

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews I

Why Hebrews was Written & Who Wrote It

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We're going to start this series, and when we finish, we're done. How many sermons that will be, that's what it's going to be. And we're going to find that the book of Hebrews is a very powerful and very unusual book. So, we're going to begin by doing a little background.

First of all, we have *The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, A Precise Translation*; you'll see it's in a nice large print, wide margin on both sides, and it has a column reference. If you turn to two opposing pages you will see that you have the marginal reference for each page. This gives plenty of room for making notes.

The next section is a comparison between my translation and the *King James* translation. So we have that side by side. Then the third section is *Special Word Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. It starts out with angels, and it's a good extensive study; covers all the major things in the book of Hebrews. Then we come to the fourth section, and the fourth section is the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry. We just enlarged the print of that and included it in here.

This way you have a complete reference all in one: you have the amplified translation that I did, you have the side-by-side with the *King James*, then you have the Interlinear which gives you all of the Greek and the English translation below it of George Ricker Berry; plus you also have another *King James Version* in the columns with it. So, this gives you a *complete study guide*.

Before we begin, let me just mention that we've already done the series in Romans and Galatians, in particularly the one on *The Circumcision Wars*. When we finish the book of Hebrews we will have the three difficult to understand Epistles of the Apostle Paul all done with the translation, with word studies, with the side-by-side, and so forth. {note the Transcript Books for each of these series on the Epistles of Paul} It would really be nice for people who are really serious in their Bible study with the *Seven General Epistles*. And you can have a verse-by-verse, in-depth study going through each one of the difficult Epistles of Paul.

The reason that I started doing the translation, I just might mention, is not because I said, 'Oh, Fred, you're so smart you ought to do a translation.' *No!* You all know how it started. When we got done with the Gospel of John and I went

through and explained what the *King James* endings of the words meant:

- 'eth' means *present tense participle*
- 'th' means a *present tense verb*

Then we discussed it with everyone at that time, and we decided to go through *The Seven General Epistles*. I said I'm really tired of explaining what the *King James* means, separate from the Greek. How about if I just do a translation and we have a study translation, and we go through it verse-by-verse?

As you remember, we started out with James, and then 1st & 2nd Peter, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, and Jude. We've got that all compiled in a book called *The Seven General Epistles*.

Now let me just say this, that there is a great debate concerning who wrote the book of Hebrews. It doesn't start out like the other Epistles of Paul. Let's look at one of them. Ephesians, for example, this is how Paul starts out almost all of his epistles:

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 1-2).

That's what you might call a fairly standard opening that Paul has for every one of his epistles. Let's look at the first part of Hebrews, and let's see that it doesn't start out that way. We'll see the reason why in a little bit.

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by His Son." Nowhere does this say through the entirety of the Epistle of Hebrews that, 'I, Paul, wrote this...' like he did in:

Galatians 6:11: "See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand." Those who claim to be the experts say:

- Paul did not write this because it's not his style
- maybe Apollos wrote this, because it has the highest level of Greek of all of the New Testament books that we have
- it was known in the days of Clement, because he mentions it in his letter to the Corinthians
- maybe Luke wrote it
- maybe Timothy wrote it

So, they don't know who wrote it. We'll go through and show you why it has to come from Paul.

This is really not a traditional epistle—a letter. This is not a letter. There are only just a few features similar to a letter, which we find going here; this gives us a clue:

Hebrews 13:23: “*I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he comes soon enough, I will see you.*” Or ‘If Timothy sees you and comes back to me, that’s good enough as if I have seen you.’ Timothy was with the Apostle Paul! Timothy was also in prison with him. He’s released, then it says:

Verse 24: “Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send greetings to you. *May God’s grace be with all of you. Amen*” (vs 24-25).

This is the only part of it that is in letter form; in other words, personal rather than a sermon. The whole book of Hebrews is *a sermon*. It is not an epistle, therefore, the style is different.

Now notice the ending, v 25: “*May God’s grace be with all of you. Amen*”—To *the* Hebrews, written from Italy, **delivered by Timothy.** He carried it. It doesn’t mean that he wrote it. Let me just give you something that I feel is strong evidence that Paul wrote Hebrews. Having translated 1st & 2nd Cor., as well as all the other Epistles of Paul, but in particularly 1st & 2nd Cor., the style in the both 2-Cor. and Heb. is very similar in the Greek.

Let’s read the note right at the end of 2-Corinthians. “The second *epistle* to the Corinthians written from Philippi of Macedonia, by Titus and Luke.”

Paul wrote it, but Luke probably edited it. After all, Luke wrote the book of Luke and the book of Acts, and this was under the Apostle Paul. Not only did Paul have fourteen epistles in the New Testament, he is also responsible for the book of Luke and the book of Acts. You see many similarities in the Greek, especially in 2-Cor., and we will see the preaching of Paul in the book of Acts. Saying this could not be Paul’s writing because it’s not his style is incorrect to say. There is a writing style and there is a preaching style. The preaching style is different from the writing style. So, you could say that it’s not from the same person.

Over time, has my style of teaching modified, and changed? *Yes!* Over time has my style of writing changed? *Yes!* You could probably go back and get something that I wrote in 1981 and read that, and then get something that I have written today and you would say it’s similar, but it’s not the same style, so it can’t be the same author. We have the same situation with Paul. Not all writing is the

same. When you take notes on a sermon, is that like writing a letter? *No!* It has nothing to do with a letter. That’s why Hebrews is different; this is Paul’s *sermon*.

Now, let’s look at a couple of things that are important here that we need to understand. Most of the scholars say that Hebrews was written between 60 and 70_{A.D.}, and in that they are fairly correct. We need to understand something, that James, who was the apostle at Jerusalem. He was martyred by the Zealots in 63_{A.D.} So, this book of Hebrews, as we will see a little later, had to also go to Jerusalem. It doesn’t mention James. Since it doesn’t mention James, could it be that James was already martyred and this was written after 63_{A.D.}? We’ll answer that question a little bit later.

Hebrews 11:32: “Now, what more can I say?...” Who is the *I*? Everyone understood who it was then. If there was anything that the Apostle Paul put his signature on, or identified in whatever he wrote that it came from Paul, going to Jerusalem, do you think it would have survived? *The way the Jews looked at Paul they would have burned it on arrival*, in my opinion.

Let’s look at another one where it talks about *I*; “...what more can I say?...”

Hebrews 13:19: “Now, I am earnestly exhorting *you* to do this more diligently that I may be sent back to you more quickly.”

Obviously, Paul was not going to go back to Jerusalem because he was run out of town. But the book of Hebrews was written to go to *every* congregation and every congregation that had converted Jews. They were all Greek-speaking. So is Paul’s saying:

“...that I may be sent back to you more quickly.” Timothy—who hand-carried it—would have told them that he’s coming back to wherever that place may be. So, it doesn’t tell us; this becomes a mystery to the scholars.

Just putting it together, I’m going to say that it is my *educated opinion* that this is a very refined sermon that Paul preached over and over again. Then it was added to, because of the condition of the Church overall. I think, he dictated it to Luke; I think that Luke wrote it—because it’s very similar to 2-Cor., and Acts in particularly—and Timothy was the one who delivered it. I suspect that Timothy brought it back to Antioch, because Antioch was the home base for the Apostle Paul. Remember that? And he wrote it while he was in his first imprisonment and made sure that it was sent to all the Churches.

Here is who it has been written to: to all the Churches, and especially to where there was the

Greek-speaking Jewish community, or the Diaspora. The reason being is that all of the Scriptural quotes from the Old Testament taken out of Psalms and taken out of the Law come from the Septuagint word for word. Those parts of the Septuagint are still accurate. Some of the historical things, because of what Jerome and different other ones did to the Septuagint, have messed up the historical chronologies. But at least the Law and the Psalms are very accurate. This is important to understand, because this is the way that Paul could get this out to everyone.

There's one other thing that's also important to understand in getting this out. There came a time when the only way for Paul to preach and to get it across was that he did not identify that it came from himself.

2-Timothy was written from his second imprisonment just before he was martyred. 2-Timothy 1:12: "For which cause I am also suffering these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He has the power to keep what I have committed to *Him* for that day. Hold *as the standard for doctrine* the sound words that you heard from me, in *the* faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by *the* Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us. You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me..." (vs 12-15).

If they're turned away from the Apostle Paul, how is he going to get something to them, in the way of something written or in the way of a warning? *By not identifying himself!* Send it in the form of a sermon with exhortation and admonition. Do not send it in the way of an epistle. Now this was toward the close of his ministry.

Why the book of Hebrews was written:

1. it was for the Greek-speaking church containing the Jews and the Greek-speaking Gentiles

All of the quotes are taken from the Septuagint. Meaning that *they had the Septuagint Bible there as a guide* that they used for the Old Testament.

2. it was written for the Jews at Jerusalem

as well as the different churches that were rejecting Paul. In Jerusalem they spoke the two languages: Greek and Hebrew.

Let's see the situation concerning Paul. You know how Paul started out when he was Saul. He was persecuting the Church. He was getting letters to take people to the high priest, bind them in chains, and take them there. When we come to Acts 21 we

find the whole table—after the conversion of Paul—has been turned on him. The Jews who were cheering him on as Saul to get rid of the Christians were now disillusioned that he became a Christian and an apostle. The Jews had their mossad out to try and get Paul in many different places in Asia, and so forth, as he was traveling.

Now then, when it comes to the Jews in Jerusalem, there's a second problem: circumcision, the offerings at the temple, and the vows, and things like this. So, Paul said he was bound in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. He knew that everywhere he went the Holy Spirit said that he was going to have trouble, but nevertheless he went.

Acts 21:17: "Now, when we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received us. And on the following *day*, Paul went with us..." (vs 17-18). This is Luke writing. Luke went with him, and probably Timothy, too.

"...to *see* James... [there is the 'head apostle' as it were, in Jerusalem; this is the brother of the Lord] ...and all the elders *were* assembled" (v 18).

The reason that they had a lot trouble—as we covered in *The Circumcision Wars* in the sermon series on the Epistle of Galatians—from those who came down from James and so forth, was when you were in Jerusalem and you're only dealing with Jews, and you set it up just like the Jews did; that's what James did. He had a little Sanhedrin, or council of elders. So, let's see what happens, and here's where I say that politics entered into it. Here is where the mistake was made of *looking to numbers* rather than God, and that's why Paul was sent there to give the witness, because no one else would give the witness.

Verse 19: "And after greeting them, he reported one by one the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard *this*, they glorified the Lord. Then they said to him, 'Brother, you see how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, and they are all zealous of the law of *rituals*'" (vs 19-20).

We're going to see that their belief was not based and rooted *in faith*, as it should have been. Remember, we have learned many times over, it's one thing to say you believe in Christ; it's another thing to actually live by that, because you actually believe it. ***If they really believed***, would they try and kill Paul? ***If they really believed***, would they give up on Christ as the Passover lamb and go back to the 'paschal lamb,' which we'll see there indications of in Heb. 6? *No, they wouldn't!*

Verse 21: “But they have been informed that you are teaching all *the* Jews who are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses...” Remember in *The Circumcision Wars*, the Jewish interpretation, as led by the Pharisees in Jerusalem, was that the Law of Moses was interpreted by their method of doing so. No, he did not teach the Jews to forsake Moses.

“...telling them not to circumcise their children...” (v 21). Paul never said that. Nowhere is it recorded. He did say that circumcision is not required for salvation (Rom. 2). That was the problem, as we saw in the book of Galatians with the circumcision wars.

“...nor to walk after the **customs**” (v 21). There’s the key: *the traditions*. Even Jesus didn’t want the apostles following the customs or the traditions.

But when you get into a situation, and you can see all the pressures that would be coming from the Jews of Judaism against the Church, and you know for sure that in Jerusalem they could not preach against circumcision as a means of salvation, they had a great problem with that. So, here’s a political solution, which backfired. And **God intended the political solution to backfire**, because this was a witness. We will see that the book of Hebrews carries through this witness.

I suspect that the book of Hebrews was written during Paul’s first imprisonment, reflecting back upon what happened here in Jerusalem. In order to give them a warning, and in order to bring them to Christ in faith, that’s why it is so loaded—the whole book of Hebrews—having to do with the history and God’s working with:

- Israel
- Abraham
- the Old Covenant
- the temple
- the priesthood

Verse 22: “What then is going to happen? A multitude is going to assemble, for they will hear that you have come.... [you’re in Jerusalem] ...Therefore, do this that we tell you: there are four men with us who have a vow on themselves; take these and be purified with them, and pay their expenses, so that they may shave *their* heads; and everyone will know that what they have been informed about you is nothing, and that you yourself also are walking orderly *and* keeping the law of rituals. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we wrote *to them* after deciding *that* they do not have to observe any such thing, except to keep themselves from things that are offered to idols, and *from* blood, and *from* what is strangled, and *from* sexual immorality” (vs 22-25).

Paul goes along with it, v 26: “Then Paul took the men, *and* on the next day he was purified with them *and* went into the temple, signifying the fulfillment of the days of purification, until each of them had offered *his* offering. But when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude; and they laid *their* hands on him” (vs 26-27).

These were the Jews who were after him. You go through the book of Acts and see how he was chased by the Jews from city to city.

Verse 28: “Crying out, ‘Men of Israel, help! This is the man... [We got him!] ...who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people... [Jews] ...and the law and this place...’”

Remember what happened when Stephen was martyred? He said, ‘God does not dwell in temples made with hands.’ They wanted to preserve that temple, because that temple gave them power. That temple gave them institutionalization.

“...and furthermore, he has also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this Holy place.’ For they had previously seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, in the city with him, *and* they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple” (vs 28-29). *No, he didn’t!* No different than today. Division is caused by *disinformation! Rumors! Lies!*

Verse 30: “And the whole city was stirred up, and the people ran together ...” Here is almost a riot. I mean, when you watch the news about the riots in Italy because of the G-8 meetings, just think of this that they are rioting against Paul.

“...and they took hold of Paul *and* drew him outside the temple, and the doors were immediately shut.... [he was contaminating it] ...But as they were attempting to kill him, a report came to the chief captain of the band that all Jerusalem was in an uproar” (vs 30-31).

Where was Fort Antonia? *Right next to the temple!* So, this is why the Roman soldiers were so close at hand and they could get down there right away.

Verse 32: “*And* he immediately took soldiers and centurions with *him and* ran down to them. And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. Then the chief captain came up *and* laid hold of him, and commanded that he be bound with two chains; and he inquired who he might be, and what he had been doing. But some in the multitude were crying one thing, and some another. When he was not able to determine the facts because of the uproar, he commanded him to be

brought into the fortress.... [into Fort Antonia] ...Now, when he came upon the stairs, it happened *that* he was being carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the multitude” (vs 32-35). In other words, the soldiers had to take him and escort him out.

Verse 36: “for the multitude of people followed, shouting, ‘Away with him!’ And when he was about to be brought into the fortress, Paul said to the chief captain, ‘Is it permissible for me to say something to you?’ And he said, ‘Do you know Greek? Are not you the Egyptian who previously caused confusion and led into the desert four thousand men who were murderers?’ But Paul said, ‘I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, a citizen of Cilicia from Tarsus, which is no insignificant city. I beseech you, allow me to speak to the people.’ And after receiving permission from him, Paul stood on the stairs *and* motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was great silence, he spoke to *them* in the Hebrew language, saying” (vs 36-40).

He gives the whole background; how he studied at the feet of Gamaliel; how that he was called, and about the martyrdom of Stephen (v 20).

Acts 22:21: “But He [God] said to me, ‘Go, for I am sending you afar off to the Gentiles.’ And they listened until they *heard* him say this; then they lifted up their voices, saying, ‘Away with such a one from the *face* of the earth...’” (vs 21-22).

As soon as he mentioned the Gentiles, that was it! That’s why, even with those who believed at Jerusalem, if Paul had his name anywhere identified with the book of Hebrews, it would have never gotten into them, to be read or studied by them as a final witness before the destruction of the temple.

“...‘Away with such a one from the *face* of the earth, for he is not fit to live!’ And as they were shouting and casting off *their* garments and throwing dust into the air” (vs 22-23).

I mean, this was quite a scene going on. When you watch the news in the Middle East you can see the same thing going on. *Nothing has changed, for 2,000 years!* Today in so-called Israel, if you believe in Jesus Christ you must leave the country, even if you are a circumcised Jew. That’s something! Then the captain took him up and found out he was a Roman. I think it was that night, or the next night, you can read it, he had to have a special night escort to convey him down to Caesarea and get him out of Jerusalem.

3. Heb. was written was for all Gentile converts, so that they could understand the things of the Law, which they should keep and should not keep

You can read in *A Harmony of the Gospels* what I wrote there concerning the fulfilling of the Law by Christ—completion of the sacrifices, and so forth—so they would know. Now they could no longer be subverted by those Jews who would come along and try to convert them either back to Judaism, or a Judaism form of Christianity.

4. the purpose of this epistle was to explain in great technical detail that the covenant with Jesus Christ is the *true, superior, spiritual* Covenant, and to show the *true spiritual worship*

Hebrews 8:6: “But on the other hand, He... [Christ—the heavenly High Priest] ...has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises. For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made. But since He found fault with them, He says, ‘Behold, *the* days are coming,’ says *the* Lord, ‘when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in *the* day that I took hold of their hand to lead them out of *the* land of Egypt because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them,’ says *the* Lord. ‘For this *is* the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days,’ says *the* Lord: ‘I will give My laws into their minds, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people’” (vs 6-10).

So, this is to fully explain the New Covenant, that it is *far* superior to the first covenant, and the earthly sanctuary, and the offering of sacrifices. The only one who could have written that in this great a detail could have been the Apostle Paul. Because he was a Pharisee; studied all of Judaism, and he knew all about the rituals and everything at the temple. Plus, he was taught three and a half years personally by Christ in the Arabian desert.

The one most qualified to understand about the technicalities of the temple and everything was the Apostle Paul. Heb. 10:16 shows the covenant. Throughout this he is showing the *superiority* of the New Covenant. I want you to really think and understand that if Paul would have had his name on this, and had it gone to all the Jews and into Jerusalem, they would surely say, ‘You’re writing against Moses.’ But what he was doing was not writing against Moses. He was explaining the New Covenant and preparing the way for them, so that they would understand what they needed to do after the temple is destroyed.

Hebrews 10:16: “‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,’ says *the* Lord: ‘I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again’” (vs 16-17).

Isn't it interesting that here in this particular location he does not put in there ‘the house of Israel/the house of Judah’? So, what he is doing by not having that there in this quotation, he is establishing that this is also going out to the Gentiles.

Hebrews 13:8—again, showing Christ is the Head: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Do not be carried about by all kinds of strange doctrines. For *it is good for* the heart to be confirmed by *grace and* not *by* foods, which have brought no *spiritual* benefit to those who have been preoccupied *with them*. We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat; for *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy places by the high priest for a *sin offering*, the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp” (vs 8-11)—over on the Mount of Olives, at the Miphkad altar, right near where Jesus was crucified.

Verse 12: “For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate. So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*; rather, we are seeking the one that is coming” (12-14). He was preparing them for the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.

5. Hebrews was written to brethren who have been in the church a long time, and to second generation Christians who were slipping away

Sound familiar? When we come to understand it in today's terminology, *the book of Hebrews is written for the Laodicean*, because they got so wrapped up in *their own ways*. I gave a sermon on *The Stages of Apostasy*; they were institutionalized and culturalized. Once they had the culture that they had arrived, they became comfortable and complacent. That's exactly what happened to the Christians at this particular time.

We're doing a little survey, going through and picking up all the reasons why the book was written.

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away.” And that's what's so important.

6. Paul was telling them to *take advantage of the time today to get right with God*, and preparing them for the coming martyrdom; especially at Jerusalem.

So again, he's warning them! And you will see that progressively he gets stronger—from Heb. 1-3 and down on into chapter 4—in admonishing them to watch out for themselves.

Hebrews 3:7: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice.’” Brethren, that message is alive and real for us today. That's for us, because there are many, many brethren and ministers who today *will not hear* the voice of God.

Verse 8: “...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart...’” If you harden your heart then you're going to apostatize, and you're going to commit the unpardonable sin, which is discussed in great detail in Heb. 6.

“...as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness” (v 8). What did they do? What was the rebellion?

- **First rebellion:** *they set up the golden calves*
- **Second rebellion:** ‘God says we're ready to go into the Holy Land,’ and they said, ‘Oh, we don't want to go!’

Can you imagine, after spending two years in the desert, you say you don't want to go in? You talk about a rebellion. God said, ‘All right. Since you accuse Me of bringing you out here to kill your children, everyone that is over 20-years-old is going to die in the wilderness, and your carcasses are going to be strewn across this desert, and the children that you said I was going to kill are going into the land. And you are going to wander a total of 40 years’—a year for every day that they spied out the land.

Verse 8: “‘Harden not your heart... [v 9]: where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, ‘They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.’ So, I swore in My wrath, ‘If they shall enter into My rest—’” (vs 8-11). Notice that dash there. That is an incomplete sentence. To enter into the Kingdom of God is conditional; not upon God, but upon *us*. God is not variable in His behavior. We're the ones that have problems.

Verse 12: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.” So, this is a powerful warning here, brethren. I mean, it's something! I think the Apostle Paul was given the

understanding by God what was coming. God inspired him to write this epistle this way, in a sermon form, so it would get to everyone in Jerusalem and all the Jews in the Diaspora who were believers, as well as all of the Gentiles.

Verse 13: “Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today,’ so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin.”

That’s why you’ve heard me say in the past many, many times: *Today is what counts!* Yesterday is already over. Whether you did good, or whether you did evil, *that’s yesterday*. If you did good, *wonderful*. If you sinned and did evil, *repent*. Today, make today a good day whatever day *today* is, because we are always living in the present. We never live in the past, because that’s over. And we cannot live in the future, because it hasn’t arrived—every day! That’s why we have the model daily prayer: ‘Give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.’ Daily, while it is today.

Hebrews 4:3: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest, as He has said, ‘So, I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into My rest—”’ although the works were finished from *the* foundation of *the* world. For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all His works’; And again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest’—” (vs 3-5).

Verse 7: “Again, He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’” When we come to Heb. 4 we’ll go into a full detailed thing concerning the Sabbath.

Hebrews 5:11: “Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food” (vs 11-12).

Has that happened in the Church of God today? *Yes, indeed!* I mean, even if you give them some milk with just a few big hunks of meat in it, they almost choke. So, there’s the warning again.

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection...” That’s what God wants to do today with the saints. He wants to perfect them.

Why does He want to perfect them? *Because God is the only one Who can qualify you for the Kingdom of God!* You have your part to do, but you must be yielded into the hands of God and the Spirit of God to let Him work the work in you to be perfected. You can’t just stick with the basics. You will never get a college education by staying in the third grade!

Verse 10: “For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work, and the labor of love *by* which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*. But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the end*” (vs 10-11).

God has impressed upon my mind, brethren, while we have peace, while we have safety, while we have security:

- grow
- study
- learn
- overcome

It’s going to be just like back then. *The day is coming when you’re not going to be able to!* Remember the parable of the ten virgins? *Five wise/ five foolish!* The five wise prepared; the foolish didn’t. The foolish came to the wise and said, ‘Give us of your oil.’ And they said, ‘We can’t. You go to them that sell and buy.’ You can’t take what God has given to you through the process of conversion and developing Godly character in you and transfer it to someone, just like you jump-start batteries. *Never happen!* That parable is showing, you’ve got to do the things you need to do. Paul is saying the same thing here.

Verse 12: “So that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises.”

Admonishing them to improve their faith; admonishing them to not slip away; and giving some very strong warnings.

Hebrews 10:21 “And *having* a great High Priest over the house of God.” Not the temple in Jerusalem on the earth, but over the house of God in heaven above.

Verse 22: “Let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience...”

There are a lot of people out there who are weak today. If they have to face tough times and martyrdom, they better start getting strong right now, because coming upon *the temptation of the whole world* is the *mark of the beast*. If you are lazy, if you are sluggish, if you do not have a relationship

with God, and you are concerned about the physical things when they tell you, 'Well look, it's really just a simple thing. If you love your family and want to provide for them, then go ahead and get this little chip in your right hand or in your forehead, and everything will be fine. You can take care of them.' It will be so tempting. And if they have a weak conscience, I fear for them.

Verse 23: "Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near. **For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins**, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*" (vs 23-27).

That's strong language! Those out there who are pure Laodiceans, you better listen! You can say all you want to; you can accuse me or others of being harsh and hard-hearted; you can accuse God of being not a God of love. But let me say this: ***If you turn down what God has given you, you have no recourse!*** So, you better think it through, and you better turn to God, and you better not be looking to men to justify your lukewarm behavior, because *men don't please you!*

I'll tell you one thing, the Apostle Paul said 'If I please men, I would not yet please God.' And that's the same thing that I'm going to do, brethren. God is no respecter of persons, and we are not going to have a respecter of persons and politics, and play little mickey-mouse religion, nicey-nicey, patsy-hands. This is it *for real*, and if you don't understand that at this point, then you better get busy because you have need of milk. You better at least find yourself some good spiritual Gerber's ground-up food that you may be able to slurp down without choking so you can get enough strength to understand what Christ is doing.

Heb. 11 is all about faith, what every one of them had to do; how he is preparing them for the coming martyrdom, to stand strong.

Hebrews 11:33: "Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions, quenched *the* fury of fire... [like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego] ...escaped *the* edge of the sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, *and* turned back the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting

deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection; and others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mocking and scourging; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword. They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated..." (vs 33-37).

Verse 38: "Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, *living* in caves and in holes in the earth. But these all, *though* they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise, *because* God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect" (38-40).

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance, having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith... [there's the solution] ...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (vs 1-3).

There are a lot of people out there who are weary and discouraged because they just look to themselves, and they just look to their little ole problems, and then they begin accusing God, and saying, 'O God, why are these things happening to me?' ***They're happening because you're not looking to Christ, and you are not drawing close to God!***

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin." Then it talks a good deal about correction.

Verse 26: "Whose voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet, once more I will shake not only the earth, but heaven also.'"

Remember, there's a time coming on this earth that is called the Great Tribulation, which is going to be so awful that there has never been a time like it from the beginning of the world. I don't know how we can better prepare ourselves than to stay close to God the Father and Jesus Christ, and—*while we have the time*—to really get about, as Jesus said, 'My Father's business.'

Verse 27: "Now the *words* 'once more' signify the removing of the *things* being shaken, as

of things that were made, so that those *things*, which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, through which we may serve God in a pleasing *manner* with reverence and awe; for our God *is* indeed a consuming fire” (vs 27-29).

Hebrews 13:5: “*Do not allow the love of money to influence your behavior, but be satisfied with what you have; for He has said, ‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.’*” He is saying this because he knew that they had tough times ahead. But he’s also saying this because some of them were slipping away and figuring that Christ was forsaking them, rather than they were forsaking Christ.

Verse 6: “So then, let us boldly say, ‘*The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*’”

Verse 22—here’s how serious the situation was: “Now I admonish you, brethren, to **patiently listen to this message of exhortation**, for I have written to you in only a few words.”

I like that. And this has to reflect the Apostle Paul, because remember how many times he was speaking for hours and hours, especially in Acts 20, where he talked all day and all night, and this poor guy was up on the third loft, and he finally went to sleep and fell down. Then after Paul was sure that he was alive, he got back up, had something to eat, and continued until sunrise. That’s why he is saying, ‘Look, this is just a few words.’ For indeed, yes, it is just a few words.

Look at the style in which this was written. We’ll just look at Heb. 1. We’re just going to look at style. We’ll come back to it and we’ll go through it in detail.

Hebrews 1:1: “God...” He starts out there. He wants to get their attention, that they have to look to God. And this is the whole thing that goes through the whole book.

“...Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the ages; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say...” (vs 1-5).

Now notice the *quoting of the Scripture*

here. This is the thing we want to pick up, *the style of the quoting of the Scriptures*. Then we will go back to Acts 13 and we will analyze Paul’s sermon that he gave in Acts 13, and you will see the style is exactly the same.

Verse 5: “For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’? And again, ‘**I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me**’? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, ‘**Let all the angels of God worship Him.**’ Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, ‘**Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.**’.... [Psa. 104:4] ...But on the other hand, of the Son *He says*, ‘Your throne, O God....’” (vs 5-8).

Is Jesus Christ God? *Yes!* But again, you see all of these are Scriptural quotes. Does this give us a clue as to how God inspires the kind of preaching that He wants? *Yes!* What is Paul doing here? *He is preaching from the Scriptures!* He is not quoting the Scripture, and then telling a nice little bedtime story not too much different than a Little Red Riding Hood.

“...‘Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom. You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.’” (vs 8-9). That’s quoted right there in the Psalms.

Verse 10: “And, ‘You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain *forever*; and *they* will all grow old like a garment, and You will roll them up like a covering, and they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years will not end’” (vs 8-12). Again, Scripture!

Verse 13: “But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’?” You can come to Heb. 2, and we will see the same pattern. You come to Heb. 3 and you see the same pattern—quoting Scripture.

Remember that Luke recorded this sermon of the Apostle Paul. I want you to go back and re-study it after we cover it here, because you will see exactly the same style of preaching and writing; which then also helps to confirm that Paul is the author of Hebrews, dictated to Luke, who wrote it, and was delivered by Timothy.

Acts 13:14: “Now, after passing through from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and

the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue said to them, ‘Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak’” (vs 14-15).

This is why God also called Paul, because he was a Pharisee before his conversion. He used that as entrance into the synagogues. None of the other apostles could have done that. Why? *They were never Pharisees!* Paul could go into the synagogue of Jews and be well received. Barnabas also, because he was a Levite. That’s why they said, “...‘Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak.’”

Verse 16: “Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, ‘Men, Israelites, and those who fear God... [the Gentiles] ...listen to me.’” Notice how he starts his sermon. Almost identical to the way that Hebrews starts off.

Verse 17: “**The God**... [In the Greek in Heb. 1:1, it is ‘ho Theos’ as here] ...of this people Israel chose our fathers...” What is he doing? *He is reviewing the history of the people of God!*

“...and exalted the people when they were sojourning in *the* land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought them out of it. And *for* a period of about forty years, He put up with their manners in the desert.... [that ties in with Heb. 3] ...And after destroying seven nations in *the* land of Canaan, He gave their land to them by lot. And after these things, He gave *them* judges *for* about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul...” (vs 17-21).

Now remember, these are the notes of Luke. I am sure that he spent a whole lot longer going into much more detail. Just like those of you who are taking notes, you’re taking notes of what I say, but you cannot possibly get every word. Paul did not have a cassette recorder to do it. So, this is summarized. Then he talks about giving them Saul.

Verse 22: “And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, “I have found David, the *son* of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will.” Of this man’s seed has God according to *His* promise raised up to Israel a Savior, Jesus, After John had first preached, before His coming, *the* baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was fulfilling *his* course, he said, “Who do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* One Who comes after me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet’” (vs 22-25).

This also shows that the book of Matthew was probably written at that time, and available. He talks about the baptism of John.

Verse 26: “Men, brethren, sons of *the* race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the message of this salvation was sent; for those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. And though no one found any cause *worthy* of death, they begged Pilate to execute Him” (vs. 26-28).

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 1:1-2
- 2) Hebrews 1:1
- 3) Galatians 6:11
- 4) Hebrews 13:23-25
- 5) Hebrews 11:32
- 6) Hebrews 13:19
- 7) 2 Timothy 1:12-15
- 8) Acts 21:17-40
- 9) Acts 22:21-23
- 10) Hebrews 8:6-10
- 11) Hebrews 10:16-17
- 12) Hebrews 13:8-14
- 13) Hebrews 2:1
- 14) Hebrews 3:7-13
- 15) Hebrews 4:3-5, 7
- 16) Hebrews 5:11-12
- 17) Hebrews 6:1, 10-12
- 18) Hebrews 10:21-27
- 19) Hebrews 11:33-40
- 20) Hebrews 12:1-4, 26-29
- 21) Hebrews 13:5-6, 22
- 22) Hebrews 1:1-13
- 23) Acts 13:14-28

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 2
- Acts 20
- Psalm 104:4

Also referenced:

Booklet: *The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, A Precise Translation* by Fred R. Coulter

Books:

- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
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- *Epistle of Paul to the Romans*
- *Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*
- *Circumcision Wars*

Sermon: *The Stages of Apostasy*

FRC: MDS/cis
Transcribed: 07/27/2003
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017