspond "God's rest" with being in His "house" as well as being a "partaker" of Christ?

7. If, through unbelief, one does not enter God's rest, what is the consequence?

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CHAPTER FOUR

1. Chapter 3 and verses 1-9 of chapter four reveal two "rests" the author employs. What are they?

2. In verse 1, the author speaks of "His rest". Which "rest" is he referring to?

3. The author uses the "rest" of settlement in the promised-land as an illustration of the "rest" provided by God and compares them. What is the point of this comparison? Hint – note verse 11.

4. Verses 8-9 is clear that opportunity still remains to enter "His rest". What is to be done with this opportunity?

5. Verses 11-12 are well known. In the context of the book, and especially this chapter, what is being "examined" or "judged" by the "word of God", and to what are the "thoughts and intentions" referring?

6. Can you rephrase verses 14-16 to reflect the point the author is trying to impress upon his readers in writing these verses?

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CHAPTER FIVE

1. The focus is now on the "priesthood" of Christ. It is compared to the earthly priesthood during the days of worship of the tabernacle. List the attributes of the earthly priest hood as described in verses 1-4.

2. In verses 5-6, the lineage of Christ as high priest is noted. First, list the differences in lineage.

Second, list the similarities and differences in function.

3. Verse 7-9 describes Jesus' suffering. How does this relate to Him being our High Priest?

4. In verse 9, the word "complete" is better than "perfect". What was it that made Him "complete" and what does that mean?

4. What does the phrase, "He became... the source of eternal salvation" mean?

5. Verse 10 talks of Christ being a "high priest according to the order of Melchizedek". Then the author goes on to say that explaining Melchizedek in this context is "hard to explain" to his readers. Why is that?

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CHAPTER SIX

1. Verses 1-3 exhibit the author's desire to press on to "maturity". He lists several topics that are "milk" (chapter 5:12-14). Are these referring to Jewish topics or Christian? How do you know?

2. Verses 4-6 is often quoted to point out that a person can lose his salvation. But the illustration the author uses in 7-8 to explain what he is trying to say may indicate something else. In your own words, state what the author wishes to get across.

3. In verses 9-12 the author clarifies his message. He employs both the idea of works and faith to his readers. Summarize what his point is.

4. 13-20. Abraham is one who, "...through faith and patience inherit the promises." This is because God Himself swore that it would be so. How does this apply to believers?

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Introductory comment:

The entirety of chapter 7:1-22 is dedicated to the person of Melchizedek, explained as a precedent and prototype of Christ. The author is establishing a basis and precedent for the priesthood of Christ who was not descendant of the priestly tribe of Levi. Here are all the verses in the Bible that refer to him. Genesis 14:18; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1, 10-11, 15 and 17.

The following questions are designed to ascertain the author's point in bringing Melchizedek into his teaching. Note 8:1-2 for a guide.

1. What is the point of the first twenty-two verses about Melchizedek and Christ? (Hint: Remember the author's point from the beginning of the epistle)

2. What point(s) about Christ is the author trying to make? _____

3. What is the argument the author makes when comparing Abraham and Melchizedek?

4. What does the phrase, "without father, without mother, without genealogy" mean regarding Melchizedek?

5. Why is there a need for another priesthood beyond that of Levi?

6. What is the difference between the priesthood of Levi and that of Christ?

7. For those in Christ, what are the advantages?

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CHAPTER EIGHT

1. The point of the book so far as described in verses 1 and 2 is what? In your own words...

2. Verse 3. What was the offering Christ brought to the heavenly altar?

3. Verse 4. Why could Christ not be a priest on earth?

4. Verses 5-6. What is the difference between the earthly structures and services and the heavenly ones?

5. In what ways was the earthly priestly services and the people under the Old covenant faulty?

6. What are some key differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant?

7. What is the place of the Old Covenant in terms of man's relationship with God now that the New Covenant has been ratified?

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CHAPTER NINE

1. Verses 1-7. In what way does the author use the word "tabernacle"?

2. What exactly is the point of verses 8-10?

3. Verses 11-14. A summary contrast in these four verses. Restate in your own words the main point of these verses.

4. Verse 15. For what reason is Christ the mediator of a New Covenant?

5. Verse 15. Does this verses shed light on how those of faith in the Old Testament gained salvation? If so, how? _____

6. Verses 16-28 revolve around the necessity of a blood/death occurrence for the terms or provisions of a covenant (or will) to be transferred to a beneficiary. What is the difference between the Old and New Covenants in terms of the provisions for beneficiaries relating to the blood/death necessity for each? Feel free to list a series of similarities/contrasts.

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CHAPTER TEN

1. What is the point of verses 1-2? _____

2. Verse 3 is a contrast with verses 1-2. Rather than relieve the sin problem, the Law and sacrifices exacerbated it. Thus verse 4. Verses 5-10 also stand in contrast to 1-4. Define the contrast and the point of 5-10.

3. In 11-14, another contrast is made. What is the contrast and main point the author wishes to convey?

4. In 15-18, the conclusion of the matter of the New Covenant replacing the Old is:

5. In 19-22, there is an invitation to enter "the holy place" with confidence. Two questions. A. Aren't those who have placed their faith in Christ already in the "holy place" or "in the heavenly places" in Christ? _____

If so, does this passage, B. Indicate an invitation to those not yet "confident" in their faith in Christ? C. Encourage those already in Christ to be "bold" in their approach to God? D. Both? E. Neither?

Your answer: _____ Why? What is your evidence from the text?

6. Note the editorial "we" in verse 26. Who is this and what is the meaning of verse 26?

7. What is 26-31 talking about and who is it talking about? _____

8. Verses 32-39 reflect the persecutions early Jewish converts suffered. What happened to them, where do they seem to be, and what is our author telling them to do in light of their present situation?

9. Are those addressed in 32-39 the same people as described in 26-31? Why or why not? What do you think? Note the use of the word "some" in verse 25. Could this help?

10. One thing is for certain. Our author is urging his readers to continue to persevere in their pursuit and assurance of faith in Christ in spite of disappointment in several areas. A. Name as many of these disappointments as you can; and, B. Do you see any correlation with the contemporary church and if so what?

A. _____

B. _____

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

The "Faith" Chapter

1. Based on this chapter (and book), approval from God is gained by:
 - A. Obedience
 - B. Worship
 - C. Good deeds
 - D. Faith
 - E. A moral and pious life

2. True or false. According to this chapter, believing God's word without sight verification or experience is foolishness.

3. True or false: It is possible to please God even without exhibiting faith in Him.

4. Trusting in God's promises and word, even without seeing the result or outcome, is a key element in faith and a central theme of this chapter.

5. True or False: Not seeing the fulfillment of God's promises yet continuing to believe and be obedient to Him is the mark of a person of faith.

6. Abraham was considered righteous because:
 - A. He believed God and demonstrated it by obeying God's word and promise.

 - B. He was willing to sacrifice Isaac.

C. He patiently waited for the birth of Isaac.

D. He was a perfect man and lived a totally righteous life.

7. True or False: In the Old Testament God only accepts those who are of the physical lineage of Abraham.

8. True or False: People of faith seldom if ever suffer persecution and hate from the world.

9. Faith should:

A. Reach beyond one's own life.

B. Persevere through all difficult circumstances and even persecution.

C. Await the total fulfillment of God's promises beyond this age and world.

D. Have the elements of endurance, perseverance, patience, fortitude, persistence and the like regardless of circumstances.

E. All of the above.

10. True or false: Those of faith may accomplish amazing things or simply be persecuted for believing without doing many, if any, mighty works at all.

11. True or False: Faith always sees its results in this life. _____

12. True or False: People of faith throughout the ages will all receive the inheritance together.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Verse 1 brings to mind an athletic event? Can you visualize it? Describe it and the participants.

2. What does verse 1 tell you about the recipients to whom it is addressed?

3. What point is the reader to get from verses 2 through 4 in the context of verse 1 (and chapter 11)?

4. Verses 5-13 speak of "discipline". "Discipline" is "training". A. What does God use as training and, B. What is the purpose(s)? C. What is the difference between discipline and punishment? D. Can you see how Romans 8:28 might relate to this passage? E. Is all suffering just a big waste of time and emotional energy? If not why not? What about for the unbeliever?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

5. Verses 12-13. Why does the author urge this to his readers? Or, could you state this in another way in your own words? _____

6. Verse 14 begins the author's conclusion. A verse easily misunderstood and often poorly translated. The words for "peace" and for "sanctification" (holiness) are nouns, not verbs. Some translations make them action words (verbs). But it could be quite different in the context of the letter. With just this hint, how would you represent the verse? What does it say about the position of the readers to who it is addressed?

7. Verses 15-17 are a unit with 15 leading into the "Esau" illustration. How do these verses relate to the author's urging and how do they relate to the readers to who they are addressed?

8. Verses 18-20 (Mt. Sinai) are contrasted with verses 21-24 (Mt. Zion). Summarize the contrast in terms of what our author is trying to get across to his audience. In other words, what is his point?

9. Verses 25-29 are a clear admonition. It brings 1:1-2 back to mind and shows the consistency of the author in his presentation. But what is he trying to say and do?

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Verses 1-4 are about caring for and being faithful to others: A. Brothers in the body, B. Hospitality toward strangers, C. Those imprisoned for their faith, D. One's spouse. But verse 2 notes something about angels. Who, in the scripture, may have entertained angels(s) without being aware?

2. Verses 5-6 speak of, "being content with what we have." In the context of the book and the passage, what is he trying to get across? What does verse 6 have to do with it?

3. Verses 7-9 speak about faith and understanding Christ in the midst of confusion. Verse 8 speaks about Jesus. In the passage, what can you glean as the point of verse 8?

4. Verses 10-15 speak of the sacrificial system as opposed to what Christ has done. Why do those who serve the tabernacle have no right to partake of the "altar" of Christ?

5. What kind of sacrifices is God pleased with? (Note also 11:6)

6. Verses 20-21 is a benediction, the author's prayer and wishes for his readers. What particular phrase do you appreciate and why?

7. A. Summarize the "word of exhortation" the author wishes his readers to bear with. or, B. What was the most important thing you learned studying the book.

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS VERSE DESCRIPTION OF RECIPIENTS

Note: Many New Testament authors use the pronouns "we", "us" and "our" etc. as well as terms like "brothers" ("brethren") as inclusive. That is they include their readers in these designations even if they may not be believers. They may include them as Jewish brothers while at the same time imploring them to come to Christ, or exercise faith in Him. John does this in chapter 1 of his first epistle including even those influenced by or having turned to "Gnostic" doctrine. But he, at the same time, excludes them from true faith in Christ. These uses of the pronouns must be carefully examined to avoid applying scripture to believers when the context is only applicable to non believers or the faithless.

<u>Chapter/ Verse</u>	<u>Pronoun</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Probable addressee</u>
Chapter One			
2:	us	Editorial	Jews in general
5:	you	third pers. sing.	God's Son (quoting LXX)
9-12:	you	third pers. sing.	God (quoting LXX)
Chapter Two			
3a:	we/we	Ed. "we". first pers. pl.	Likely unbelieving or undecided Jews vacillating in their confidence, not paying attention and on the verge of neglecting so great a salvation.
3b:	us	Ed. "us"	Jews who had heard the gospel from others and some like the author had become believers. So both 3a and believers.

4:	them	third pers. pl.	Those who proclaimed and confirmed the truth of the gospel.
5:	we	Ed. “we”	The author (or apostle) and his believing companions.
8a:	you	Ed. “we” third pers. sing.	God (quoting LXX)
8b:	we	first pers. pl.	Jews (perhaps mankind) in general.
9:	we	first pers. pl.	Jews in general/believers for sure.

Chapter Three

1:	holy brethren ³ /our	first pers. pl.	Jews in general (possibly Christian apostles/ believers but unlikely considering 7-11.)
3:	“our confession”		Not necessarily “Christian” confession, but agreement with the promises of God. ⁴
6:	we/we	Ed. “we” first pers. pl.	Jews of verse 3
7-11:	A quotation employed as a warning to Jews in danger of “going astray in their hearts” and in danger of being excluded from God’s “rest”.		
12:	brethren	third pers. pl.	Jews of verse 3 among whom may be those who are unbelievers.
13:	you	third pers. pl.	Same as 12,

³ The term “holy brethren” is used as a encircling of both Jewish unbelievers and family believers in Christ. See commentary.

⁴ See: Hebrews 4:14; 10:23 and commentary.

14:	we	first pers. pl.	Editorial “we”. Jewish brothers by the flesh.
15:	you	third pers. pl.	Jews warned not to provoke God as did their forefathers
19:	we	first pers. pl.	Everyone, every Jew

Chapter Four - The audience becomes clear

1:	us/you	Ed. “us”	“us” Jews in general “you”, Jews of 2:3, 3:12.
2:	we/us/they/them/those		Jews of history to the present
3:	we		Believing Jews
7:	See 3:15		
9:	“People of God”		Jews yet to come to faith in Christ.
11:	us	Ed. us,	Jews yet to come to faith in Christ.
14:	we/us/our	Ed. us.	Jews in general, entire audience
15:	we	Ed. we	Jews in general, entire audience
16:	us/we	Ed. we/us	Jews in general, entire audience

Chapter Five

11a:	we	Ed. we	The apostles/teachers/writers
11b:	you	Third pers. pl.	Jews – “dull of hearing”
12:	you/you/you/you		Jews - “dull of hearing”

Chapter Six

1:	us	Ed. us	An invitation for others to follow the writer – the teacher instructing his class as to where they are going next.
3:	we	Ed. we	Same as 1
4:	those who		To whomever this might apply
6:	them		To whomever this might apply
9-12:	you		His readers
18a:	we/us		Believers including the author
18b-20:	we/us		Believers, but inviting his readers to accompany them.

Chapter Seven

4:	“you” (implied)		His readers
26:	us - (note previous “them” vs. 25)		The historic Jews

Chapter Eight

1:	we		The historic Jews
8:	them		The priesthood, tabernacle, and sacrificial system

Chapter Nine

14:	your		His readers
24:	“for us”		Everyone, but specifically Jews

Chapter Ten

10:	we		Everyone, but specifically Jews (see 14)
19-25:	we/us		His readers who would be receptive
26:	we	Ed. we	Jews who are on the verge of neglecting the word of God spoken in Christ.
30:	we		The historic Jews
32-36:	you		“Enlightened” Jews Group C.
39:	we		Believers

Chapter Eleven

3:	we		Jews in general/believers specifically.
32:	I		The author
40:	us		“Us” - of faith

Chapter Twelve

1-10:	we/us	Ed. we	Group C
12-13:	your		Group C
14-17:	you		His readers in general
18-29:	you		His readers in general, specifically Groups A. and B.

Chapter Thirteen

1:	brethren	Jews and believers
3-25:		Brothers in Christ –Group C.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Because of the stakes involved, the Book of Hebrews is one of the three most important books of “theology” in the New Testament, the other two being Paul’s epistle to the Romans and to the churches in Galatia.

Yet, the Book of Hebrews may be one of the most confusing books in the New Testament to us who are unfamiliar with its setting, style and message. It is not an easy book to grasp for us. Its content is controversial to us, yet its message is profound and essential. In some ways it lacks clarity regarding the basis of the believer’s security and yet in other ways it helps establish clear differences so that those considering their faith in Christ within the New Covenant might not be caught up in the tenants of the Old Covenant and be rendered confused thereby . Though similar to Paul’s clear theology regarding the latter, the book fails to establish a firms clarity regarding the former as does Paul.

III. The recipients. Your worksheet should have brought you to some understanding of whom the recipients of the letter are . What did you find?

Chapter 2:1-3a; 4:1-3; and 5:11 are among the clearest verses to assist in answering the question.

IV. Old and New Covenant contrasts. The writer contrasts the provisions of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant from his very introduction where he states,

1: God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

2: 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.

This dichotomy or contrast becomes the pattern or model the writer uses throughout the epistle. He continually contrasts one against the other and presents strong arguments to support his case. His goal is to win Jews to Christ who are either unbelieving, confused or fully committed to Christ as Messiah, Lord and Savior.

V. Bottom line message in the Book of Hebrews. Miss out, disregard, ignore or dismiss God's presentation of the New Covenant in Christ's blood and there is no hope whatsoever for you.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

A. Touching on the question, "Why is it so difficult to ascertain who wrote the Book of Hebrews." See notes in the commentary.

B. One of the problems Christians have had from the beginning of the church age is the lack of understanding regarding what Scripture verses are applicable to the Christian life and which ones are not. Because of the commitment to the divine inspiration of Scripture, the thought of disregarding any of it as applying to the Christian life has been difficult and controversial.

We are well aware that many denominations and groups deeming themselves "true Christians" differ with each other over this very subject. For example, the Seventh Day Adventists abide by dietary laws and keep, as much as possible the Ten Commandments, especially the Sabbath. Others do not keep the Sabbath yet emphasize tithing, the commandments, and selected passages of the Old Covenant. Some Messianic Jews keep the feasts and convocations of the Old Testament. Other Christians disregard much of the Old Testament and abide by church law, tradition or teaching leaving the entire matter to a designated authority. Some regard the "Lord's Supper one way, some another. The same for baptism and so on.

Most difficult is the teachings of Christ Himself. Do they all apply to the Christian life or not. Or how do we understand what to do? For example, Matthew 8:2-4 recounts the time, 2: "... a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, 'Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.' 3: Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, 'I am willing; be cleansed.' And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4: And Jesus said to him, 'See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a

testimony to them.’ Christians generally admit that when one is healed by the Lord, he does not have to go to a priest and present the offering Moses Commanded (as described in Leviticus 14).

Some feel that Matthew 6:14 and 15 apply to Christians and some do not. "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

Is being forgiven for our sins based on whether those in Christ forgive others? And is forgiveness for our sins retained if we do not resulting in death and loss of our salvation?

What then about Paul's counsel in Colossians 3:12-13 or Ephesians 4:32?

Questions like these leave many Christians with a dumbfounded look on their faces not being able to clearly know what the answers are.

C. Much of the problem is twofold: 1. Scripture is there for both understanding and application. In understanding the intent and context of certain passages, we realize they are not applicable, and this does not take away from their truth or inspiration. 2. The major problem with the church from the beginning is the failure to understand the differences in the purposes and provisions of the Old Covenant as it stands in contrast to the New.

If it is true that some Scripture is not addressed to nor applicable to Christians, could that be true, in some cases, of New Testament passages? For example, are Christians obligated to obey and apply the commands and desires of Satan recorded in the New Testament? What about when enemies or false teachers are quoted? Why not? Aren't they inspired? Aren't they truthful? More to the point, how about statements written or spoken by the apostles to non-believers – such as the recorded speeches of Stephen, Peter, Paul and others?

In our case with the Book of Hebrews, could it be that the direction of the apostle writing this epistle is to Jews in a state of either non belief or indecision? If so, then the content would have to be carefully examined to see what might apply to Christians and what might not, correct?

Thus, our work begins.