

**TWENTY-SIX LESSONS ON
HEBREWS**

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Bible Student's Study Guide

TWENTY-SIX LESSONS ON HEBREWS

A Student Book
For Twenty-six Weeks
Of Study

by

Wallace Wartick

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How To Use This Book

Welcome! So glad you have considered a study of Hebrews. The book is of inestimable value in many ways — may God help you to learn and live some of those ways.

For use on a quarterly basis, the book has been divided up into twenty-six (26) lessons. The lesson text, title and summary follow this introduction. Each lesson text will have discussion relevant to the lesson as well as general comments on the text itself. You may, of course, ignore the suggested lessons and study it at your leisure or in your own way. Whatever you do, study it to know better the lessons within the book itself — they are more important than anything man could say. Some questions are given at the end of each lesson for your use. Some are fact questions, some are thought questions. They are intended to help you to think and ask your own questions, thus causing further study and increased understanding.

Lessons From Hebrews

Lesson 1, 1:1-2 — God and Revelation. The Christian system has at least three basic tenets: 1) God is, 2) he has spoken in written revelation, and 3) that written revelation is of such nature that man can both know it and obey it. This lesson discusses these ideas, and especially the fact that God has spoken.	3
Lesson 2, 1:1-4 — God and His Son. The final and complete will of God which is now exclusively contained in the New Testament, is centered in Jesus Christ, God's unique "word" to man. This lesson focuses upon (a) son, and impressive characteristics.	10
Lesson 3, 1:4-14; 2:5-18 — Jesus and Angels. Part of this "apologetic" for the superiority of Christianity centers around angels, who mediated part of the revelation in the Old Testament (testament = will), and Jesus, God's mediator and revealer of His New Testament. As our text clearly shows, angels are but servers, Jesus is the son.	13
Lesson 4, 2:1-4 — The Great Salvation. Within the "apologetic" of 1:4 — 2:18 this important exhortation appears. Based upon the fact that God has no other word for man than that which is in Christ Jesus (of whom God said, "Hear	

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<p>Him," Matt. 17:5), the Hebrew writer in this lesson text implores all Christians "to hold fast" that which they have in Christ.</p> <p>Lesson 5, 2:17-18 — Our High Priest. Though Jesus is compared to, and shown to be better than prophets, angels, Moses and Joshua, the major thrust of the epistle is that Jesus is better than Aaron. The first direct mention of the high priesthood of Jesus is a good place to survey the teaching within the epistle, especially 3:1-3; 4:14 — 5:11; 7:1-28; 8:1-7; 9:1-28; 10:1-18. Remember that this epistle is unique within the N.T. in its teaching on the high priesthood of Jesus, the main point of this lesson.</p> <p>Lesson 6, 3:1-6 — Jesus and Moses. None were greater than Moses in Jewish history, and rightly so. God spoke through Moses, giving the finest specimen of law ever possessed by man. Yet, Moses was but a servant, while Jesus was the son. This lesson to highlight this important relationship.</p> <p>Lesson 7, 3:7 — 4:13 — Jesus and Joshua. Moses led Israel out of bondage, Joshua led them into the land of promise, but neither could give the Jews "rest" — only Jesus could (and can) do that. Our lesson text delineates the wilderness tragedy of Israel and the cause thereof, a most important point for all of us.</p> <p>Lesson 8, 4:14 — 5:10 — God's high priest: sinless and chosen. In God's economy, all things are done as God wills. Especially is this true in the area of spiritual things. Our lesson brings out two aspects God specified for his "chief representative" on earth, the high priest — he must be able to help, and selected by God. Both were true of Jesus.</p> <p>Lesson 9, 5:11 — 6:12 — The Maturing Disciple. W. D. Chamberlain in his book <i>The Meaning of Repentance</i> describes the Christian life as a "pilgrimage from the mind of the flesh to the mind of Christ." Our lesson text is concerned with some of the Christian readers who had not grown as they should have grown.</p> <p>Lesson 10, 6:13-20 — God, The Soul's Anchor. Life without hope is empty; hope without an adequate basis is deceitful. Christians build their hope on God, his character and promises. With so great a foundation, the Christian life is satisfying beyond measure. Our lesson text underscores the reason for hope.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>25</p> <p>29</p> <p>32</p> <p>39</p> <p>44</p> <p>51</p>
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<p>Lesson 11, 7:1-10 — Melchizedek. Part of the argument that Christianity is superior to Judism centers around the subject of our text, who is a type of Jesus, and represents a priesthood superior to that of Aaron. The "sacrificial system" of Christianity was foreshadowed in many ways, one of them being Melchizedek, the subject of our lesson.</p>	55
<p>Lesson 12, 7:11-28 — Christ's priesthood: our better hope. The Levitical priesthood represented a sacrificial system that was imperfect in that it offered no actual access to God, and our lesson tells us that the superior priesthood of Jesus brings (a better) hope in that through it we may draw near to God.</p>	58
<p>Lesson 13, 8:1-13 — The Faultless covenant. God's first covenant by written revelation was imperfect in many ways, yet was designed by God so that it was vastly better than any previous covenant. However, it was made temporary in nature, and from within itself the faultless covenant was foretold. The lesson for us in our text is that "the old has passed away, the new has come to be."</p>	63
<p>Lesson 14, 9:1-10 — The Tabernacle and its worship. God's first permanent place for worshippers to come was the "tent of meeting." Though "transportable" in nature, it served the Israelite nation some five hundred years until Solomon's reign. Because of its typical significance, our text has an important lesson for us.</p>	69
<p>Lesson 15, 9:11-28 — Jesus and the New Covenant. Our lesson is concerned with the sacrifice Jesus made, its eternal nature and efficacy. The text makes special emphasis upon Jesus' death, since it is the central point of contrast with the sacrifices of the Old Testament.</p>	73
<p>Lesson 16, 10:1-18 — The Forgiveness of Sins. The opening verses of ch. 10 introduced the major points of emphasis and contrast between the old covenant and the new covenant. The major thrust about Jesus was contained in the two statements "when he had made purification for sins" and "he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high," which are the major points of our lesson text. No religious system can present a better or more permanent "scheme of redemption" than Christianity.</p> <p>As we study this lesson, it should be noted that 1:1 — 10:18 is built around the idea of contrast between the old</p>	

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covenant and the new covenant, with the respective people involved. It might be called the section on "doctrine." The section of 10:19 — 13:25 is given somewhat more to the "faith life" (i.e., "duty") as it seeks to direct the readers concerning how they ought to live, both by citing examples and by exhortation.	79
Lesson 17, 10:19-25 — Access to God. On the basis of the person and work of Jesus, every Christian has reason to draw near to God, with all hope, without any (undue) fear. Our lesson begins the second major division in the epistle with several exhortations to encourage every Christian to take advantage of that which Jesus has provided.	83
Lesson 18, 10:26-39 — The God We Serve. With the great blessing of access to God, it is well to think about our God. The lesson text turns our eyes upon him, and brings into focus several important facets of his character, making application to our Christian living. The idea of faithfulness is introduced, which is enlarged upon in the succeeding chapters.	87
Lesson 19, 11:1-3 — Faith. This lesson will be a good time to consider the subject of faith. We need to get faith into its proper prospective (rather than the limited one of "faith, repentance," etc.) of our text and the Bible generally. Consideration needs to be given to the faith which the various ones mentioned in ch. 11 had, as well as the point made in Romans 1:17, that it is the essence of the gospel message.	93
Lesson 20, 11:4-22 — The Patriarchs and Faith. To show the eternal necessity of faith, the Hebrew writer begins at the beginning of the human race. Our lesson text presents selected people from the Patriarchal age as typical of believers who pleased God.	98
Lesson 21, 11:23-40 — Faith and Law. This lesson highlights the period from Moses to Christ, and the faith of many within that span of time. Noteworthy is the fact that faith made all of those mentioned in ch. 11 pleasing to God and examples for us.	105
Lesson 22, 12:1-2 — Jesus, the Example. In the midst of this section about living a life pleasing to God, Jesus is presented as the example of such a life. It is always good to meditate upon Jesus' earthly life, and our lesson is intended to provide that opportunity.	112

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Lesson 23, 12:3-17 — The Disciplined Life. Living a life of faith will necessitate implicit and continued obedience to God, who will discipline every child of his so that said child will be able to follow Jesus into the presence of God, and thus not lose sight of the goal and fail to receive what is promised, as Esau did. 116

Lesson 24, 12:18-29 — The Unshakeable Kingdom. God asks for faithfulness and gives adequate reason for such a life. The Christian is in an inestimable greater position for faithful living than those who went before, especially in respect to the fact that the kingdom of which he is a part is of permanent nature, not merely typical and shadowy. Such is the subject of our lesson. 123

Lesson 25, 13:1-6 — Godly Living. Many are the areas of life where the Christian should be conscious of the presence of God. Our lesson text highlights some of those areas which are often real tests for everyone who lives in the midst of a "crooked and perverse generation." 128

Lesson 26, 13:7-25 — Leaders for Life. This final lesson pinpoints attention upon those who lead others, especially in the various congregations, and then directs the gaze of everyone upon Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep. Surely a fitting lesson for all of us at the conclusion of this epistle! 132

Introduction To Hebrews

Hebrews has many things of importance in it. Many years ago, A. B. Bruce called it the "first apologetic for Christianity." Certainly it presents the Christian system as superior to Judaism, or any other religion. The writer of Hebrews often used the comparative "better" in describing Christianity, but as Bruce remarked, "best" is behind the "better." It is without equal among the new covenant scriptures in its treatment of the high priesthood of Jesus compared to angels, Moses and Joshua, adding information found in no other book. Hence, the doctrinal portion, 1:1 — 10:18, deals with Christianity as does no other book. Likewise, the "duty" section of 10:19 — 13:25 brings application to Christian living in a distinctly different way than any other book. It surely is a thrilling book to study, as well as unique in its helpfulness for understanding the relationship of the old covenant system of worship to that of the new covenant.

While we are thinking about the structure of the book, the following outline is presented, which is typical of many:

I. The Doctrine of the Old and New Covenants

- A. 1:1-3 God's revelation in a Son
- B. 1:4 — 2:18 Jesus and Angels
- C. 3:1 — 4:13 Jesus, Moses and Joshua
- D. 4:14 — 7:28 Jesus and Aaron
- E. 8:1 — 10:18 Old and New Covenant Worship and Sacrifice

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II. The Duty of the New Covenant Christian

- A. 10:19-39 God and the Faith Life
- B. 11:1-40 The Examples of O.T. Faithfulness
- C. 12:1-3 The Example of Jesus
- D. 12:4-29 A Disciplined Life
- E. 13:1-17 Obedient Discipleship

Conclusion, 13:18-25

Our introduction to Hebrews has centered around its purpose and content. We have not discussed some other matters of interest, specifically a. who is the author, b. when was it written, c. to whom was it written, d. where did the recipients live. We shall discuss each of these.

The person who wrote the book was known to the first recipients, as 13:18-25 shows. Where the author was is unknown. Various persons have been suggested over the centuries, but the fact is that no one certainly knows who wrote it. The early Christians accepted it as inspired, and deserving of a place in the canon of Scripture, but that is the best that one can do. (This writer assumes Paul to be the author.)

The time of writing is likewise uncertain. If anything is decisive at all, the comments in such text as 8:4-5; 10:11-12 and 13:10 seem to indicate that the old covenant worship was still going on. If so, then it was written prior to A.D. 70 when those things ceased to be.

The people who received it were rather clearly Christians who either had a Jewish background or were considering becoming Jews or both. They had some knowledge of Old Testament things, had been Christians for some time (5:11-14) and had undergone severe testing (10:32ff.). Other than these, we know neither who they were nor where they lived.

The uncertainty of the above matters does not detract from the usefulness of the book to every Christian. No one book so clearly shows the close relationship of the old covenant with all that pertained to it and the new covenant, its true, real and complete fulfillment.

Some of the readers of this study guide will not know Greek. Some Greek words are in the comments, and are discussed. There is no particular reason to be scared of Greek, anymore than any other foreign word. Learn to read the comments about the words, even if you don't know the Greek term. It is necessary to mention certain Greek terms because they are important to the meaning of the passage. Learn to be a better bible student than you are — make use of the Greek terms and the comments thereupon rather than ignoring them.

A word of thanks must be extended to Mrs. Debby Cripps Johnson who has given both time and thoughtfulness to this book, as well as the study guides on II Corinthians and Acts in this series.