

JESUS THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTOR OF FAITH

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

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SCHEDULE

January 3–April 4

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Lesson 1

INTRODUCTION

The book of Hebrews is described as a “word of exhortation” (13:22). It is an exhortation to Christians who were on the verge of falling away from the faith. It is an appeal not to drift away but to be faithful. The message is based upon the superiority of Jesus and the finality of Christianity. Jesus is the “author and perfecter of faith.”

Who were the original recipients?

We can be reasonably certain of several facts about the original recipients of Hebrews.

First, they were Christians. We can assume they were Jewish Christians, since they were well-acquainted with the Old Testament and various details about Judaism. The message of Hebrews is thoroughly grounded in the Old Testament and its appeal is presented in such a way as to be most convincing to its readers. The author assumes that they already regard the Old Testament as authoritative, so no effort is made to argue for the authority of Scripture. It is also likely that, because the original recipients were conversant in Greek, they were Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) Jews.

Second, Hebrews was written to a specific group of Jewish Christians in a particular locale. This is evident from the fact that there was some prior acquaintance between the writer and those first readers. The author hopes to be reunited with them (13:23). He knows about specific issues and problems among them (5:12-6:1; 10:32-34; 13:1-7). They had been Christians for some time (10:32; 5:12). They had been helpful to other Christians (6:10). Some of them had suffered persecution (10:32-34; 12:3; 13:3), but none of them had been put to death (12:4).

What was the occasion and purpose of Hebrews?

The original recipients of Hebrews were in danger of falling away from the faith.

The writer repeatedly encourages them to remain faithful (3:12-13); he fears that some will fall short of entering into God’s rest because of their unbelief and lack of diligence (4:1, 14); they had failed to progress in their spiritual growth and were about to fall away (5:11-6:6); they had changed from being zealous to being sluggish (6:10-12; 10:32-39). Because of their unfaithfulness, they face the wrath of God (2:1-3; 3:15-18; 6:7-8; 10:26-31; 12:25-29).

Persecution was evidently a factor in their becoming weary and unfaithful (10:32). Several passages in Hebrews offer encouragement based on Jesus’ example of suffering and the help he offers believers who are striving against sin (2:18; 4:14-16; 5:7-9; 12:2-11). The examples of the faithful in the Old Testament include those who endured hardship (ch. 11). The readers are exhorted to endure their present sufferings as in times past (10:32-39). The pressures of persecution were tempting them to abandon Christianity and return to Judaism.

The reason the Christians were being persecuted is that unbelieving Jews saw Jewish Christians as heretics who had lapsed from Judaism. Christians believed and taught that the way to be

right with God was not Judaism. Rather, it was through faith in Christ Jesus, who was really the coming Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament. It was through the new covenant established by Jesus, not through the old covenant made through Moses. Unbelieving Jews rejected this new teaching as wrong, and their opposition led to persecution.

The purpose of Hebrews is to set forth clearly the uniqueness and greatness of Christianity. Its aim is to encourage and exhort Jewish Christians who, under the pressures of persecution, were about to give up following Christ, and to warn them of the dangers of falling away.

What is the message of Hebrews?

The author's method in dealing with these difficulties is to set before his readers the absolute superiority of Jesus. He explains the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, and presents a comparison of the two covenants. This message can be summarized by noting several points of emphasis in the epistle. Here are some examples:

Jesus and other agents of God. The superiority of Jesus is set forth by contrasting him with various agents God used in his revelation and his redemptive work:

1. Jesus and the prophets (1:1-3)
2. Jesus and the angels (1:4-2:18)
3. Jesus and Moses (3:1-19)
4. Jesus and Joshua (4:1-13)
5. Jesus and Aaron (4:14-10:18)

Better things. The superiority of Jesus as high priest is demonstrated in terms of:

1. Better high priest (4:14-7:28)
2. Better ministry (8:1-6)
3. Better covenant (8:7-13)
4. Better sanctuary (9:1-14)
5. Better sacrifice (9:15-10:18)

Descriptions of Jesus. Several vivid descriptions of Jesus that show his superiority are found throughout the epistle:

1. Son of God (1:2; 3:6; 4:14; 5:8)
2. Author of Salvation (2:10)
3. Apostle and High Priest of Our Confession (3:1)
4. Author and Perfector of Faith (12:2)
5. Great Shepherd of the Sheep (13:20)

Exhortations and warnings. The exhortations in Hebrews are significant. They are often introduced with words like "take care" or "let us." Many of them are presented as warnings, such as the following:

1. Do not drift from what we have heard (2:1-4)
2. Take care not to fall away and fail to enter God's rest (3:7-4:13)
3. Press on to maturity (5:11-6:20)

4. Hold fast the confession of our hope (10:19-39)
5. Do not refuse him who is speaking (12:25-29)

When was Hebrews written?

There is good reason to suggest that Hebrews was written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. References to the temple services in the epistle are stated in the present tense, suggesting the temple was still standing. Because the epistle was written Jewish Christians who were in danger of falling away, it would be surprising for there to be no reference to the city's destruction if it had already occurred. Instead, the writer argues that the old system was about to disappear (8:13), rather than that it had already physically passed away. At the same time, the recipients of the epistle had been Christians for some time. We can conclude that the epistle was probably written around AD 65.

Where did the first readers of the epistle live?

It is difficult to answer this question with any degree of certainty. A number of places have been suggested, dependent on the various theories of authorship. The two possibilities that have had the greatest support are Jerusalem and Rome.

The traditional title "To Hebrews" might suggest Jerusalem as the destination. Objections to this theory include the fact that the epistle was written in Greek, especially this form of Greek, instead of in Aramaic, the native language of Jews living in Jerusalem. The epistle says the original recipients had not resisted sin to the point of shedding blood (12:4), something that could not be said of the believers in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 7:54-8:3). And none of the first readers of Hebrews had personally seen the Lord (2:3).

Perhaps a better possibility is Rome. It was likely at Rome where Clement of Rome made use of the epistle around AD 95. The writer of the epistle makes the statement, "Those from Italy greet you" (13:24). Does this mean the writer was in Italy, or does it mean the recipients were in Italy? Either is possible. If the epistle is addressed to believers in Rome, then the expression "those from Italy" could mean there were some Italian believers away from home sending greetings back to Rome by means of the author's note. The group's past leaders (13:7), the nature of the persecutions, and the connection with Timothy (13:23) all would fit with what is known of the church at Rome. In spite of these facts, there is no way to know exactly where the first readers of the epistle lived.

Who wrote Hebrews?

The answer to this question is even less certain. There are really two unanswered questions regarding authorship. We do not know who wrote Hebrews, and we do not know why the author never identifies himself in the epistle. The author was certainly someone who was well-known to the readers. But as time passed, the author's identity became unknown.

Some have conjectured that Hebrews was written by Paul. Reasons for this position are many. Some of the circumstances mentioned in chapter 13 suggest similarities with known letters of Paul, such as mention of Timothy (13:23). Many of the themes, terms, and phrases presented in

Hebrews are similar to those found in Paul's writings, such as the exaltation of Christ and the two covenants.

However, there are also strong reasons for doubting that Paul wrote Hebrews. There is little historical support for Paul as the author among early writers. The style and language of the epistle in the original Greek differ from Paul's known writings. Numerous individuals besides Paul have therefore been suggested as the author, including Barnabas, Luke, Apollos, and others.

While we cannot know with certainty who wrote Hebrews, it does not affect our understanding of its message. And there are some things that we do know about the author. The author was someone who was known by the first readers (5:12; 6:9; 13:18-19, 23-24). He was acquainted with Timothy (13:23). His knowledge of the Old Testament and the ministry of the Jewish priesthood tell us that he was a Jew, and his writing style suggests that he was a Hellenistic Jew. But his name remains a mystery. As Origen concluded in the third century, "As to who wrote the epistle, only God knows the truth."

OUTLINE OF HEBREWS

I. GOD'S FINAL WORD IN HIS SON (HEB. 1:1-2:4)

- A. God has spoken in his Son (1:1-4)
- B. Christ is superior to the angels (1:5-14)
- C. Exhortation and Warning: Pay closer attention to the word that came through Christ (2:1-4)

II. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS (HEB. 2:5-18)

- A. The superiority of Jesus, though he was humbled through death (2:5-9)
- B. Jesus the Savior of men (2:10-18)

III. A WARNING FROM THE WILDERNESS (HEB. 3:1-19)

- A. Jesus is greater than Moses (3:1-6)
- B. Exposition of Psalm 95:7-11 (3:7-11)
- C. Warning from the wilderness (3:12-19)

IV. GOD'S PROMISED REST (HEB. 4:1-13)

- A. The rest that remains (4:1-10)
- B. The word of God (4:11-13)

V. JESUS OUR HIGH PRIEST (HEB. 4:14-5:10)

- A. The compassionate Christ (4:14-16)
- B. Qualifications of the high priest (5:1-4)
- C. The qualifications of Jesus (5:5-10)

VI. PRESS ON TO MATURITY AND THE HOPE SET BEFORE US (HEB. 5:11-6:20)

- A. Spiritual immaturity (5:11-14)
- B. Encouragement to press on to maturity (6:1-3)
- C. A warning against apostasy (6:4-8)
- D. A word of encouragement (6:9-12)
- E. The certainty of God's promises (6:13-20)

VII. A HIGH PRIEST FOREVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK (HEB. 7:1-28)

- A. The example of Melchizedek (7:1-3)
- B. The greatness of Melchizedek (7:4-10)
- C. Significance of the new priesthood (7:11-19)
- D. Superiority of the new priesthood (7:20-28)

VIII. THE MEDIATOR OF A BETTER COVENANT (HEB. 8:1-9:5)

- A. A minister in the true tabernacle (8:1-5)
- B. A ministry of a better covenant (8:6-13)
- C. The first tabernacle (9:1-5)

IX. THE FINALITY OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE (HEB. 9:6-10:18)

- A. The tabernacle worship (9:6-10)
- B. Christ's ministry in the heavenly tabernacle (9:11-14)
- C. Christ the mediator of the new covenant (9:15-22)
- D. Christ's final sacrifice (9:23-28)
- E. The last word on animal sacrifices (10:1-4)
- F. The perfect sacrifice (10:5-10)

G. Christ exalted (10:11-18)

X. EXHORTATION TO FAITHFULNESS (HEB. 10:19-39)

A. Exhortation to draw near (10:19-25)

B. Further warning against apostasy (10:26-31)

C. Exhortation to endurance (10:32-39)

XI. EXAMPLES OF ENDURING FAITH (HEB. 11:1-40)

A. A description of faith (11:1-3)

B. Examples of faith: Abel, Enoch, and Noah (11:4-7)

C. The faith of Abraham (11:8-12)

D. The better country of the faithful (11:13-16)

E. The faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (11:17-22)

F. The faith of Moses (11:23-28)

G. Faith demonstrated at the exodus and Jericho (11:29-31)

H. Other examples of faith (11:32-38)

I. Concluding statement of faith (11:39-40)

XII. RUN WITH ENDURANCE (HEB. 12:1-29)

A. The example of Jesus (12:1-3)

B. Discipline as evidence of sonship (12:4-11)

C. Exhortation to encourage others (12:12-17)

D. Sinai and Zion contrasted (12:18-24)

E. Do not refuse him who speaks (12:25-29)

XIII. FINAL EXHORTATIONS (HEB. 13:1-25)

A. Moral exhortations (13:1-6)

B. Steadfastness in the truth (13:7-16)

C. Further exhortations (13:17-19)

D. Concluding words (13:20-25)

Lesson 2

GOD'S FINAL WORD IN HIS SON (HEB. 1:1-2:4)

- I. God has spoken in his Son (1:1-4)
- II. Christ is superior to the angels (1:5-14)
- III. Exhortation and Warning: Pay closer attention to the word that came through Christ (2:1-4)

QUESTIONS

1. How did God speak to the fathers in times past? (v. 1)
2. Can you think of some examples from the Old Testament of the different “ways” in which God spoke?
3. How does God speak to us now, and how is this different from before? (v. 2)
4. List and summarize seven things that are stated about God’s Son in verses 2 and 3.
5. What is the main point of verses 1-4, and what does it indicate about the Son?
6. Why is Jesus better than the angels? (v. 4)
7. List the Old Testament passages quoted in verses 5-13. Note the original context of each passage. What is point being made by the writer with each quote?
8. How does the designation of “Son” set Jesus apart from angels?
9. What does the fact that angels are directed to worship God show about them? (v. 6)
10. What is significant about the Son having a throne and a scepter? (vv. 8-9)
11. Who laid the foundation of the earth and created the heavens? (vv. 10-12)
12. What is the significance of the quote from Ps. 110:1 in verse 13? Find other places in the New Testament where the psalm is quoted.
13. What work are angels sent to perform? (v. 14)
14. How does the exhortation of Heb. 2:1-4 relate to the points made in chapter 1?
15. Compare the “word spoken through angels” (v. 2) with the “word spoken through the Lord” (v. 3).
16. What testimony has been offered as confirmation of the “word spoken through the Lord”? (vv. 3-4)

Lesson 3

THE HUMANITY OF JESUS (HEB. 2:5-18)

- I. The superiority of Jesus, though he was humbled through death (2:5-9)
- II. Jesus the Savior of men (2:10-18)

QUESTIONS

- 1. Read Psalm 8 and consider how the writer is using it in Hebrews 2:5-8.
- 2. What does the psalm say about man as God made him?
- 3. In what sense was Jesus made “a little lower than the angels”? (v. 9)
- 4. Why was the humanity of Jesus so essential in God’s plan of redemption? (v. 9)
- 5. What was necessary to perfect (complete) the author of salvation? (v. 10)
- 6. Who are Jesus’ “brethren” and why is he not ashamed to call them such (vv. 11-13)
- 7. From verses 14-18, comment on how Jesus’ humanity made possible: (a) victory over Satan; (b) freedom from the fear of death; (3) his becoming our high priest; (4) his making propitiation for our sins; (5) his ability to come to our aid in temptation.

Lesson 4

A WARNING FROM THE WILDERNESS (HEB. 3:1-19)

- I. Jesus is greater than Moses (3:1-6)
- II. Exposition of Psalm 95:7-11 (3:7-11)
- III. Warning from the wilderness (3:12-19)

QUESTIONS

- 1. How does the writer address the brethren in verse 1?
- 2. When the writer calls upon us to “consider Jesus,” how does he describe him? (v. 1)
- 3. In the comparison of Jesus to Moses, in what ways are they alike and in what ways are they different? (vv. 2-6)
- 4. Why is Jesus worthy of more glory than Moses?
- 5. Who constitutes Jesus’ “house” and under what condition? (v. 6)
- 6. Read Psalm 95:7-11. What is the lesson the psalmist draws from the wilderness experience?
- 7. What lesson does the writer of Hebrews draw from the psalm?
- 8. How is “today” used in Heb. 3:7, 13, and 15?
- 9. What does this teach us about the possibility apostasy? (v. 12)
- 10. What are we exhorted to do to avoid falling away? (vv. 12-14)
- 11. What happened to the Israelites in the wilderness and why? (vv. 17-19)

Lesson 5

GOD'S PROMISED REST (HEB. 4:1-13)

- I. The rest that remains (4:1-10)
- II. The word of God (4:11-13)

QUESTIONS

1. What “rest” did the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness fail to enter?
2. What is the rest that remains for the people of God?
3. How is this rest related to the creation and the Sabbath?
4. How is Joshua a type of Jesus?
5. Based on the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness, what will prevent us from entering our rest?
6. What are we exhorted to do to enter our rest?
7. How is the word of God described? (v. 13)
8. Why is the word of God compared to a sword?
9. How does this picture of the word of God fit into the context?

Lesson 6

JESUS OUR HIGH PRIEST (HEB. 4:14-5:10)

- I. The compassionate Christ (4:14-16)
- II. Qualifications of the high priest (5:1-4)
- III. The qualifications of Jesus (5:5-10)

QUESTIONS

- 1. What is the motivation for us to hold fast our confession? (4:14)
- 2. Why is Jesus able to sympathize with our weaknesses? (4:15)
- 3. What is the source of the Christian's confidence to approach the throne of grace? (4:16)
- 4. In order for the high priest to serve "on behalf of men," what qualification must he possess? (5:1-2)
- 5. Why was it necessary for the high priest to make an offering for himself? (5:3)
- 6. How did Aaron become high priest? (5:4)
- 7. How did Jesus become our high priest? (5:5)
- 8. What do the quotes from Ps. 2:7 and Ps. 110:4 show about Jesus as high priest? (5:5-6)
- 9. What did Jesus learn from his suffering? (5:7-8)
- 10. In what sense was Jesus made "perfect"? (5:8-9)

Lesson 7

PRESS ON TO MATURITY AND THE HOPE SET BEFORE US

(HEB. 5:11-6:20)

- I. Spiritual immaturity (5:11-14)
- II. Encouragement to press on to maturity (6:1-3)
- III. A warning against apostasy (6:4-8)
- IV. A word of encouragement (6:9-12)
- V. The certainty of God's promises (6:13-20)

QUESTIONS

1. What was the fundamental shortcoming on the part of the readers of Hebrews? (5:11-12)
2. List the "elementary teachings" of Christ mentioned in 6:1-3.
3. In what way have Christians experienced the following things? (6:4-5)
 - a. Enlightened
 - b. Tasted the heavenly gift
 - c. Partaken of the Holy Spirit
 - d. Tasted the good word of God
 - e. And the powers of the age to come
4. Is it possible for a Christian who has experienced such things to fall away? (6:6)
5. Why is it impossible to renew them again to repentance? Explain in light of other scriptures, including Matt. 12:31-32.
6. Explain the point of 6:7-8.
7. Why does the writer say he is convinced of better things concerning the Hebrews? (6:9-10)
8. What attitudes and qualities are urged upon the Hebrews in order to inherit the promises? (6:11-12)
9. Who is given as an example of someone who through faith and patience inherited the promises? (6:13-18)
10. Why did God swear by himself? (6:13-14)
11. What two unchangeable things has God provided to give us encouragement? (6:17-18)
12. How is hope described? (6:19-20)
13. Where has Jesus gone to serve as our high priest?

Lesson 8

A HIGH PRIEST FOREVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK

(HEB. 7:1-28)

- I. The example of Melchizedek (7:1-3)
- II. The greatness of Melchizedek (7:4-10)
- III. Significance of the new priesthood (7:11-19)
- IV. Superiority of the new priesthood (7:20-28)

QUESTIONS

- 1. What do we know about Melchizedek from Genesis 14?
- 2. What two offices did he hold? (v. 1)
- 3. What does the name Melchizedek mean? What other title was given him? (v. 2)
- 4. What did Abraham and Melchizedek do for each other (vv. 1-2)
- 5. What is the meaning of verse 3?
- 6. In what two ways does the writer show that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham? (vv. 4-10)
- 7. In what sense did Levi give tithes to Melchizedek? (vv. 9-10)
- 8. What is the argument concerning the priesthood in verses 11-14?
- 9. Could Jesus have been a priest under the Law of Moses? (v. 13-14; cf. 8:4)
- 10. What does the writer say about the old covenant in verses 19-20?
- 11. How does the new covenant of Jesus compare with the old covenant? (v. 22)
- 12. How does the new priesthood of Jesus compare with the Levitical priesthood? (vv. 23-28)

Lesson 9

THE MEDIATOR OF A BETTER COVENANT (HEB. 8:1-9:5)

- I. A minister in the true tabernacle (8:1-5)
- II. A ministry of a better covenant (8:6-13)
- III. The first tabernacle (9:1-5)

QUESTIONS

1. What is the main point the writer refers to in 8:1?
2. Where is the sanctuary and true tabernacle where Jesus performs his ministry? (8:1-2)
3. Why must Jesus have something to offer? (8:3)
4. What do the earthly Levitical priests serve? (8:5) How does this compare with Jesus' ministry?
5. Why is Jesus' new covenant better? (8:6)
6. Why did the Lord find occasion to bring in a second covenant? (8:7f)
7. Compare Heb. 8:8-12 with Jer. 31:31-34.
8. List the characteristics of the new covenant given in 8:10-12. How is the new covenant different from the first?
9. What was the significance of the prophecy promising a "new" covenant, according to 8:13?
10. Give a brief description of the tabernacle based on 9:1-5 and Exod. 25-40.

Lesson 10

THE FINALITY OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE (HEB. 9:6-10:18)

- I. The tabernacle worship (9:6-10)
- II. Christ's ministry in the heavenly tabernacle (9:11-14)
- III. Christ the mediator of the new covenant (9:15-22)
- IV. Christ's final sacrifice (9:23-28)
- V. The last word on animal sacrifices (10:1-4)
- VI. The perfect sacrifice (10:5-10)
- VII. Christ exalted (10:11-18)

QUESTIONS

- 1. Into what part of the tabernacle did the priests enter most often? (9:6)
- 2. What was the role of the high priest on the Day of Atonement? (9:7; cf. Lev. 16)
- 3. What was the basis limitation of the old covenant and the ministry in the tabernacle? (9:8-10)
- 4. How long was the old covenant intended to last?
- 5. What tabernacle did Jesus enter? (9:11-12)
- 6. What blood did he offer? (9:13-14)
- 7. How does the writer explain the relationship between Jesus' death and the new covenant? (9:15-17)
- 8. What reason is given for Jesus' death in 9:18-22?
- 9. How did the earthly tabernacle and the vessels compare with the "heavenly things"? (9:23)
- 10. What does 9:24-28 emphasize about the sacrifice of Jesus?
- 11. What was the Law and why was it unable to make men perfect? (10:1-4)
- 12. Compare Heb. 10:5-7 with Ps. 40:6-8. How does the writer apply these passages to Jesus?
- 13. In what sense has the sacrifice of Jesus made men perfect? (10:11-18)

Lesson 11

EXHORTATION TO FAITHFULNESS (HEB. 10:19-39)

- I. Exhortation to draw near (10:19-25)
- II. Further warning against apostasy (10:26-31)
- III. Exhortation to endurance (10:32-39)

QUESTIONS

- 1. What blessings are given in verses 19-21 as a summary of what has been discussed throughout the book of Hebrews?
- 2. Based on these blessings, what three practical exhortations are given? (vv. 22-25)
- 3. What is meant by the cleansing referred to in verse 22?
- 4. To what degree does our faithfulness depend on our own resolve, as opposed to the mutual encouragement we receive from one another?
- 5. What reasons are given for being faithful in assembling with one another in verses 24-25?
- 6. What awaits us if we continue in willful sin after coming to know the truth? (vv. 26-27)
- 7. Why would the consequence of rejecting the blood of the new covenant be even more severe than setting aside the Law of Moses? (vv. 28-31)
- 8. Why does the writer give the reminders of verses 32-35?
- 9. What lesson does the writer make by quoting from Habakkuk 2:3-4? (vv. 37-38)
- 10. What is essential for the preserving of the soul? (v. 39)

Lesson 12

EXAMPLES OF ENDURING FAITH (HEB. 11:1-40)

- I. A description of faith (11:1-3)
- II. Examples of faith: Abel, Enoch, and Noah (11:4-7)
- III. The faith of Abraham (11:8-12)
- IV. The better country of the faithful (11:13-16)
- V. The faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (11:17-22)
- VI. The faith of Moses (11:23-28)
- VII. Faith demonstrated at the exodus and Jericho (11:29-31)
- VIII. Other examples of faith (11:32-38)
- IX. Concluding statement of faith (11:39-40)

QUESTIONS

- 1. How is faith explained, and why is it so important? (vv. 1-2, 6)
- 2. A key phrase in this chapter is “gained approval” (also “obtained the testimony” or “obtained the witness” (vv. 2, 4, 5, 39). What does this mean as related to faith?
- 3. How is faith connected to our understanding of creation? (v. 3)
- 4. Summarize how faith worked in the lives of the following:
 - a. Abel
 - b. Enoch
 - c. Noah
 - d. Abraham
 - e. Sarah
 - f. Isaac
 - g. Jacob
 - h. Joseph
 - i. Moses
 - j. Rahab
- 5. What kinds of things did people experience by their faith? (vv. 32-38)
- 6. In what sense did these faithful ones not receive the promises? (vv. 13-16, 39-40)

Lesson 13

RUN WITH ENDURANCE (HEB. 12:1-29)

- I. The example of Jesus (12:1-3)
- II. Discipline as evidence of sonship (12:4-11)
- III. Exhortation to encourage others (12:12-17)
- IV. Sinai and Zion contrasted (12:18-24)
- V. Do not refuse him who speaks (12:25-29)

QUESTIONS

- 1. Who are the “great cloud of witnesses” and how do they encourage Christians? (v. 1)
- 2. What preparations are needed for Christians to run the race? (vv. 1-2)
- 3. What lesson is being drawn from the fact that God disciplines us as his children? (vv. 4-11)
- 4. How can Christian help one another not to grow weary? (vv. 12-17)
- 5. What do the two mountains represent? Which one is greater, and why? (vv. 18-24)
- 6. How should we respond to God’s warning in view of the fate of those who refused him on earth? In view of the nature of God as a consuming fire? In view of the nature of the kingdom we have received? (vv. 25-29)

Lesson 14

FINAL EXHORTATIONS (HEB. 13:1-25)

- I. Moral exhortations (13:1-6)
- II. Steadfastness in the truth (13:7-16)
- III. Further exhortations (13:17-19)
- IV. Concluding words (13:20-25)

QUESTIONS

- 1. Consider the moral exhortations of verses 1-6: brotherly love, hospitality, sympathy toward prisoners, purity in marriage, contentment. How are they related to the theme of the epistle?
- 2. What things should we remember to help us remain faithful? (vv. 7-16)
- 3. Why is worship important in maintaining faithfulness? (v. 15)
- 4. Why is it important for Christian to submit to their leaders? Who are their leaders? (v. 17)
- 5. For what purpose is prayer urged in verses 18-19?
- 6. What is the author's prayer in verses 20-21?