

Hebrews

*An Overview of the Scriptures, by
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The letter to the Hebrews is unique in that there is no signature. It would be a mistake to conjecture the author's identity, as this omission is inspired in itself. The title *Hebrews* is not a part of the inspired text, but it is clear from the opening and throughout the entire work that this is clearly written to the **Hebrew believers** within the early ecclesia. And so we must caution ...

WARNING: This letter is clearly directed to the Hebrew believers within the early ecclesia, and not to the body of Christ. All Scripture is for our benefit, but not all Scripture is written directly to us in this present age. We must take great care not to force direct application of all elements in this writing into our present context. God clearly deals differently with different people groups (Israel versus non-Israel) and in different eras.

This overview is written in the first person, as if I were to paraphrase the text highlights. My own notes are distinguished by using a different font.

[1:1] **God has spoken thru a Son.** God has spoken in many ways in the past, but now He has spoken to us thru a Son, Who is the brightness of His glory and the emblem (the image) of His person. (Note: When the writer says "He has spoken to us" this refers to Israel. We must remember that the writer is a Hebrew and he is writing to Hebrews.)

[1:4] **The Son is superior to the angels.** (Note: This is supported by references quoted from Psalm 2, Psalm 45, Psalm 102, Psalm 104, Psalm 110 and 2 Samuel 7:14.)

[2:1] **Don't neglect – how could we escape?** We should give close attention. If there were consequences to disobedience to the word brought by angels, how can we escape if we neglect the word of salvation brought by the Lord and confirmed by eyewitnesses, signs and wonders?

[2:5] **All things in subjection under Christ.** Unlike angels, God has put all things in subjection under the Son's feet. But currently we do not yet see all things under Him. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, but then crowned with glory.

[2:9] **The Son is of the nature of men.** He tasted death for every man. As the children are flesh and blood, He took part in the same; that thru death He might destroy him that had the power of death; the Adversary ... and to deliver those who were subjected to bondage, fearing death.

He did not take on the nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham. Made like His brethren, he could be a merciful and faithful chief priest; to be a propitiatory shelter for the sins of the people. Suffering and undergoing trial, He is able to help those who are being tried.

[3:1] **The Son is superior to Moses.** Moses was faithful, but Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses. Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ as a son over His own house. And we are of this house, if we retain the boldness and the expectation unto the end. *(Note: More on this later, but let us here observe that perseverance is a requirement for these Hebrew believers.)*

[3:7] **Do not fall into unbelief.** Do not harden your hearts, as did your fathers who wandered in the wilderness. They did not enter into God's rest. Do not fall into unbelief. Exhort one another. We are made partners of Christ if we hold to our confidence unto the end. Our fathers in the wilderness could not enter His rest because of unbelief.

[4:1] **Enter the rest.** Our fathers heard the gospel, but it did not profit them as it was not mixed with faith. We also have heard the gospel, and we who believe are entering into the rest. God stopped His works on the seventh day, and it remains for some to be entering into His **stopping**. Our fathers did not enter because of their stubbornness, but God specified thru David that **today** is the day if you should not be hardening your hearts. We should endeavor to enter into this rest. *(Note: The rest or stopping of old referred to the promised land, delayed 40 years while the Hebrews wandered in the wilderness. And upon entering they never fully entered all that had been allotted. This is contrasted with the rest or stopping that lies ahead for faithful Israel, when the Messiah returns and when the kingdom is restored upon the earth, this time in fulness.)*

[4:12] **The word of God is living and operative,** and keen above any two-edged sword, and penetrating up to the parting of soul and spirit, both of the articulations and marrow, and is a judge of the sentiments and thoughts of the heart. And there is not a creature that is not apparent in its sight. Now all is naked and bare to the eyes of Him to Whom we are accountable.

[4:14] **Since we have a great chief priest** who has passed thru the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. He was tried in all respects, like us, but He did not sin.

[5:1] **Christ is a perfected chief priest**. As is true of a chief priest, Christ does not glorify Himself, but God. He is a priest according to the order of Melchizadek. He learned obedience thru suffering. And when ***perfected***, He became the cause of eonian salvation to all obeying Him. *(Note: Those obeying will have salvation and life in the eon to come. But this does not preclude those who have forfeited life in that eon from being ultimately reconciled to God at the end of the eons, in accord with God's will that all men be saved.)*

[5:11] **By now you should be teachers**, but still have need of one to teach you the basics; milk, not solid food. We should be brought on to maturity, not again disrupting the foundations ... repentance from dead works, faith, baptizings, the laying of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eonian judgment. *(Note: It would appear, then, that there were challenges and disputes over these basic teachings that were preventing the believers from moving on to maturity.)*

[6:4] **Once enlightened, if one falls aside it is impossible to renew to repentance**. But we are persuaded of better things concerning your salvation. *(Note: We must remember that these were Hebrew believers, whose expectation was the return of the Messiah to restore the kingdom. In anticipation of this coming kingdom, perseverance was needed to be qualified. It is interesting that when the called-for repentance does not come, and the coming kingdom is delayed until the complement of the nations enters (Romans 11:25), God works in a new direction not described in Hebrews. Thru Paul He will announce the body of Christ, a heavenly expectation not upon this earth, and where repentance and perseverance are not requirements. It will be fully the grace and the work of God, lest any man boast. But in this present context, to the Hebrew believers, perserverance is required, and if one falls back and rejects Christ they will be hardened and it will be impossible to renew to repentance. This one will have forfeited the enjoyment of his allotment in the eon to come, although he will not and cannot forfeit his ultimate reconciliation with God at the end of the ages.)*

[6:11] **Be diligent, assured of the expectation until the end**. Imitate the examples of faith and patience. Abraham was patient, and he happened upon the promise. God has promised the enjoyment of the allotment by an oath. We who flee for refuge have a strong consolation and a secure expectation that has been confirmed.

[6:20] **Jesus became chief priest according to the order of Melchizadek**, for the eon. [7:1] Melchizadek was a different kind of priest. He was king of righteousness and king of peace. He had no geneology; no beginning or end. He pictured the Son of God, remaining a priest to a finality. If the Levitical priesthood was perfect, why would there be the need for a different priest according to the order of Melchizadek? The priesthood needed to be transferred, as the law also. Our Lord is of the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of priests. He is a priest ***for the eon*** according to the order of Melchizadek. The preceding precept is weak. The law does not perfect. We have a ***better expectation***. This priest (Christ) comes

thru an oath by God. He is the sponsor of a **better covenant**. The former priests all died, but this one remains for the eon. He is able to save to the uttermost those coming to God thru Him. Undeified, separated from sinners, residing in the heavens ... daily sacrifices are no longer necessary. He offered Himself once for all time.

[8:1] **The true tabernacle; a better covenant.** Such is our chief priest, seated at the right hand of the throne. He is minister of the true tabernacle. The tabernacle of old was based on the model shown to Moses in the mountain. Christ is Mediator of a better covenant. As was promised, God's laws will be imparted to their comprehension and inscribed on their hearts. All will be acquainted with the Lord. God will not be reminded of their sins and lawlessnesses. The old covenant is near its disappearance. *(Note: It is clear that this prophesy was not yet fulfilled. The hearers were being encouraged to repent and to persevere in view of the fulfillment of this new covenant. This was their expectation. It was not yet in place. This may be what Paul spoke of in Romans 11:25-27, referring to the day when all Israel will be saved.)*

[9:1] In the former tabernacle, priests performed divine service continually, but in the holy of holies only once a year, with blood. This is a parable for the present. Those were sacrifices that could not perfect as to conscience. But now comes Christ, and a greater tabernacle not made by hands. His own blood is a better sacrifice; once for all into the holy places, resulting in eonian redemption.

[9:15] **He is the Mediator of a new covenant**, so that **those under the first covenant** may obtain the promise of eonian enjoyment of the allotment. *(Note: Here we see that the new covenant pertains to those who were under the old covenant; that is, Israel.)*

[9:23] **A better sacrifice was necessary.** Without blood there is no pardon. And celestial things required a better sacrifice. Christ has entered the holy place in heaven. Once, at the conclusion of the eons, for the repudiation of sin through His sacrifice, is He manifest. *(Note: It is not that Christ died at the end of the eons. This would not make sense, as He has in fact died, but we are not yet at the end of the eons. He is manifest at the end of the eons. To some He is manifest now, but at the end of the eons He will be fully manifest to all, and what He has accomplished will be understood by all.)*

[10:1] **The old sacrifices could never perfect ... they were never final.** It was impossible for the blood of these sacrifices to eliminate sins. As was prophesied, God does not will or delight in sacrifices, but in the One to come Who would do His will. The first is ended to establish the second. We are hallowed thru Christ's sacrifice. The priests stood, offering daily sacrifices. Christ is seated. He is waiting until His enemies are at His feet. By one sacrifice He has perfected with finality those who are hallowed. With the new covenant there is pardon. There is no longer an approach present concerned with sin. So ... we may be approaching

with a true heart, in the assurance of faith ... avowing the expectation without wavering ... and inciting one another to love and ideal acts, not forsaking assembling together.

[10:26] **Warning against voluntary sin.** After recognizing truth, if we sin voluntarily there is not a sacrifice concerning sins, but just a fearful waiting for judging ... he who rejects the blood of the covenant that has hallowed him. *(Note: From the context, this voluntary sin appears to specifically refer to the sin of falling away from the faith ... rejecting Christ's blood as the sacrifice.)*

[10:32] **Endure; have faith.** Remember the former days when you suffered and were reproached, yet believed; knowing you have a better and a permanent property in the heavens. Have endurance. Do God's will. Christ is coming. The just shall be living by faith. We do not shrink back to destruction ... we have faith that procures the soul. *(Note: Faith that procures the soul is speaking of that which secures life in the eon to come, which would be forfeited if faith is rejected. Again, this speaks to the Hebrew believers who awaited the coming kingdom. Faith to the body of Christ refers to a different expectation, where perseverance is not demanded ... since faith for the body of Christ is the faith of Christ; fully of God; lest any should boast.)*

[11:1] **Faith** is an assumption of what is being expected; a conviction concerning matters that are not being observed. By faith we are understanding that the eons are adjusting to God's declaration, so that what we observe has not come out of what is appearing. *(Note: In other words, this new chief priest, new sacrifice, new covenant, new tabernacle, new Mediator ... are all things requiring faith ... as they do not appear to be naturally following what the Hebrews had observed for centuries.)*

[11:4] **Examples of faith** include Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah. One coming to God must believe that He is, and that He is becoming a Rewarder of those seeking Him. *(Note: Even if this reward has not yet been realized and enjoyed.)* All of these examples died not having received the things promised, but only seeing them still to come. They all craved a better future ... celestial. Other examples of faith include Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the fall of Jericho, Rahab, and others. None of these received the promise concerning us, and apart from us they are not perfected.

[12:1] **Therefore ... have endurance.** Look to Jesus, the inaugurator and perfecter of faith. Consider Him Who endured contradiction by sinners.

[12:5] **The Lord's discipline.** Do not disdain the discipline of the Lord. The Lord disciplines those He loves. He disciplines for our good; for us to partake of His holiness. Pursue peace with all; and holiness. Supervise, that none lack God's grace.

[12:16] **Esau's example.** Remember Esau gave up his birthright and was later rejected from enjoying the allotment. *(Note: Esau forfeited the enjoyment of what would have been his to enjoy. But he did not experience eternal torment as a result. It was a loss of reward that he experienced. We must remember that to forfeit the enjoyment of the allotment is a loss of reward, but does not signify eternal torment as most with the churches of man teach.)*

[12:18] **You have grace; do not refuse Him.** You have come to mount Zion, celestial Jerusalem ... to Jesus, Mediator of a fresh covenant. Beware. Do not refuse Him. **How can we escape if we do?** We may have grace and offer divine service pleasing to God, with piety and dread, for our God is also a consuming fire. *(Note: Full and complete grace, as proclaimed by Paul, is not yet seen here. There is grace, but always the need for perseverance lest one falls and becomes disqualified, and subject to the consuming fire. But even here, the consuming fire is not an eternal torment. It will last only to the end of the eons, serving the purpose of bringing all of creation into subjection and reconciliation.)*

[13:1] **Closing instructions regarding behavior.** Exhibit brotherly fondness. Be mindful of those bound, and mistreated. Keep marriage pure. Do not be fond of money; be content. Remember your spiritual leaders. Imitate their faith. Be not carried away by strange teachings, for we have an altar they have no right to. *(Note: Since the altar is one they have no right to, this would seem to imply that the strange teachings are coming from pagan religions. Much of this letter is a warning against falling back to Judaism, at the encouragement of the non-believing Hebrews. But this warning against strange teachings seems to be different ... a warning against the following of strange teachings of the pagan nations, and probably including Gnosticism which was prevalent in this day.)*

We bear reproach as He did. Here we do not have a permanent city, but seek the one that is coming. Offer sacrifices of praise continually. Do well, and contribute. Heed your leaders. Pray concerning us. May God adapt you to every good work, to do His will.

[13:22] **Bear these words of entreaty.** With this admonition repeated once again as the letter concludes, we see that the primary purpose of this writing is to entreat the Hebrew believers to persevere in their faith; not falling back to Judaism as they were being tempted to do.

This overview contains the thoughts and opinions of the author, and is considered by the author to be a work in progress and subject to change as his study of the Scriptures continues. Some things that God has revealed are very clear. The gospel, for example ... that Christ died for our sins ... that He was entombed ... and that He was roused^{1 Cor 15:3} ... this is very plain. That all are to be ultimately reconciled to God thru the work of Christ is also very plain.^{1 Cor 15:20-28} But on many specifics in the Scriptures there are a variety of interpretations and opinions, and none should conclude they have the complete and final understanding on these matters that are less clear. The reader is encouraged to consider various opinions, but to study and to think for himself. Within the body of Christ we should study and discuss our various understandings so as to reach a more complete understanding of that which God has revealed.

*Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the Concordant Literal New Testament and the Concordant Version of the Old Testament.
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