

A Bird's-Eye View for Me and You

Hebrews

I'm glad once again you could join me today for "It's a Good Life." We're going to continue our study on a "A Bird's-Eye View for Me and You," the books of the New Testament. Today, we're looking at study number nineteen, the book of Hebrews. Now, let me remind you that I in no way will be able to cover the entire book of Hebrews, just as I have not been able to cover everything in this study of the New Testament. My goal here is to give us a bird's-eye view to help us to think our way through the New Testament, and that's what we want to do today in the book of Hebrews. I would encourage you, if you're in a place where you can get your Bible and something to write with and write on, that you would have that there so that we can study this book together and get a bird's-eye view, an overview, of what the book of Hebrews is about.

Let me invite you to write me today, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. If you'll write me today, I'll send you absolutely free of charge a transcript of this program, and if you request other transcripts of "It's a Good Life," I'll be glad to send those to you free of charge. You can also go to our website, www.LRWM.org, and you can download transcripts, free, of this program and other programs of "It's a Good Life." You can also download messages of "It's a Good Life" and other messages found there on that website, www.LRWM.org. Thank you for listening today, and thank you for writing and thank you for going to the website.

Today, in the book of Hebrews, the author of this book, of course, is not said in the book itself who the author is; however, to me anyway and to many Bible historians, Paul the apostle was the author. Now, some people do not agree with that. I believe he was, but let us not forget that, whoever penned the words of the book of Hebrews, I believe foremost in not naming a human author, we are

drawn to the inescapable conclusion, as with all other books of the Bible, God is the true author of the book of Hebrews. Now, He used a human to pen down the words, but God is the author. All Scripture is given by inspiration, and that means the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God the Father.

The date was probably around A.D. 70, and since the Jewish Christians written to herein were seeking to go back to a form of Judaism, which would have existed before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. And there is no mention of Jerusalem's fall in the book, so I believe that it was before A.D. 70.

Now, the setting is this. At this time there was a great patriotic and nationalistic call back to Judaism. And since this call was to Christians with Jewish lineage, these people would be feeling that call. In other words, they would feel a drawing to come back into Judaism. And all the terms used in Hebrews were ones that Jews would understand, and this is the way we need to understand the epistle, written to Jews trying to get Christians to come back into Judaism.

There are several key verses found in this book, and I believe one of those is Hebrews 3:1 where it says, *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*

Hebrews chapter 4, verses 14-16, says, *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. ¹⁵For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

How can we approach the throne? It's through Jesus Christ because we have trusted Him as our Savior. He is our great High Priest and He's now seated at the right hand of our Father which is in Heaven. He's there to make intercession for us.

Well, what about the purpose of the book of Hebrews? Many Jewish Christians were considering going back to Judaism and leaving Christ, and the writer wants them to consider what they are leaving and what they are going back to. Now "going back to" does not mean they lost their salvation. It means they've turned their thinking around, and they are starting to fall back. There's a problem here of falling back into legalism. No matter what hardships are involved, the writer of the book of Hebrews shows that Jesus is better in all respects to anything Judaism had to offer. And he does this by showing the following things:

Christ is divine, that is, He is God and He is superior to angels, according to Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1-14. Christ is human and He understands what we're going through, Hebrews 2, verses 1-18. Christ is superior to Moses and Joshua, Hebrews chapter 3 through chapter 4 and verse 13. Christ is a compassionate priest and is of a better order of priest than those found, that we understand, of human...as we look back in the Old Testament, those people who were the humanistic people, we might say, that God used in the Old Testament. Hebrews chapter 4, verse 14, through chapter 7, verse 28, talks about that.

Christ is a mediator of a better covenant, according to Hebrews chapter 8, verses 1-13. Christ has a superior temple ministry, according to Hebrews chapter 9, verses 1-28. Christ is the superior sacrifice, according to Hebrews chapter 10, verses 1-39. Well, what does this mean? This means that Christ is superior to all.

Then, He is the best choice to put our faith in. Through our faith in Jesus, we should continue to persevere, according to Hebrews chapter 11.

Hebrews 11:1-3 says, ¹*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

²*For by it the elders obtained a good report.*

³*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

Hebrews chapter 12, verses 1-2, says, ¹*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses....* Those great cloud of witnesses were those people we read about in Hebrews chapter 11. The writer goes on to say, [*L*]*et us lay aside every weight....* because of these witnesses we've seen. We've heard what they've done and what they said. [*L*]*et us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ²Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

And Hebrews 13:8 says, *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* The writer of this book is trying to let those Jews know that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, that the best way to live is by the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, what about some application lessons here? First, Hebrews was intended to build faith in Jesus, and we see that, therefore, use the book to teach believers. This is to us today, as well. Use the book to teach believers. Secondly, use the book to help Christians who are weak in faith.

And then we see that God chose how He wanted to speak to us today, according to Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1-4. It was not through angels, according to Hebrews chapter 2, verses 2-4. It was not through prophets today, Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1-4. It was not through men even though some claimed to be the mouth of God. We see that today, that people are claiming they are getting a direct revelation, hearing from God, and the only way

that we get word from God today is through the Word of God. He speaks to us through that still small voice that comes through the Word of God. It's not through men who claim to be the mouth of God, speaking for God, and you might be thinking I'm talking of preachers who stand and preach from the pulpit. I'm not. I'm speaking of those individuals who do not go by the Bible. Those people who stand and say that they are the mouthpiece of God and do not open the Scriptures....they do not base what they're saying upon the Word of God. They try to get people to believe that they are a prophet in the sense that they're getting directly from God without opening the Scriptures, they're getting directly from God what God wants us to know. And that is wrong.

It's only through Jesus Christ, His Son, that we have access to the Father, and it's only through Him that we understand what God expects of us and has for us. Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1-4, says, ¹*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,* ²*Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.... That's through the Word of God.... whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;* ³*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;* ⁴*Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*

Some people say today that, "No one understands the problem that I'm going through," but what does the Hebrew writer say? He says that Christ is able to help those who are tempted. He says that Christ has been tempted in every way like us. He says that Christ ever lives to make intercession for us. Therefore, Jesus does understand our problems, and He is able to help us overcome those problems by His power.

And God has planned a rest for His people, according to Hebrews chapter 3 through chapter 5. God rested on the seventh day of creation, according to Genesis. The Israelites rested on the sabbath day, according to Exodus chapter 20. As faith grows, there is a rest that takes place in the life of the Christian, according to Hebrews chapter 4, verses 9-11. It says, ⁹*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.* ¹⁰*For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.* ¹¹*Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

Romans 10:17 says, *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Romans 1:17 says, *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

It's by faith. That is the rest. When we grow and mature in Christ, we come to a place in our lives where we can rest in the completed work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ask Him into your heart today if you've never done that. Let Him save you today. "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive you as my Savior."

And if you're saved, follow Him today. Go into that rest. Live by faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Get into His Word.

May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.