

הַבְּרִיט

INTRODUCTION

1. Why the Hebrew font for the title of the study? Well because the book we are studying is the book of Hebrews, of course. Why mention this? Well, strangely enough the book was written in Greek (so why not use Ἑβραῖος) and the quotes from the Old Testament are from the Septuagint (the Greek version)! This calls into question the audience. The extensive use of Old Testament quotations and symbols makes us not doubt that the audience was Jewish, but where were they. Many suggestions exist but the most likely are that they were in 1) Palestine or 2) Italy.
 - Why Palestine? Numerous references to the Temple/Tabernacle rather than Synagogue, the large number of Jewish believers present, and the temptation to fall back into Judaism (not pagan worship).
 - Why not Palestine? The references to the Temple/Tabernacle are equally relevant everywhere, Hebrews 2:3 indicates that the audience were all second generation Christians, which would be highly unlikely for Palestine.
 - Why Italy? Hebrews 13:24 includes the quote “Those from Italy greet you.” which from the original Greek leans heavily to the idea that these were Italians who were abroad. Who cares? Why single them out unless you are dealing with an Italian audience?
 - Why not Italy? Romans considered Christianity as a sect of Judaism, so going back to Judaism would not remove all the persecution.

What do you think?

2. Hebrews is unique among the books of the New Testament, in that we do not know the name of the author. Read Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:1-4, 13:18-25 as background to the authorship. We have some contenders even though we do not know explicitly the authorship.
 - Paul: Hebrews is consistent with the emphasis of Paul’s writings, though this only shows the writer was familiar with, and probably a friend of Paul. Paul certainly had the qualifications to do so, and the majority of Church history (1200 years) Paul was the undisputed author. So why doubt his authorship? Well, first the vocabulary and argument style is very different from Paul’s standard, and second, the earliest authorities were undecided, but tended to lean against Pauline authority. The real clincher though is Hebrews 2:3, where the writer states that the testimony of men, and not divine revelation is the source of the author’s knowledge of Jesus. Compare this with Galatians 1:11-12.
 - Barnabas: He was a close friend of Paul (Acts 11:22-26), a Levite (thus with priestly experience, Acts 4:36-37), knew Timothy well, and would be well known to all Christians. He is also listed by Tertullian as the author (earliest recorded statement of authorship).
 - Luke: Also a close friend of Paul and Timothy, some similarities exist with Luke’s writings, and several 2nd century writers list him as the author. It is unlikely that Luke wrote it however, because it is very different overall to Luke’s writing (Luke’s canonical writings were to Theophilus, tended to be more interested in historical timelines and events than expositing symbols, etc.).
 - Apollos: Again he is a close friend of Paul (Titus 3:13) and Timothy and was well known to all Christians. Read Acts 18:24-28. Interestingly enough Hebrews is more akin to Classical Greek rather than Koine Greek of the rest of the New Testament, and Apollos is the most likely person to be trained in Classical Greek. Finally he was considered the author by Martin Luther, however Martin Luther was the first to suggest his authorship of Hebrews.
 - Others such as Silas, Clement of Rome, Priscilla, and Aquila have been suggested but the likelihood is low.
1. The final background question is that of date. I left this for last as it is the easiest to answer. Read Hebrews 5:1-4, 7:26-8:6. Note the priestly activity is mentioned in the present tense, suggesting the temple is still present (plus this would be a great supporting argument, the old is not needed and has gone away now). Thus the Book was written before 70 AD. Now we saw that Timothy was just released, and persecution was increasing (Hebrews 10:32-39, 13:3), which is most consistent with 67-69 AD.

הַבְּרִיטָה 1:1-1:4

CHRIST IS SUPERIOR

1. Look over verses 1-4. In the Greek this is one long sentence, and as noted in the introduction was common for an introduction to a classical Greek oration. What does it mean that “God spoke to our forefathers”? Read Micah 1:1, Zephaniah 1:1. What does this say of the ultimate authority of the Old Testament? What does it mean that God spoke “at many times and various ways”? Read Obadiah 1:1, Amos 8:1, Habakkuk 1:1-6, Psalm 51:1-4, 1 Kings 18:20-40.
2. What does it mean that He has spoken to us by His Son? Read John 14:8-14. Does the entire New Testament come through Christ? Read Galatians 1:11-12, 1 John 1:1-4. How is Christ “heir of all things”, and did the Father or the Son make the universe? Read Genesis 1:1, John 1:1-5, Colossians 1:15-23. Note that God is one in essence but three in person. Each person of the Godhead take on different roles but all to achieve the same ends. For instance consider redemption: the Father predestined it (Ephesians 1:3-6), the Son paid it (Ephesians 1:7-10), and the Spirit applies and ensures it (Ephesians 1:11-14).
3. What do you think “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory” means? The word translated radiance is “ μ ” or apaugasma, and is only used here in the New Testament. It means sending forth an inner light, and doesn’t connote reflection. With this in mind, read Revelation 1:12-16. What does it mean for Christ “to be the exact representation of His being”? The word translated exact being is “ χ ” or charackter (sic), and it is the word from which we get character. The original meaning was a tool used for engraving but by New Testament times it specifically pointed to a die or stamp, like those used in making coins. Thus Jesus is the stamp of the Father, carrying all attributes of deity, and thus one with the Father. Read John 1:10-18. What does it mean that Jesus is “sustaining all things by His powerful word”? How did God make the world? Read Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24. How might this have bearing on how He sustains it? Keep in mind the implications of this and read John 18:1-14, 19:1-3. Think of it the men who arrested Him, the crown of thorns that cut Him, the soldiers’ fists that struck Him could not exist without His permission and continual will! He suffered what He could of stopped at any time, for you & I and the glory of God! What love!
4. What is the purification for sins that Jesus provided? Read Romans 6:5-7. Who did Christ pay our debt to, and who crucified Him? Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 51:3-6, Leviticus 1:1-5. Many Christians get this one wrong, the debt was paid to God, and it was God who crucified Him for us. Note that this does not remove the moral culpability of those who were the agents, but it does show two things: (1) Jesus did not buy us back from Satan! Jesus bought us out of slavery and into sonship so we could come into God’s presence. We were debtors to God, not Satan! (2) God the Father is not some cosmic bully who Jesus saved us from! The Father is the one who chose how to save us, and caused it to happen at a great cost to Himself! One last thing, why did Jesus sit down? Read Hebrews 7:23-8:2.
5. If Jesus is God, how can the text say “He became as much superior to the angels”? Does this not of necessity mean He was less than angels and thus not God? Read Philippians 2:5-11, Psalm 8. Note that Psalm 8 is quoted in Hebrews 2 in reference to Christ’s humanity, thus this is what is in light here. What does it mean that “the name He has inherited is much superior to theirs.”? Recall that names in the Old Testament connoted the character of the one who held it (see for instance the names in Ruth). Revelation 1:1-18, 19:11-16, Matthew 1:22.

1:5-1:14 הַבְּרִיט

CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO ANGELS

1. Read Psalm 2. Psalm 2:7 is the first quote in our passage, but you might note several other messianic prophecies that are fulfilled in Revelation. What does this Psalm look to? 2 Samuel 7:11-16. What does this passage refer to? Did Christ sin? If Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment, does that negate prior applications? Consider 2 Corinthians 5:20-21. Could this apply? The next quote (v. 6) is from Deuteronomy 32:43 (in Septuagint, Masoretic text, and Dead Sea Scrolls), and is corroborated in Psalm 97. What do Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 97 serve to do? How does accepting worship relate to Revelation 19:10?
2. After a series on the Son, the writer looks at how the angels are described. Verse 7 is a quote from Psalm 104:1-4. Notice that the word for angels, in the prelude to the quote is “pneuma” which is translated differently depending on context. Sometimes it is spirit, sometimes angel, sometimes wind, and sometimes even Holy Spirit. In this context it is probably best translated winds for the connection of thought, though angels are definitely in mind.
3. Read Psalm 45:1-7. This is the source of the next quote. What is this quote from? Do you note a pattern in the quotes? Notice how all the quotes of Jesus are in light of His kingly role, but each covers a different area. Now read Psalm 102:21-28. How does it fit in with what we just mentioned? Ref.: John 1:1-5. The final quote is one of the most often quoted in Hebrews, so pay particular attention! Read Psalm 110. What does this final one refer to? Note how the king is also a priest. Read 1 Samuel 13:8-15. How did God respond to a king claiming the priestly role?
4. The summary of the end of the first chapter is thus Christ is better than Angels. Christ is king and priest, preeminent over all, while the angels are ministering spirits.

2 הַבְּרִיטָה

PAY ATTENTION

1. Read Hebrews 2:1-4. Look at verse 1. What does the therefore refer to? The first verse could also read, “Therefore, we must pay more careful attention to what ...” Does this help? What was the core message of the end of chapter 1? What is the message spoken by angels? Read Deuteronomy 33:1-5, Acts 7:37-40, 51-53. Note that the passage in Acts is the speech of Stephen, the first recorded martyr of the church. Where there punishments with the law? Read Leviticus 20:1-3, Deuteronomy 28:15-24. Is there an increased penalty to not believing in Jesus when you have more light? Read Matthew 11:20-24. There are so many miracles and gifts the Holy Spirit used to witness to the authenticity of the message, both in Jesus and in the apostles. What is your favorite miracle in the Bible? Why don’t we see dramatic gifts manifest today?

JESUS IS SUPERIOR IN SALVATION

2. Read Hebrews 2:5-18. Who is to rule with Christ? Read Revelation 2:26-29. What does Psalm 8, which is quoted here, begin with? What does it end with? Does it refer to the Messiah or to mankind? Why would the author make a point of emphasizing the humanity of Jesus, after the major work done to show His deity in chapter 1? Did God give man rule over creation? Reference Genesis 1:27-30. Why doesn’t the world obey us? Reference Genesis 3:17-21. What is the purpose of verse 8? How is the argument completed in verse 9? Read Philippians 2:1-11, Romans 5:18-19.
3. Who are the sons brought to glory in verse 10? Read 1 John 3:1-3. If Jesus is God, and God is intrinsically perfect, how can Jesus be made perfect through suffering? Does Jesus’ deity blur with His humanity? This is a statement of His humanity learning obedience, not His deity. We see in verse 11 that Jesus is our brother (Read Mark 3:31-35), from the prior verses we see he is our redeemer. Why were both necessary? Reference Ruth 4:1-12. The quote in verse 12 is from Psalm 22, so read Psalm 22:22-31. What is the context of Psalm 22? Where is verse 1 of it quoted? The next two quotes are from the same passage. Read Isaiah 8:11-18. For reference this is in a very messianic section, Isaiah 7:10-14 is the famous “Emmanuel” passage, Isaiah 9:2-9 is the equally famous “government is on his shoulders” passage. How does Isaiah 7-9 form a natural progression?
4. Does God or Satan hold life and death? Recall Genesis 2:15-17, Revelation 1:17-18. What is meant here then? Read 1 John 3:7-8. How do we no longer fear? Read 2 Timothy 1:3-12. What is the significance of verse 16? How does verse 17 relate to Hebrews 5:1-10? Note the word translated make atonement is hilaskomai, and it carries the connotation of mercy. It is only used here and in Luke 18:13, where the tax collector in the temple cries for mercy to God. Was Jesus tempted? Recall Matthew 4, and read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13.

הַבְּרִיּוֹת 3:1-3:6

GREATER THAN MOSES

1. Why does the section start with “holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling”? Holy brothers appears only here in the New Testament (some translations have it in 1 Thessalonians 5:27 but the Greek is different). Why are we holy? Read Hebrews 2:14-18. Does the phrase heavenly calling refer to where the calling is from or where we are called to? Our Greek word of the day is “katanoeo”, which is translated “fix your thoughts” or “consider”. This is a compound word composed of “kata”, literally “down”, and “nous” which means mind. The ending difference is because the word is intensive force thus meaning “put your mind down on” or “consider carefully” (ref.: Ralph Earle, Word Meanings in the New Testament). The writer is thus using this to tell us to pay close attentions and think on what is being said in this section. Now what or who is the object of our thoughts? What is an apostle? Was Jesus an apostle or the sender of the apostles? Read Acts 1:7-8, John 3:16-21. This section compares Jesus with Moses, so why mention the office of high priest? What happens in Hebrews 4:14?
2. What is the point of verse 2? This verse refers back to Numbers 12. What happens in Numbers 12? Why is Miriam struck and not Aaron? Note Miriam is mentioned first, thus indicating she was the instigator. Also note Aaron consistently went with the crowd but did not lead (ref. Exodus 32). A final point is that Aaron was the high priest and thus if he was unclean the sacrifices could not be offered.
3. On what basis does verse 3 sets Jesus above Moses? Can Moses be considered part of the house? Read 1 Timothy 3:14-15. Did Jesus build the house? Read Zechariah 6:9-15. Note the passage in Zechariah is messianic, and thus the high priest Joshua is seen as a symbol of the Branch who is Christ.
4. What is the purpose of verse 4? Does this say Jesus is not God but an under-builder? NO! Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-17. Note that as we grow then witness and disciple others we are the under-builders, but all the building is really due to God, and from verse 3 we see that this same position as builder of all is Jesus. This text thus is a strong statement that Jesus must be God as Jesus is the builder of all.
5. What is the final contrast between Jesus and Moses? Is this description unusual? Read Galatians 3:26-4:7, John 15:14-15. The last sentence of verse 6 is the connector to the implications which we will cover next time, but to wet your appetite consider the following. We have noted that Christians are often referred to God’s house (particularly in this section), but sentence puts a condition which we must do. So is it Christ alone or Christ and works? Read Ephesians 2:8-10. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (sola gratia, sola fide, solus Christus). This does not mean we can live any life we want, a direct result of our salvation is that we will live for Christ. Not perfectly, but we can’t accept him as savior and not Lord. This is the basis of many great passages in the Bible such as Romans 6-7, James 2:14-26, 2 Peter 1, 1 John, John 15-16, etc. Clearly too much to do at one time but I encourage you to read these passages in your own study. They are meant to show us how to live in light of Jesus, and as an assurance of our salvation by seeing our growth in Jesus.

הַבְּרִיּוֹת 3:7-19

REBELLION OR REST

1. This section is an exposition of the Exodus through Psalm 95:7-11. Read Psalm 95. What is contained in the beginning of Psalm 95? How could we praise God like that and still doubt? Do you ever doubt? The second half of Psalm 95 contains a warning against rebellion based on the Exodus. Is there any difference in the quote in Hebrews? Depending on the version you have it may keep the original Hebrew words (Meribah and Massah) rather than translate them since they point to particular events. Read Exodus 17:1-7. Ref Numbers 20:1-14. Note that the passage in Exodus happened just weeks after God led them through the Red Sea.
2. Hebrews 3:12 picks starts the exposition with what? What is the remedy given? How do we encourage one another? Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, Ephesians 4:20-5:2, Galatians 6:1-10. Why the emphasis on today? Can we put off serving God until tomorrow so that we may enjoy the pleasures of sin today? How is sin deceitful? Isn't sin just an act? Read Colossians 2:6-8.
3. What does verse 14 mean? Read Colossians 1:21-23. Does this mean that if I do not continue in Jesus I will be forsaken by Him? In Hebrews 3:16-19 we see a series of rhetorical questions. What is the point of the questions? Read Romans 9:6-9. How does this fit? Read 1 John 2:18-23. Why does the passage in 1 John end in a description of denial of Jesus? How does the passage in Hebrews end?
4. Greek word of the Day - Katapausis - which is translated rest in the chapter. Pauo, means to cease, and kata is the intensive of down so we get the idea of laying down our troubles to Jesus and ceasing to worry about them. The rest of God is thus free of the cares of the world, not because of wealth or power but rather because of the one providing the rest.

הַבְּרִיטָה 4:1-13

PROMISED REST

1. We continue the exposition of Psalm 95:7-11 with an emphasis on the rest. How can we be found to have fallen short of the promised rest? How had the Israelites in the wilderness? Ref Hebrews 3:7-11. Was this rebellion unique to the Israelites? Read Romans 3:9-20. Hebrews 4:11 tells us to make every effort to enter the rest, so does this mean my works matter? Read Romans 9:30-33. Well does my faith then count as the good work? Read Romans 9:14-16. What does it mean that we also had the gospel preached to us? Isn't the gospel the story of Jesus? Is it enough to hear the gospel? Do we need to hear or can we just have faith? Read Romans 10:9-17.
2. Some debate surrounds whether the rest mentioned is the ultimate rest of the believer in heaven, the continual care God gives us, or our salvation. Is there any clue in verse 3? Has God been inactive since creation? Read Consider the Exodus, and Jesus' ministry as examples. What does it mean then that God rested? Genesis 2:1-3. Does God need to redo His plan for any unexpected events? Does God need to make something new to keep the creation working? How does this apply to us then? Read Luke 12:22-34. How does this fit with Philippians 4:4-9? When we enter the rest can we stop and just relax? Read 2 Peter 1:3-11. Hebrews points out that the land of Canaan was not the promised rest, so is the rest physical? Though not addressing this issue what does Matthew 5:43-48 say?
3. Hebrews 4:12-13 is often quoted, but what does it really mean? Is the Bible physically alive? Does it move around? Read 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5. How does this relate to the action of the Bible? Read Ephesians 6:10-20. Does this fit in with what is said in Hebrews? How do these verses fit in with the greater context of Hebrews 3-4? What does it mean that nothing is hidden from God? Does the fact that you are sinning right in front of the throne of God effect how you view your sinning?
4. The Greek word for the day is 'sabbatismos' is translated in verse 9 as rest. It only occurs in the New Testament in this verse and specifically refers to keeping the Sabbath rest. How is the Sabbath rest differ from just working? Does this shed light on what we just discussed?

4:14-5:10 הַבְּרִיט

BETTER THAN AARON

1. What is the purpose of Hebrews 4:14-16? How has Jesus passed through the heavens? Read John 3:10-15, Acts 1:9-11. Is there more than one heaven? It is interesting to note that God refers to three: the atmosphere/sky (Genesis 1:6-8), space (Genesis 1:14-19), and where He dwells (Genesis 28:10-22). Some twist this into thinking there are multiple heavens where God dwells, and thus we strive to see which level we can get into. Such teachings are foolishness and contrary to the Bible. What is our confession? How was Jesus tempted? Read Matthew 4:1-4, Mark 8:31-33. How does this help us to come boldly to God? Read 1 John 1:8-2:2, Ephesians 2:11-18.
2. What are the qualifications for the high priest? What are the duties of the priest? How does this fit with the purpose of the priesthood in the Old Testament? Read Leviticus 9:1-7, Numbers 3:5-13, Numbers 6:22-27, Malachi 2:1-9. What was the special duty of the high priest? Read Leviticus 16:1-5. Was Jesus subject to weakness? How does Jesus fulfill all this?
3. Hebrews 5:5 quotes Psalm 2:7 just as Hebrews 1:5 did, thus we will not look at it again, but Hebrews 5:6 introduces a new quote. Read Psalm 110. Who is the subject of this Psalm? Is this Psalm quoted elsewhere? Read Mark 12:35-37. Who was Melchizedek? Read Genesis 14:18-20. What does verse 7 refer to? Read Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:41-44. What does it mean to learn obedience? Read Philippians 2:5-11. What does it mean that Christ was 'made perfect' by His sufferings? Made perfect is 'teleioo' and more fully connotes the idea of bringing to completion or the desired goal. It is sometimes translated consecrated, by connecting it with the beginning thought of the passage we are studying. How does all this fit with the rest of the sentence? Just for interest, verse 11 is often connected with verse 10 in the same sentence. This is because the teaching in this book is in response to the lack of growth and subsequent slipping on the part of the Jewish believers.

5:11-6:6 דְּבָרִים

FALLING AWAY

1. Read Hebrews 5:11-6:3. What does the author have much to say about? Why doesn't he? What does it mean that they should be teachers by now? Should all Christians be teachers? Read 1 Peter 3:13-17, James 3:1-2. Is there a difference between an official teacher in the church and believers who share the truths of God's word? What is in mind here? What is a babe? What is a mature Christian? How are they differentiated? It is interesting to note that 'elementary principles' or 'first principles' refers to the basic sounds and letters, thus they did not really know the ABC's of the faith. Three groups of two items are given as examples of basic teachings, what are they?
2. Read Hebrews 6:4-6. Enlightenment refers to intellectual knowledge. Can we know intellectually and not be believers? Read James 2:19-20. Tasting the heavenly gift refers to experiencing consciously the benefits of God, as happened to the Jews in John 6:1-14. Were all who experienced this saved? Read John 6:34-37. Partaking of the Holy Spirit, means they had the Holy Spirit come upon them to do His will. Were all who were thus filled by the Spirit saved? Recall Balaam in Numbers 22-24. Tasted the goodness of the word of God, refers most likely to participation in the sacraments (Baptism and Lord's Supper) but can be linked as an extension of the enlightenment. The powers of the age to come refers to the miracles that marked the Gospel. Read Acts 8:9-24. It seems thus possible that the people were not Christian, to whom the writer is referring. Consider now v.6. This seems quite certain that they must have been. Can believers lose their salvation? Any conditional phrase can be correct one of two ways: if both clauses are correct, or if the first is a false statement for the purpose of instruction? How does this play out here? What does it mean to crucify Christ again?

הַבְּרִיטָה 6:7-6:20

HOPE AND CERTAINTY

1. Read Hebrews 6:7-12. What are the two types of ground? What does the ground symbolize? What do the plants symbolize? What happens to each type? There are two views of what this is symbolizing. The most popular interpretation connects this with passages like John 15:1-17 and puts the two grounds as believers and unbelievers. Note also that Hebrews 6:9 indicates that the negative parts mentioned do not go with salvation. Read Luke 13:1-9. What does removal of the fig tree symbolize here? The second view says both types are believers (one faithful, the other failing) and the fire on the second type is to make the failing believer fruitful (as was the agricultural purpose). Can a believer fail to have fruit in his/her life? Read James 2:14-26, Matthew 7:15-23. What does it mean that a man is justified by works in James? What accompanies salvation? Read Galatians 5:19-26. What does Hebrews 6:10 mean? Why be diligent? Interesting to note that lazy in v.12 is the same word as dull or slow to learn in Hebrews 5:11.
2. Read Hebrews 6:13-20. Did Abraham receive the full promise? What did he receive? Matthew 5:33-37. Why does Jesus say not to take an oath? Why did God take an oath? Is there a problem here? What are the two unchangeable things? What is our hope in this passage? How does this anchor us? Read Ephesians 4:1-16. What is the curtain that Jesus entered? Read Hebrews 5:9-11, 6:20. What is about to happen?

7:1-7:10 הַבְּרִיט

MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD GREATER THAN AARON'S

1. Read Hebrews 7:1-10. How is the description of Melchizedek started? What is unusual about it? Read the account of Uzziah in 2 Chronicles 26:16-23. (Note Uzziah was counted as a good king). What is the purpose of the first two verses? Why the emphasis on the meanings of Melchizedek and king of Salem? Read Isaiah 9:6-7, Jeremiah 23:5-6.
2. Some have claimed that Melchizedek was not born but rather was either the pre-incarnate Christ or a special creation of God because of v.3. First what is the context of 'without father or mother'? Interestingly, John MacArthur notes, the ancient Syriac Peshitta gives a more accurate translation of this Greek phrase as "whose father and mother are not written in genealogies." Additionally some contention that Melchizedek was 'like the Son of God' makes him actually Jesus. Does this hold even to basic rules of grammar? Interestingly enough the word translated 'like' is used nowhere else in the NT (aphomoioo) means to be made like or to cause a model to appear as the actual item. What does this verse imply then?
3. Three arguments are given as to why the Melchizedek priesthood is greater than the Aaronic priesthood. What are they? Why did the tribe of Levi receive tithes? Read Numbers 18:21-32. What does a tithe thus show? Why is it beyond contraction that the better blesses the lesser? Read Hebrews 11:20-21, Numbers 6:22-27. What is the purpose of blessing and from whence does it originate? What is the final argument? Compare it with Romans 5:12-21. What is the basic idea of the argument?

7:11-7:28 הַבְּרִית

SUPERIOR PRIEST AND COVENANT

1. Read Hebrews 7:11-19. What is the argument? What is the point of v.12? Did Jesus annul the Law? Read Matthew 5:17-20. How are we free from the Law if the Law is not annulled (i.e.: how did Jesus fulfill the Law for us)? Read Romans 7:1-6. What is the New Covenant then? Read Romans 3:21-31. What does it mean to become a priest on the basis of an indestructible life? What does it mean that the law is useless? Read Romans 3:19-20. How is hope linked to the New Covenant? Read Hebrews 6:13-20, 2 Corinthians 3:7-18.
2. Read Hebrews 7:20-28. How did the Levitical priesthood get established? Read Exodus 32:25-29, Numbers 3:5-10, Numbers 17:1-8. Are there any oaths by God in any of the sections denoting God's selection and verification of the Levitical priesthood? What does it mean that Jesus is the guarantee of a better covenant? Do the other members of the Trinity also guarantee it? Read John 10:25-30, Ephesians 1:11-14. Why point out that the high priests die? Note it is claimed that 84 high priests held the office from Aaron till the destruction of the Temple in 70AD. How does this show Jesus can save completely? Why do we need a priest as described in v.26? How is v. 27 useful in recalling the argument in Hebrews 6:6? How does v.28 bring the argument to conclusion? Note the argument we have gone over here will be expanded on in the next couple of chapters.

8:1-8:13 דְּבָרִים

NEW COVENANT

1. Read Hebrews 8. What is 'the point' of verse 1? What was discussed in chapter 7? What does it mean that Jesus sat down? What is the throne of the Majesty in heaven? Recall Hebrews 1:3. How does Jesus still serve in the true tabernacle? Read 1 John 2:1-2.
2. It mentions a gift and sacrifice that Jesus was to offer but does not specify it. What is it and why wouldn't it be mentioned here? Read Hebrews 9:11-14. In context of Hebrews 7, what is Hebrews 8:4 saying? What does it mean that the tabernacle (subsequently the temple) is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven? What does the quote show? Read Exodus 25:8-9, 40, 26:30, 27:8. What did the image Moses see look like? Recall Revelation 4, 6:9-11, 15:5-16:1. What does verse 6 in Hebrews 8 do?
3. What is the problem (fault) in the old covenant? Hebrews 8:8-12 quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34, so for context read Jeremiah 31:27-34. What is the message of Jeremiah? What is promised? Is it unique amongst the prophets? Read Ezekiel 36:22-32. What is the new heart? What does Hebrews 8:13 mean? How is the old obsolete? What does it mean that it will disappear? Does the current existence of Jewish people cause a problem here? Is there a difference between modern Judaism and the Old Testament Judaism? How does this play in the chapter?

9:1-9:10 דְּבָרִים

NEW SANCTUARY

1. Read Hebrews 9:1-10. What is the general subject? What is the purpose of Hebrews 9:1? What is the subject of verses 2-5? How about verses 6-10? Why does the writer say in verse 5 that '...we cannot now speak in detail.'? What is the point the writer does not want us to miss? Why mention the items if they are not going to be discussed?
2. 2. What was in the outer sanctuary? What did they symbolize? Why is the incense alter listed in the Holy of Holies when in Exodus 30:1-10 it is listed as outside the Holy of Holies? What does Leviticus 16:12-13 have to say about it? What is the passage in Hebrews concentrating on? Might there also be a functional reason, and if so what?
3. What item is covered most in detail? Why? What is in it? What was the pot of manna from? Reference Exodus 16:32-36. What did it picture? Read John 6:30-40. What was the rod that budded? Reference Numbers 17:1-10. What was it picturing that we have discussed at length the last several times? What were the tablets? What did they signify?
4. Why is it significant that the high priest could enter only once a year? What is the meaning of verse 8? What do verses 9 and 10 have to do with what Jesus said in Matthew 23:25-26? Why did God have the people follow the rituals if they were of no use? Were those of the Old Testament times saved? Reference Psalm 51. The word 'illustration' or sometimes 'symbolic' is the Greek word 'parabole' from which we get parable. Does this add anything to the reading? How does this relate to Peter's vision in Acts 10:9-16?

9:11-9:22 דְּבַרֵּי

BLOOD OF CHRIST

1. Read Hebrews 9:11-22. Why does verse 11 start with but? What is the argument that is being presented? Why does it matter that the greater tabernacle is not made by hands and thus not of this creation? Read Haggai 2:10-14, Romans 8:18-25. How does verse 12 follow a similar line of argument to verse 11? What is the significance that Jesus “entered once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” to us? Does this language leave any room for the loss of salvation? It is kind of cool to note that the word for redemption, ‘lutrosis’ was originally used for slaves whose freedom was purchased. What are the blood of bulls and goats from (ref.: last section)? What about the ashes of a heifer? Read Numbers 19:1-10. How does the argument of verses 13-14 continue the form of argumentation? What are the dead works? Read Hebrews 6:1, Colossians 2:6-15. Why were we freed?
2. What does verse 15 do? Who is identified as the beneficiaries of the new covenant? If one of the called did not trust and thus went to hell, would God be double charging for the sins since Jesus “died as a ransom to set them free...” Why does the NIV translate testament/covenant as will? If it is not a will why the need for the death? Read Genesis 15. What is going on in it? What is the reference to the sprinkling of blood from? Read Exodus 24:1-8. So how does the need for death at a will relate to sprinkling the blood in the Exodus passage? From what we have already seen, why do the items in the tabernacle need to be cleansed by blood? What is the key purpose of verse 22? What do we expect the next section to do?

9:23-10:4 הַבְּרִיטָה

GREATNESS OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

1. Read Hebrews 9:23-10:4. What does verse 23 say? Why? What does it mean that Jesus is “now to appear for us in God’s presence.”? Read Romans 8:31-39, 1 Timothy 2:1-7, and 1John 2:1-2. What error is spoken against in Hebrews 9:25-26? How does it tie into Hebrews 6:4-6? Why do we need to avoid, confess, and repent of wrong if the sin is taken care of? Read Romans 8:1-17, Galatians 5:13-18, James 2:14-17, 2 Peter 1:3-11, 1 John 2:3-6. What two key teachings are in verses 27 and 28? The word ‘appear’ occurs 3 times in verses 24, 26, 28 referring to three key phases in our Christian lives. What are the phases?
2. What purpose does Hebrews 10:1-4 serve in a formal argument? Does this summary link to a subject not covered yet? What might we expect in the next section (Hebrews 10:5-18) then? Why is the law called a shadow? How does this relate to the tabernacle being a ‘copy’? What is the main point the author is driving home? Why does he seem to go over it so many times in so many similar ways? What does he end on? Given the audience why would he want to end on that? How does this relate to us? Read Galatians 3:1-14.

10:5-10:18 תְּבַרֵּחַ

CONSUMATION

1. Read Hebrews 10:5-18. Read Psalm 40:1-10. Does anything odd stand out between the original in Psalm 40 and the quote in Hebrews 10? Does the fact that Psalms is translated from the original Hebrew and Hebrews quotes from the Septuagint (Greek) help in understanding it? How can it, in light of the inspiration of Scripture? The Septuagint was translated dynamically (expressions were translated not word for word but colloquially) to make the Old Testament easier to understand for the Greek audience. Two ideas are being summed up by the simplification. Read Exodus 21:1-6. What is being described? The servant who serves his master out of love has his ear “opened” with an awl, for the Son to so serve the Father required a physical body. Read Isaiah 50:4-6. What does opening the ear mean in this passage? What is the result in the Servant’s (this is a Messianic Passage also) life? What we are thus seeing is a form of literature called synecdoche, in which part of an object is used to represent the actions of the whole.
2. Why are four offerings mentioned? There are five offerings outlined in the first 7 chapters of Leviticus. (a) The burnt offering was a voluntary act of worship covering general sins as well as devotion and surrender to God, (b) The grain offering was a voluntary sacrifice of thanks for God’s provision. (c) The fellowship offering was also a voluntary offering for thanksgiving, fellowship with God and the community, and fulfillment of vows. (d) The sin offering was mandatory for unintentional sins that did not requiring restitution. (e) The guilt offering was also mandatory for unintentional sins that required restitution. Note that there is no sacrifice for intentional sins (ref Numbers 15:30-31, which we will read next time). Note that the five are summarized nicely in four offerings, to maintain the poetic format. In Hebrews 10:9 what is the “first” and the “second” mentioned? Was Jesus’ blood shed for you or His body offered for you? What do verses 11-14 serve to do? What is going on now in the Divine plan? Anything else? Read 2 Peter 3:8-10, Luke 19:11-27. What key point is heavily emphasized in this section?
3. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. What is the point of this quote? Have we seen it before? What did this whole section do? What is verse 18 saying? What follows a summary in Hebrews?

10:19-10:34 תְּבַרֵּחַ

PERSEVERE

1. Read Hebrews 10:19-34. As we have seen before, when 'therefore' starts a section, it refers back to the last section. Here we have not only 'therefore' but also 'since'. What does this tell us? Why is Jesus' body compared to the veil in the Temple? Reference Mark 15:33-41. It is interesting to note how the Christian life is referred to in verse 20. The original name given to Christianity by the Jews and Romans was The Way. Reference John 14:5-7. A lot of images occur in the next few verses (19-25), so let's diagram what is going on. First let's get the big framework, namely what famous triad (not trinity) appears in these verses (22, 23, 24)?
2. Now look at the first one (faith). What are we commanded to do? What is to be our attitude? What does it mean to have a sincere heart? Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Matthew 18:1-4. How can sinners approach God with assurance? Read 1 John 3:16-24. What does it mean to be cleansed of a guilty conscience? Read Hebrews 9:13-14. Being washed with pure water does not refer to baptism (though baptism is a sign and seal of the real truth here). What is pictured? Read Ezekiel 36:24-27. What is all of this predicated upon?
3. Next we will look at the second one (hope). What are we commanded to do? What is implicitly assumed we are doing? How can we possibly do this? Read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13, John 10:25-30.
4. Finally we consider the third of the triad (love). We are commanded to do three things here. What are they? The word for spur (paroxusmos) means to provoke or incite to strong emotion. What is this the image of the first command? The second and third command are two boundaries (see the conjunction) set to help explain the first one. What do they tell us? Is this just telling us to show up at church? What should we do then?
5. Verses 26-31 make up one of the most struggled with sections in the Bible. The NIV does a very good job with verse 26. What is the condition for the if then clause? Reference Numbers 15:30-31. Why is no sacrifice left? What does this tell us of the condition? What is the argument in the middle of paragraph? What do the quotes tell us? Read Deuteronomy 32:34-38.
6. Verses 32-34 give the argument from the positive side. What is it? What did they face? At what point in their faith? How had they responded? Why did they? Read Matthew 6:19-24. How does this line up with 1 Peter 5:1-11?

10:35-11:2 יְהוֹרֹס

HALL OF FAITH INTRODUCTION

1. Read Hebrews 10:35-11:2. What was the point of our last discussion? How did it end? This section sets out the two alternatives of the Hebrews. What are they? The quotation is paraphrased from Habakkuk 2:3-4 and Isaiah 26:20. In Habakkuk, the prophet questions God about what is going on at the time and God answers him, but God's answer generates a new question. Habakkuk finally rests in the Lord and praises Him for who He is. The quote is from God's second (and final) answer, which is given in response to the prophet Habakkuk's question about how God could use the evil Chaldeans to judge Judah. Read Habakkuk 2:2-8,18-20. What does God emphasize in His response? How does this apply to the Hebrews who received the book of Hebrews? How does it apply to us? The Isaiah passage is from a section sometimes called the song of salvation. Read Isaiah 26:19-21. What does the Isaiah passage tell us? What does Hebrews 11:39, tell us about the two groups?
2. Hebrews 11:1 contains what is often called the great definition of faith. Time for a little sentence diagramming (sorry, but it is very useful). The sentence defines faith by two nouns, which are modified by prepositional phrases. What are the two nouns? The first is sometimes translated sure, assurance, or substance. The Greek word is 'hupostasis', and it can mean substance or exact representation (Hebrews 1:3), or confidence (Hebrews 3:14). What are we sure of? Read Romans 5:1-5. The second word is sometimes translated certain, conviction, or evidence. The Greek word is 'elegchos', and it means proof, evidence, or conviction. What are we certain of? Read 2 Corinthians 4:16—5:0. Does either imply blind belief? Read Psalms 34:1-10. Does either say we can impartially test it? Read Ephesians 2:1-10. Were we logically convinced of Christianity and then followed through? What do they suggest? How does this apply to us? How does this apply to our witnessing? What does Hebrews 11:2 suggest?

11:3-11:7 הַבְּרִיָּוִים

HALL OF FAITH: ANCIENTS

1. Read Hebrews 11:3-7. This section covers the ancients (creation to the flood). What notable people are not mentioned? Why are they not mentioned?
2. What is God's point in this section? Note that the word for universe literally means ages, and the word for formed literally means to 'be prepared to fulfill a purpose'. How does this influence the passage? Read Genesis 1:1-5, Job 38:1-7,31-33,42:1-6, Jeremiah 10:6-16, John 1:1-14, Colossians 1:15-20, 2 Peter 3:3-7. What is God's purpose in all these verses? Why does God emphasize creation so much? Can we give in on this point? Is it minor to our faith? What is to be our response?
3. Read Genesis 4:1-16. What were the jobs of Cain and Abel? What were the sacrifices of Cain and Abel? Why was Abel's sacrifice accepted, while Cain's sacrifice was not? How does Abel still speak?
4. Read Genesis 5:18-24. What does it mean that "Enoch walked with the Lord," and what happened to him? How does Hebrews apply the life of Enoch? What does it put as the basis of drawing near to God? What do the two areas mean? Read Deuteronomy 4:32-40, Romans 4:4-8.
5. Read Genesis 6:9-22. How do we know Noah had faith? How does acting on a warning show faith? How are the two categories of men contrasted? How are the actions of the faithful become a condemnation to the faithless? What do each of the witnesses from the ancients teach us, and how can we apply this to our lives?

11:8-11:22 תְּבָרִיחַ

HALL OF FAITH: PATRIARCHS PART 1

1. Read Hebrews 11:8-22. Who is in the list of Patriarchs? Which of them is not usually there? When did Abraham live? When was the flood?
2. The story of Abraham goes from Genesis 11:26-25:12, so I will reference a different section to tell us of his life. Read Acts 7:1-16. This is from the discourse of Stephen, just before he became the first martyr of the church (he was stoned to death with the approval of Saul, see Acts 7:54-60). How does Acts expound on the image of Abraham as a stranger in the land promised him? Did Abraham see the consummation of his promise? Did Abraham want a large country for his descendants? What did he want? How does the emphasis on the foundations of the city contrast with the tents Abraham lived in? During the collapse of the Roman Empire, many Christians became distressed because they had grown to associate Rome with God's kingdom. A now famous monk named Augustine wrote a book called "City of God" expounding on this statement of Abraham seeking a city whose builder and maker is God. The point of Augustine's book was that as believers we cannot put our faith in the things of this world, rather we need to look to God and His city, the New Jerusalem, for the fulfillment of our desires. How does this fit with John 15:18-21, 16:31-33? How does it fit with Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17?
3. How does Hebrews 11:11 differ in the NIV versus all other translations? My instinctive reaction is to side against the NIV on precise wording, but I was curious as to why they differed so strongly. Two things come to light in the Greek. (1) Abraham is not mentioned. (2) The phrase "to become a father" in the NIV or "to conceive seed" in most others is "eis katabolen spermatos" which literally means "to lay down seed" and is thus incompatible with Sarah doing it. Most translations ignore (2) because (1) is so noticeable. The NIV follows a suggestion by the great theologian F.F. Bruce, which says that Sarah is not the subject but rather a "dative of accompaniment". Basically, F.F. Bruce is stating that Sarah is being included along with Abraham, who is implicitly the subject from his earlier inclusion in verses 8-10, and the implied gender of (2). What do you think? Are the Jews as numerous as the sand on the seashore? What does Paul say in Romans 9:6-9?
4. Now look at Hebrews 11:13-16. What does the first part of verse 13 do? What does it mean to welcome something from a distance? What does it mean to be an alien and a stranger, and how does this relate to verse 14? Why doesn't this follow directly on the heels of verses 8-10? What do verses 11-12 add? What does verse 15 mean? Why would our not longing for Heaven be something that God would be ashamed of us for? What does it mean to long for Heaven? Read 1 John 2:15-17, Revelation 22:10-17. How does God show His pleasure in His people?
5. Do you seek the city of man or the city of God (as Augustine put it)? How does this whole strangers in the world thing apply to our lives? What is our culture and world view? What is the world view of non-believers? How does the world view affect the ideas we come up with? Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16. Notice a few key areas. (1) Does the gospel make sense to non-believers? Is this because the message is foolish or because the foolishness of the non-believer? (2) Can we be proud since we got it? Should we be proud of our "foolishness" to the world? What then? (3) What should we teach to non-believers? How about to believers? (4) How did we learn what we know, and how are we to learn more?

11:8-11:22 תְּבָרָה

HALL OF FAITH: PATRIARCHS PART 2

6. Read Hebrews 11:17-22. Now read James 1:13-15. The word tempt in one place is the same word (peiradzo in the Greek) in both places though a different word is used. Is this a contradiction? Here is where a little knowledge can be dangerous. My Greek lexicon lists 11 meanings for peiradzo which fall into three general categories: to attempt something, to verify the quality, to entice. So which meaning is used in each area, and how do we know? Read James 1:1-12. Is the context of James one of God will not put us in a test? From the context is God doing us good or evil? Does God entice us when we are tested or put us in a place where we might be enticed if we follow our own way? What was going on in the Hebrews passage and how did Abraham understand the circumstance? Is this a contradiction or a paper tiger?
7. Let's look at the account of the sacrifice of Isaac. Read Genesis 22:1-19. There are several things I want you to notice about this story.
 2. First where is the sacrifice to take place? What is the significance of Mt. Moriah? Was it to take place on Mt. Moriah or a distinctive peak near Mt. Moriah?
 3. Second, does Abraham have any doubts? What does Abraham say to his son when Isaac asks about the lamb? What did Hebrews say was Abraham's reasoning? Could Abraham have been thinking both but only mention one?
 4. Third, who speaks to Abraham? Who is the Angel of the Lord? What does angel mean? Do we see the Angel of the Lord elsewhere?
 5. Fourth, what is provided? Why a ram (literally a mighty ram) and not a lamb? Is it surprising that it is a ram's blood that was used for the consecration of the tabernacle items, and for the sin offering?
 6. Finally, what scene is being painted? Who does Abraham represent? Who does Isaac represent? What does the sacrifice represent? How about the ram? What about the second statement from God?
8. Is there an application to us here, beyond salvation by grace alone through faith alone? Look at this from a different perspective. Did Abraham have any worldly reason to question the sacrifice? Was there any support from the thinking of this world? Are we ever in such a place? What did Abraham do? Was he afraid? How did he do it? What can we learn from this? Was the worldly thinking right even though it seemed to have everything going for it? How did God react? Does God always give immediate relief? What can we expect? Would it be wiser to just give in? Why or why not? What was the wise action? What is your action going to be?
9. What is the significance of the blessing that was done? What is the basis of these blessings? Where both Jacob and Esau equally blessed? Reference Genesis 27:1-41. Why, was one better or was one more deserving? Did the blessing equate to time or interaction Isaac spent with them? What did it really correlate to? How about with Joseph's sons? Reference Genesis 48:8-22. What is significant with Jacob's actions? What was the significance of Joseph being buried in the Holy Land?

11:23-11:29 תְּבִרָתוֹ

HALL OF FAITH: MOSES

1. Read Hebrews 11:23-29. What was the king's edict at the time of Moses' birth? Why were the parents not afraid? What does it mean for Moses to be "no ordinary child", which is usually translated "a beautiful child" or "a proper child"? Read Exodus 2:1-10. How did Pharaoh's daughter know Moses was a Hebrew child? Just for interest, Pharaoh's daughter is most likely Hatshepsut, who later became one of the most famous Queens of Egypt. Hatshepsut's death caused a huge power struggle and revenge against those associated with her. If you ever wondered how one who was so high in the Egyptian power could lose his position for what he did, it is most likely that his enemies used this as an opportunity for revenge.
2. What does it mean that Moses refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter? How did Moses suffer mistreatment? What options are being contrasted? What pleasures were available in Egypt? What was life like in Midian? Where is Midian and how long was Moses there? How did Moses even know of Christ, let alone know enough to feel he was suffering for Christ? Read Genesis 3:14-15, 12:1-3, 22:15-18, 49:8-12, 50:24-26, just to name a few. What are the equivalent options available to Christians today? What reward makes all the struggles worthwhile?
3. What does it mean that Moses left Egypt, not fearing Pharaoh? Read Exodus 2:11-15. Does it say in Exodus that Moses fled for fear of Pharaoh? Some claim Moses' fear was of God for the sin he did. Does this seem likely? Did Moses leave Egypt only once? Given that this section is time sequential and the time in Midian has already been discussed, does it seem likely this is referring to Moses' fleeing? What immediately follows? Could this be referring to the Exodus?
4. What does it mean to keep the Passover by faith? Read Genesis 12:1-20. What is the significance of Passover to us? What is the lamb? Why is the blood their? What is the significance of eating in haste? What does the parting of the Red Sea point to? As a side note, some say the parting of the Red Sea (literally Yom Kopf, the sea of reeds) was in a shallow marshy area that was found to be amazingly dry and crossable. This attempt to lessen the miracle actually introduces a greater one, the drowning of an elite army when a few inches of water flowed back in!

11:30-11:31 יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

HALL OF FAITH: RAHAB

1. Read Hebrews 11:30-31. Now read the story of Jericho in Joshua 2:1-21, 5:11-6-25. Why such long passages? Well let's look at them first. Joshua 2 tells the story of Rahab, and how she was spared. There is a much argued part of this story, which revolves around the lie Rahab told. Did God sanction Rahab's lie? Should she have told the truth? Let's put this in a more modern setting. Should the many Christians who hid Jews from the Nazis have told the truth? Some say James 2:25 commends her for lying. Does it? Which of the 10 commandments forbids lying? Is it ok not to tell the truth sometimes? Could God have saved the spies without her lie? Would misleading have been better? Is there a difference?
2. As for the passage of taking Jericho, we started earlier so you would see two important details. First, when was the city taken? What is the significance of the day after Passover? In Jewish times it was the feast of First Fruits, but it is also the day Christ rose from the dead. Now note that it is this time that the Commander of the Army of the Lord appears to Joshua. The second point is who is this commander? How do we know? What is the significance of the taking of Jericho to us? Jericho had very thick walls and was a major military center of the time, as we discover from archeology. How is the city taken. Do the people do anything? How many times do the people march around Jericho? Why is it usually said the people march around 7 times (this even appears in Jewish weddings)? How does this tie into 2 Corinthians 10:1-6? How do we fight? What is our goal? What should we do? Read 1 Peter 3:13-17.

11:32-11:40 הַבְּרוּס

HALL OF FAITH: PROPHETS 1 (THE POSITIVE PART)

1. Read Hebrews 11:32-40. Why does the writer mention the names and incidents if he says he does not have time to discuss them? Lets look at them to see what would have been obvious to the original readers of this epistle. Note: the people who are named are listed in pairs with the most prominent one first.
 7. Gideon (Judges 6-9) This is a well known story. Read Judges 6:11-24. What happens? Was this enough to convince Gideon to act against the Midianites? Gideon had 300 men, how many of the enemy died? See Judges 8:10.
 8. Barak (Judges 4-5) Barak was the military commander when Deborah was judge. He trusted the Lord to deliver a greater army into his hand, but wanted the support of Deborah. She chastens him for a lack of faith (needing her), but here he is commended. Why?
 9. Samson (Judges 13-16) This is another well known story. Two things come to mind though. First, was Samson a big tough guy? Samson was about the least faithful person I can think of in how he lived his life. Why is he here?
 10. Jephthah (Judges 11-12) Jephthah has some controversy with him. Read Judges 11:29-40. What happens here? Some say she was literally sacrificed on an altar. Some point out the custom was for one who was promised to the Lord to be dedicated to service in the tabernacle. Was she sacrificed on an altar or dedicated to the Lord? What from the text seems to indicate one way or the other?
 11. David (last half 1 Samuel, all 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles, many Psalms)
 12. Samuel (first half of 1 Samuel)
 13. Prophets (Moses is first then Samuel the next, many follow till Malachi)
 14. Conquered kingdoms (Joshua, Judges, David, etc.)
 15. Administered justice/worked righteousness (see judges and the good kings)
 16. Gained what was promised (Solomon)
 17. Shut mouth's of Lions (Daniel 6, also Samson and David)
 18. Quenched fury of flames (Daniel 3) I want to pay particular attention to this story. What was the situation for these three men? Where is Daniel? What is at stake here? How do they respond? Is there any basis for confidence? Why do they have any?
 19. Escaped edge of the sword (2 Kings 6) This story answers the questions from the last one? How does Elisha have confidence? What does it mean for God to be omnipresent? What does this mean for us? Think about this: the Holy One is here now, in all His glory, and we are always before Him even when we sin. Next time you are tempted or scared consider the fact you are at the foot of His throne.
 20. Weakness to strength (Ehud, Jael, Gideon, Samson, Hezekiah)
 21. Powerful in battle (Just about all of them)
 22. Women received their dead back (1 Kings 17:22, 2 Kings 4:34)

11:32-12:2 יְבָרוּס

HALL OF FAITH: PROPHETS 2 (THE NEGATIVE PART)

1. Read Hebrews 11:32-40. Let's finish looking at the list to see how they dealt with afflictions that did not go away.
 23. Tortured but refused release (2 Maccabees 6,7) I have included this on the back because I found it very inspirational to see the love Eleazer and this family had for God. Note: this is not canonical, thus not scripture, but can be used for edification like Christian literature of today. Always be careful when reading noncanonical works that you do not use it to form doctrine, there are errors that come from 1&2 Maccabees, such as purgatory, which are not Biblical. I am including the reasons not to have it in the canon from the intro to the Oxford translation (which is the version I am quoting)
 24. Jeers and flogging (Great many) Read 2 Kings 2:23-25, Jeremiah 20:1-6, 37:11-17.
 25. Chained and imprisoned (Many possibilities) Read 1 Kings 22:24-28 (2 Chronicles 18:23-27).
 26. Stoned (Zechariah son of Jehoiada Read 2 Chronicles 24:20-22)
 27. Sawed in two (Isaiah, tradition- Ascension of Isaiah) This took place during the reign of evil king Manasseh.
 28. Killed by sword (Uriah, Jeremiah 26:23) Could also refer to one of the many times God's people were mass murdered by unbelievers amongst them, see 1 Samuel 22:16-19, 1 Kings 19:13-14.
 29. Wore sheepskins and goatskins (Read Matthew 3:1-6, Zechariah 13:1-5, 2 Kings 2:8-14)
 30. destitute and mistreated (Great many) Read Jeremiah 38:4-12.
 31. Wandered in deserts and mountains, caves and holes (Great many) Read Psalm 107:1-16.
2. What is the better resurrection mentioned earlier? What does it mean that "the world was not worthy of them"? Why did God allow all this torture of those who were faithful? Read James 1:18, 1 Peter 3:8-17. These are good answers but what is the ultimate? Read Matthew 5:1-16. Did they get what they sought then? Did they ever get it? How? Through who? What is the relation between the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints? Why did they not get it apart from us? Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

The Apocrypha has never been accepted as scriptures for the following reasons:

- a) The Jews never considered them part of their sacred canon.
- b) Christ rejected them by citing the scriptures as the "Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms". The Jews would understand that to be what we now consider the 39 books of the Old Testament.
- c) They are never quoted in the Bible.
- d) They are unreliable and contradict known historical facts and doctrines in the Bible. See Gill 22551| for a detailed list.
e.g. 2 Mac 12:44,45, Wis 13:18 etc.
- e) The number of books, the verse numbering and the actual verses themselves vary greatly depending on who prints the Apocrypha.
This is not definitely something you would want to depend on!

2 MACCABEES 6

6:1 Not long after this the king sent an old man of Athens to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers, and not to live after the laws of God: 6:2 And to pollute also the temple in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter Olympius; and that in Garizim, of Jupiter the Defender of strangers, as they did desire that dwelt in the place. 6:3 The coming in of this mischief was sore and grievous to the people: 6:4 For the temple was filled with riot and revelling by the Gentiles, who dallied with harlots, and had to do with women within the circuit of the holy places, and besides that brought in things that were not lawful. 6:5 The altar also was filled with profane things, which the law forbiddeth. 6:6 Neither was it lawful for a man to keep sabbath days or ancient fasts, or to profess himself at all to be a Jew. 6:7 And in the day of the king's birth every month they were brought by bitter constraint to eat of the sacrifices; and when the fast of Bacchus was kept, the Jews were compelled to go in procession to Bacchus, carrying ivy. 6:8 Moreover there went out a decree to the neighbour cities of the heathen, by the suggestion of Ptolemee, against the Jews, that they should observe the same fashions, and be partakers of their sacrifices: 6:9 And whoso would not conform themselves to the manners of the Gentiles should be put to death. Then might a man have seen the present misery. 6:10 For there were two women brought, who had circumcised their children; whom when they had openly led round about the city, the babes hanging at their breasts, they cast them down headlong from the wall. 6:11 And others, that had run together into caves near by, to keep the sabbath day secretly, being discovered by Philip, were all burnt together, because they made a conscience to help themselves for the honour of the most sacred day. 6:12 Now I beseech those that read this book, that they be not discouraged for these calamities, but that they judge those punishments not to be for destruction, but for a chastening of our nation. 6:13 For it is a token of his great goodness, when wicked doers are not suffered any long time, but forthwith punished. 6:14 For not as with other nations, whom the Lord patiently forbearth to punish, till they be come to the fulness of their sins, so dealeth he with us, 6:15 Lest that, being come to the height of sin, afterwards he should take vengeance of us. 6:16 And therefore he never withdraweth his mercy from us: and though he punish with adversity, yet doth he never forsake his people. 6:17 But let this that we at spoken be for a warning unto us. And now will we come to the declaring of the matter in a few words. 6:18 Eleazar, one of the principal scribes, an aged man, and of a well favoured countenance, was constrained to open his mouth, and to eat swine's flesh. 6:19 But he, choosing rather to die gloriously, than to live stained with such an abomination, spit it forth, and came of his own accord to the torment, 6:20 As it behoved them to come, that are resolute to stand out against such things, as are not lawful for love of life to be tasted. 6:21 But they that had the charge of that wicked feast, for the old acquaintance they had with the man, taking him aside, besought him to bring flesh of his own provision, such as was lawful for him to use, and make as if he did eat of the flesh taken from the sacrifice commanded by the king; 6:22 That in so doing he might be delivered from death, and for the old friendship with them find favour. 6:23 But he began to consider discreetly, and as became his age, and the excellency of his ancient years, and the honour of his gray head, whereon was come, and his most honest education from a child, or rather the holy law made and given by God: therefore he answered accordingly, and willed them straightways to send him to the grave. 6:24 For it becometh not our age, said he, in any wise to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar, being fourscore years old and ten, were now gone to a strange religion; 6:25 And so they through mine hypocrisy, and desire to live a little time and a moment longer, should be deceived by me, and I get a stain to mine old age, and make it abominable. 6:26 For though for the present time I should be delivered from the punishment of men: yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive, nor dead. 6:27 Wherefore now, manfully changing this life, I will shew myself such an one as mine age requireth, 6:28 And leave a notable example to such as be young to die willingly and courageously for the honourable and holy laws. And when he had said these words, immediately he went to the torment: 6:29 They that led him changing the good will they bare him a little before into hatred, because the foresaid speeches proceeded, as they thought, from a desperate mind. 6:30 But when he was ready to die with stripes, he groaned, and said, It is manifest unto the Lord, that hath the holy knowledge, that whereas I might have been delivered from death, I now endure sore pains in body by being beaten: but in soul am well content to suffer these things, because I fear him. 6:31 And thus this man died, leaving his death for an example of a noble courage, and a memorial of virtue, not only unto young men, but unto all his nation.

2 MACCABEES 7

¹ It came to pass also, that seven brethren with their mother were taken, and compelled by the king against the law to taste swine's flesh, and were tormented with scourges and whips. ² But one of them that spake first said thus, What wouldest thou ask or learn of us? we are ready to die, rather than to transgress the laws of our fathers. ³ Then the king, being in a rage, commanded pans and caldrons to be made hot: ⁴ Which forthwith being heated, he commanded to cut out the tongue of him that spake first, and to cut off the utmost parts of his body, the rest of his brethren and his mother looking on. ⁵ Now when he was thus maimed in all his members, he commanded him being yet alive to be brought to the fire, and to be fried in the pan: and as the vapour of the pan was for a good space dispersed, they exhorted one another with the mother to die manfully, saying thus, ⁶ The Lord God looketh upon us, and in truth hath comfort in us, as Moses in his song, which witnessed to their faces, declared, saying, And he shall be comforted in his servants. ⁷ So when the first was dead after this number, they brought the second to make him a mocking stock: and when they had pulled off the skin of his head with the hair, they asked him, Wilt thou eat, before thou be punished throughout every member of thy body? ⁸ But he answered in his own language, and said, No. Wherefore he also received the next torment in order, as the former did. ⁹ And when he was at the last gasp, he said, Thou like a fury takest us out of this present life, but the King of the world shall raise us up, who have died for his laws, unto everlasting life. ¹⁰ After him was the third made a mocking stock: and when he was required, he put out his tongue, and that right soon, holding forth his hands manfully. ¹¹ And said courageously, These I had from heaven; and for his laws I despise them; and from him I hope to receive them again. ¹² Insomuch that the king, and they that were with him, marvelled at the young man's courage, for that he nothing regarded the pains. ¹³ Now when this man was dead also, they tormented and mangled the fourth in like manner. ¹⁴ So when he was ready to die he said thus, It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God to be raised up again by him: as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life. ¹⁵ Afterward they brought the fifth also, and mangled him. ¹⁶ Then looked he unto the king, and said, Thou hast power over men, thou art corruptible, thou doest what thou wilt; yet think not that our nation is forsaken of God; ¹⁷ But abide a while, and behold his great power, how he will torment thee and thy seed. ¹⁸ After him also they brought the sixth, who being ready to die said, Be not deceived without cause: for we suffer these things for ourselves, having sinned against our God: therefore marvellous things are done unto us. ¹⁹ But think not thou, that takest in hand to strive against God, that thou shalt escape unpunished. ²⁰ But the mother was marvellous above all, and worthy of honourable memory: for when she saw her seven sons slain within the space of one day, she bare it with a good courage, because of the hope that she had in the Lord. ²¹ Yea, she exhorted every one of them in her own language, filled with courageous spirits; and stirring up her womanish thoughts with a manly stomach, she said unto them, ²² I cannot tell how ye came into my womb: for I neither gave you breath nor life, neither was it I that formed the members of every one of you; ²³ But doubtless the Creator of the world, who formed the generation of man, and found out the beginning of all things, will also of his own mercy give you breath and life again, as ye now regard not your own selves for his laws' sake. ²⁴ Now Antiochus, thinking himself despised, and suspecting it to be a reproachful speech, whilst the youngest was yet alive, did not only exhort him by words, but also assured him with oaths, that he would make him both a rich and a happy man, if he would turn from the laws of his fathers; and that also he would take him for his friend, and trust him with affairs. ²⁵ But when the young man would in no case hearken unto him, the king called his mother, and exhorted her that she would counsel the young man to save his life. ²⁶ And when he had exhorted her with many words, she promised him that she would counsel her son. ²⁷ But she bowing herself toward him, laughing the cruel tyrant to scorn, spake in her country language on this manner; O my son, have pity upon me that bare thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee such three years, and nourished thee, and brought thee up unto this age, and endured the troubles of education. ²⁸ I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that were not; and so was mankind made likewise. ²⁹ Fear not this tormentor, but, being worthy of thy brethren, take thy death that I may receive thee again in mercy with thy brethren. ³⁰ Whiles she was yet speaking these words, the young man said, Whom wait ye for? I will not obey the king's commandment: but I will obey the commandment of the law that was given unto our fathers by Moses. ³¹ And thou, that hast been the author of all mischief against the Hebrews, shalt not escape the hands of God. ³² For we suffer because of our sins. ³³ And though the living Lord be angry with us a little while for our chastening and correction, yet shall he be at one again with his servants. ³⁴ But thou, O godless man, and of all other most wicked, be not lifted up without a cause, nor puffed up with uncertain hopes, lifting up thy hand against the servants of God: ³⁵ For thou hast not yet escaped the judgment of Almighty God, who seeth all things. ³⁶ For our brethren, who now have suffered a short pain, are dead under God's covenant of everlasting life: but thou, through the judgment of God, shalt receive just punishment for thy pride. ³⁷ But I, as my brethren, offer up my body and life for the laws of our fathers, beseeching God that he would speedily be merciful unto our nation; and that thou by torments and plagues mayest confess, that he alone is God; ³⁸ And that in me and my brethren the wrath of the Almighty, which is justly brought upon our nation, may cease. ³⁹ Than the king' being in a rage, handed him worse than all the rest, and took it grievously that he was mocked. ⁴⁰ So this man died undefiled, and put his whole trust in the Lord. ⁴¹ Last of all after the sons the mother died. ⁴² Let this be enough now to have spoken concerning the idolatrous feasts, and the extreme tortures.

הַבְּרִיטָה 12:1-3

GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

1. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What is the therefore there for? This marks the end of the section that started in Hebrews 10:19 (see what I mean about the bad chapter divisions added around the start of the last millennium)? Re-read the intro paragraph from that section (Hebrews 10:19-25). What is the purpose of Hebrews 10:19-21? How were the ideas developed? What key concepts of a faithful walk did we see in the “hall of faith” (Hebrews 11)? Look again at the intro paragraph to this section (Hebrews 12:1-2). What does the since mean? What is the cloud of witnesses? The Greek word of the day is *martus*, which is translated witness. It can mean both an onlooker who can tell about the situation (legal sense) and one who lives as a model (moral sense). In English, we get the word martyr from this root. Both concepts are used in the Bible. We see the legal use in, for instance, the false witnesses in Jesus trial (Gospels) and in the apostles as witnesses of the resurrection (Acts 1:22, 2:32, 3:15, 1 Peter 5:1, etc). The moral sense appears when referring to martyrs like Stephen (Acts 22:20), Antipas (Revelation 2:13), two witnesses (Revelation 11:3) and even of our Lord Jesus Himself (Revelation 1:5). What relation do they have to us? What is our response to be to the witness they give to us?
2. What two things are we to throw off? Are the things that hinder (literally a weight or burden) sin? This image is from running, where you do not want to carry extra weight if you are going to win. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. What is Paul encouraging us to do? What do the images point to in the life of Paul? Read a little earlier to get the context (1 Corinthians 9:15-23). What is Paul talking about? What is the context of a hindrance then? What is the sin that so easily entangles?
3. Why does the next phrase start with “and let us?” How are we to run? Why this and not speed, power, agility, or skill? Read Hebrews 10:35-39. Where are we to run? Read Ephesians 2:8-10. Are there big pylons and signs to mark out what we are to do? How do we know where to go? In any strenuous exercise, you often need to focus your attention on some object so your mind does not concentrate on the pain. What are we to concentrate on? How does this tie into the last section? How is Jesus the author and perfecter (finisher) of our faith? Read Hebrews 2:10-11, John 19:28-30. What is the joy set before Jesus? Read Philippians 2:5-11, Isaiah 53:10-12. How so is a cross shameful? Reference Galatians 3:10-14. What is the significance of Christ sitting down? What does Hebrews 12:3 say to us?

12:4-11 הַבְּרִיּוֹס

DISCIPLINE OF GOD

1. Read Hebrews 12:1-11. I am double using the previous verses because we really should have done 12:1-11 as a unit but it was too packed with good stuff to be handled in one section. What does verse 4 mean in light of Hebrews 10:32-34? Why is the connection made between resisting sin and tribulation in the world? Read John 15:18-25.
2. How do verses 5-6, tie in with Hebrews 2:10-12? The passage quoted is from Proverbs 3:11-12. The first several chapters of Proverbs is an exhortation to the son of Solomon to heed the counsel of the book. All of chapter 3 is really applicable to what we are looking at so lets read Proverbs 3.
 5. Proverbs 3:1-2. What is being exhorted here? What is the benefit?
 6. Proverbs 3:3-4. What are we commanded to do? Haven't we seen that the world will hate us for doing good? Why will men have favor and esteem for us? Recall 1 Peter 3:13-17.
 7. Proverbs 3:5-6. What are we to do here? Are we not supposed to think? The contrast here is between our perception and God's revelation. Which is more reliable?
 8. Proverbs 3:7-8. What is the command here? Why?
 9. Proverbs 3:9-10. What is the exhortation? What is the benefit? Is this a give to get idea? Does God supply our needs? What are we honoring God with then? Where is the real increase (Ref Matthew 6:19-21)?
 10. Proverbs 3:11-12. What is pictured here? Does God only discipline for sins or does He also discipline to strengthen potential weaknesses? Think of Job, why did God allow Him to suffer? What does discipline show? When we go through hardships here, what can we be confident of?
 11. Proverbs 3:13-18. What is the purpose of this passage?
 12. Proverbs 3:19-20. What is the importance of this passage? Is wisdom separate from God, or one of His attributes? How can we share it?
 13. Proverbs 3:21-30. How does this tie in with what we have been reading? How is it to affect our lives? How does this tie in to Hebrews 12:12-13?
 14. Proverbs 3:31-35. Who are the two being contrasted? Which is the better to be?
3. What is the contrast in Hebrews 12:7-8? It is interesting to note that in Roman society, Nobles would supply the needs of the illegitimate sons but have nothing to do with them, but the sons who were to inherit the fathers name were treated harshly? Why do you think this is true? How does this relate to God? What is the argument in Hebrews 12:9-10? Who is the lesser but familiar example? How are we supposed to react to him? Who is the greater example, and how are we to react to Him? How do we? What is the benefit we can expect? Verse 11 is a sanity check, in a sense, lest we think God is telling us to enjoy pain? What is the point? Can we have joy in spite of suffering? How? The phrase "peaceful fruit of righteousness" (varies with translation) is the same phrase as James 3:18. Read James 3:13-18. What is James point? The Greek word of the day is *gumnazo*, which is translated trained. More fully it means to exercise vigorously either the body or mind. Guess what English word comes from it.

הַבְּרִיּוֹת 12:12-27

HOLINESS OF GOD

1. Read Hebrews 12:12-27. What did we discuss in the last section? Look at verses 12 and 13. Who is the object of verse 12? Who is the object of verse 13? The majority of commentators read both passages as referring to us. This is in good accord with Hebrews 12:1-2, but I disagree. Consider the context from which these verses were taken, and I will then explain why I think God is saying something different here. Verse 12 is taken from Isaiah 35. Read Isaiah 35 (only 10 verses). How is the phrase used in Isaiah? What can it mean for us? How does it fit into the last section? How does it fit into this section? Verse 13 is taken from Proverbs 4:20-27. Read Proverbs 4:20-27. What is Solomon saying in the passage from Proverbs? How does it fit with the previous section (Hebrews 12:1-11) and the rest of this section? What does the conclusion of verse 13 tell us? Now to get back to my disagreement. Isaiah is clearly speaking of encouraging others (though it can have application to encouraging ourselves). Solomon is clearly speaking of ensuring your own safety. In context of the race in Hebrews 12:1-2 and the discipline of the Lord in Hebrews 12:3-11, I feel this is looking at our responsibility to other downcast believers to help them, while ensuring that we do not stumble ourselves. The Christian life is not a one man race, God gave us our brothers and sisters to help and be helped by. This seems to catch a more full orb'd perspective of the Christian life and its differences from non-Christian behavior. Something to think about.
2. Read Romans 12:9-21, 1 Peter 2:11-25. How do these passages fit with Hebrews 12:14-17? What does it mean to pursue peace? What is holiness? This is our Greek word of the day: *hagiasmos*. It means the consecration and sanctification of the heart and life, or the effects there of. Boy that helps doesn't it. Basically, this is referring to the process by which our lives are becoming more in line with our position in Christ. What does it mean that without it we won't see God? This backs up 1 Peter 1, 2 Peter 1, and James 2, in that true faith always shows itself in its transforming of a life. Without growth, we should have fearful impetus to drive us to Christ and repentance. This does not mean our lives will be perfect (recall Hebrews 11), rather that we are becoming more Christ-like. What three things are we to look carefully for? The phrase "misses the grace of God" is poor, it is more accurate to read "is falling away from their sanctification in Christ." Some say this refers to a Christian falling away (in keeping with how the read Hebrews 6). I agree the connection is there, but also with Hebrews 10 and the holiness from the previous verses. All together this is looking at a struggling brother or sister, whom we must help to move forward. The phrase bitter root is from Deuteronomy 29:18, where it refers to an evil person who causes problems in the church. Read 2 Timothy 2:14-26, Titus 3:3-11. What are we to do, and how? The "sexually immoral," is literally a "fornicator." Why are we to notice a fornicator or godless person in the church? Does this mean to be a busy body? What does it mean? Can we look out for things without being involved with our brothers and sisters? What is presupposed by this? What is going on with Esau? Why did he sell his birthright (Genesis 25)? What Esau seek with tears (Genesis 27)? Why couldn't Esau change the situation even with tears? How does this apply to us in the passage?
3. What is described in Hebrews 12:18-21? Why was God's presence so scary? Think of who God is, who they are, and what is happening there. What attribute of God is manifested here? What is described in Hebrews 12:22-24? Why doesn't it seem scary to us? Is God's holiness not being shown here or is the difference in those who are in His presence? What is the stated difference in the text? Would the second scene be scary to one not washed by Christ's blood? What is the application? Read Hebrews 2:1-4. Is there any other similarities to the first and second chapters? Why might the connection be made back to the beginning of the book?
4. The quote is from Haggai 2:6. Read Haggai 2:1-9. What is going on in the passage from Haggai? What in heaven can be shaken (removed)? What happened at the crucifixion of Jesus with regard to the temple (Luke 23:44-49)? What will happen at His return? Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

12:28-13:25 תְּבַרֵּךְ

CONCLUDING EXHORTATIONS

1. Read Hebrews 12:28-13:25. What was the thrust of the last section? What should be our response? Read Deuteronomy 4:21-24. Why is God described as a consuming fire? Is there a difference in Hebrews and Deuteronomy?
2. What is the thrust of Hebrews 13:1-3? The main thrust is broken down into three practical areas. What are they? What does it mean to entertain angels unawares? Read Judges 13:8-25 and Matthew 25:31-46. Which is most likely in view here? Why include it? Why these three examples?
3. What two sins are dealt with in Hebrews 13:4-6? Both sins are put in contrast with the correct action. What are the antithetic couplets and what do we see in them? Which sin was probably the bigger struggle? Read Deuteronomy 31:1-6, Joshua 1:1-9. How are these quotes appropriate? What should be our response? Read Psalm 118:1-6. This Psalm is interesting because it is the final Psalm (113-118) in the liturgy of Passover, and thus probably the final song Jesus sang with His disciples. How does this context fit?
4. What can we infer about the leaders in Hebrews 13:7? How are they different from those in Hebrews 13:17? What is the outcome of their way of life? Why would we want to imitate it since it lead to death? Why is verse 8 in the text? What are the strange teachings? What grace are we to be strengthened by? How does grace contrast with the ceremonial foods? Why can't those from the tabernacle eat at the altar? What is the imagery involved? Why does it say Jesus died outside the camp? What does it mean for us to go outside the camp? What are the two cities? What three offerings is God pleased with? What is the condition on the offering? Why? Who are we to obey and submit to and why? What is included and what is not? What is their duty and to whom do they perform it? Why do we want their work to be a joy?
5. What does the writer request? Why? What does it mean to have a clear conscience? Read Acts 20:25-35. What is keeping the writer from coming to those whom he was writing?
6. What is the purpose of verses 20-21? What is emphasized and why?
7. What is the purpose of verses 22-25? Why is this a short letter? What does verse 23 tell us about the state of the writer? What is significant about the three groups mentioned? Why does the book end with verse 25?