

word 'faith' in a Bible dictionary.

3. Why not visit a local synagogue, or discuss with a pious Jewish friend the importance to Jews of the law and their various festivals?

### Notes



[www.elimcarlisle.org](http://www.elimcarlisle.org)

### **Meeting With God Bible Reading Notes**

*"This extract from Meeting With God published by Inter-Varsity Press, is used with permission"*

**14th April 2014**

### **Week 33: The Letter to the Hebrews (A bird's eye view)**

The Jewish nation was going through hard times and the religious authorities were urging loyalty to their heritage. They were hostile to Christians, now excluding them from the Temple. Being a Christian was made to seem unpatriotic. Hebrews was written to these Christian Jews who were being tempted to turn back to the old ways.

Hebrews teaches us that Christ is the final, perfect revelation of God to man. It gives a full picture of both his deity and humanity, in a way no other book of the Bible does.

This week's study therefore asks you to read the whole of it!

#### **Day 1. The Son of God**

##### **Hebrews 1 - 3**

God had spoken to man many times through his servants, but never before by his Son. Hebrews stresses the absolute supremacy of this final revelation, over all others.

1. List some of the statements made about Christ. In what ways is he greater than angels, prophets and Moses?

**Note: 2:10** Although morally perfect, Jesus became more perfectly equipped for God's work.

2. What do you learn about the nature of man? Why did Jesus become a man?

The Israelites are warned they must obey God. Think of any ways in which you are disobeying him. Pray that God will keep you mindful of his glory and majesty; and make you responsive to hearing his word.

#### **Day 2. The promise of God**

##### **Hebrews 4 - 6**

As the Israelites entered the Promised Land, so we can enter God's rest by accepting his gift of salvation. Christ has made this possible, but it brings certain responsibilities. We don't just settle our sins and live as we please. Our behaviour in the 'wilderness' (i.e. this life) shows whether we have truly believed.

1. Summarize the main evidence that God's promises are irrevocable and unshakeable.
2. Note down some reasons why Christ's priesthood is better than the Levitical one.

**Notes: 4:11** 'Disobedience' is not believing. **6:4-6** 'Enlightened' - hearers, but not necessarily believers.

3. What responsibilities do you have concerning your spiritual life?

'**Add to Your Faith**' by Sinclair B. Ferguson (Pickering & Inglis) is a superb book about spiritual growth.

One responsibility we do have, is to store up God's word, so remind yourself of this, by learning 4:12.

Have you grown as you should? Pray that God will help you remove the things that hinder your growth and cultivate those helpful activities.

### Day 3. The High Priest of God

#### **Hebrews 7 & 8**

God regarded the Levitical priesthood as imperfect and obsolete. As made clear in Galatians 3:24-25, the law existed to lead us to Christ. A Jewish Christian may be tempted to keep the law as well as accepting Christ, so it is important to explain the temporary nature of the old covenant.

God always intended the more ancient and perfect Order of Melchizedek to come to fruition in Jesus. The Levitical system could never meet our needs. In today's study we see only Christ can do this.

1. List some reasons why the new covenant is superior to the old.
2. What are some ways that Jesus Christ is unique?
3. Why do we need a High Priest?

Consider all that Jesus endured for our sake, such as the crucifixion. Thank God that he has provided a way of salvation, and pray that you will be a faithful witness to it.

### Day 4. Entering the presence of God

#### **Hebrews 9 & 10**

The annual Day of Atonement was an awesome occasion. The people stopped work, fasted, and in sacred assembly watched the High Priest enter the Most Holy Place. God was seen to be separate from sin. This elaborate system was only the shadow, pointing forward and preparing men for Christ. He gave himself as a perfect sacrifice and became High Priest forever. Unlike the Jews, we can now

come right into God's presence at any time - if we want to.

1. Make two lists showing the differences between the sacrifices in the Tabernacle and Christ's sacrifice. What has been achieved by Christ's sacrifice?
2. What are some encouragements and warnings we are given to guide us in the Christian life?

**Memory verse:** Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:23-24, NIV).

What effect do you have on other Christians? Are you helpful, sympathetic and positive, or negative and critical? Pray that you will be a blessing to other people.

### Day 5. Pleasing God

#### **Hebrews 11 - 13**

The Jews had a choice. They could accept Christ and follow God through faith, or continue with a code of religious observance. It is not possible to do both because, as we've seen, the heart of Christianity is that there is one way to God - through the sacrifice of Christ. It is neither an easy choice to make or an easy path to follow. But God is able to save and keep us, using the trials of this life to equip us for the next.

1. How did some of the individuals in chapter 11 prove their faith in God?
2. What are some privileges we have that these Old Testament heroes didn't? (See 11:39-40; 12:18-24.)
3. List those duties we should perform. Have you neglected any of them?

**Memory verse:** Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2, NIV).

Meditate on this verse, training yourself to remember Christ at all times. Many grow weary and lose heart. Pray for those you know who seem in danger of giving up.

### Weekend

1. Hebrews contains much practical advice about how we are to live. Look through your notes and summarize (a) some dangers we're warned of; (b) some things we're encouraged to do; (c) some incentives we're given. Do you neglect any of these?
2. One of the major themes in Hebrews is faith. It is neither vague nor wishy-washy, but a lifelong solid confidence in God's promises. Find out more by reading chapter 6 in '**The Fight**' by John White (IVP) or by looking up the