

A Bible Study on the Book of Hebrews

Entering In

*Using the Book of Hebrews
to Enhance Your Prayers*

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Introduction

The Book of Hebrews is a wonderful addition to the New Testament. While commonly attributed to the Apostle Paul, only God knows the true author. This mystery did not hinder its inclusion in the set we now know as the Bible.

This book was written to people who knew the Old Testament and the Law well. This creates a different starting point than most of the other New Testament writings. While referencing the Old Testament, Hebrews highlights Jesus as its fulfillment. God now speaks to us through His Son, the priest forever mediating on our behalf before the throne of God. He was without sin and yet understands our weakness.

Hebrews invites us on a journey to the throne room of God to find ourselves accepted there. This study will highlight our invitation and the rewards for the journey. Therefore engage your mind with the questions so you will be ready to respond to God's desire.

This study can be used individually or as a group study. Before you get started, read through Hebrews on your own first. The Book of Hebrews will be our focus; this study will just be a tour guide to enhance the journey.

May you be encouraged to enter in.

Blessings,

Kevin Shorter

Entering In ~ Study 1 *Jesus is Greater*

1. What normally comes to mind when you think about Jesus?
What do you normally thank Him for?

Early Christians didn't have a category for Jesus. He wasn't just a spiritual teacher; He was the Son of God who laid His life down for our sins. This was unfathomable to the Jewish mind, and yet many followed Him. Throughout Hebrews the author helps to wrap our minds around the greatness of Jesus and what He is doing for us.

As we read Hebrews let's allow our understanding to expand. If God is infinite and Jesus is God, then there is no end to the depth of understanding into which we can dive. Jesus is worthy of a lifetime of study.

READ HEBREWS 1:1-4

2. What does the Son being "the radiance of God's glory" mean?
3. How is the Son being "the exact representation of God's being" different than the radiance?
4. How was the world created?
How is the world sustained?
5. How is something sustained by someone's word?
6. What is the importance of Jesus having sat down?
... at the right hand?
... of the Majesty?
7. Why do you think the author said Majesty instead of God?
8. PRAY: Take a couple minutes and ask Jesus to show you what each of these look like.
9. What additional things would you now add to what was discussed?
10. Which of these aspects of Jesus would like to see more real in your life? Why?

Entering In ~ Study 2 Greater Than Angels

1. What comes to mind when you consider angels?
What do they look like? What do they do?

I'm not an expert on angels. I assume that they can look like people to some degree since we can entertain them and not know it. Abraham took in the three strangers; two of which were angels. Lot did the same. Mary Magdalene looked in to the tomb Peter and John left and saw two angels, which the two disciples missed. The Bible talks often of angels. To start us off, just know they are real and needed in God's kingdom.

READ HEBREWS 1:4-14

2. Which are greater, men or angels? Why?
3. What do angels do?
4. How many angels are there?
5. What arguments does the author use for Jesus being greater than the angels?

READ HEBREWS 2:1-18

6. How was Jesus made a little lower than the angels?
7. How is it important to know that angels' messages are binding?
8. Why does the author compare Jesus to the angels?
9. Are angels necessary for us now? Why?
10. How do angels help us?
11. Are you aware of experiencing angels' help? How?
12. How do we actively try to receive their help?

Entering In ~ Study 3 Greater Than Moses

1. How are the most important figures to the Jews?
Why?

Abraham was the father of the Jews, But Moses gave the people a way to relate to God. The law became central to the Jews. They were to bind them to their heads and post them to their doorframes. They were to be constantly reminded of the Law so that it would direct every decision.

READ HEBREWS 3:1-6

2. How would you explain the analogy used of the builder and house?
3. What is the difference between a servant and a son?
4. How was Moses faithful as a servant?
5. How was Jesus faithful as a son?
6. Which role do we get to play?
How are they different in our lives?
7. What does it mean that Moses testified to what would be said in the future?
8. In relationship to Jesus being greater than Moses, why does the author urge we fix our thoughts on Jesus?
9. What does it mean we are God's house?
10. What is the importance of both courage and hope?
11. In what areas would you like to focus more of your thoughts on Jesus?

*Entering In ~ Study 1
If You Hear His Voice...*

1. Have you had a time when you knew something was from God but you didn't want to do it? Please share.

In Exodus 17 the Israelites were coming out of the desert and there was no water. They complained to Moses to the point Moses felt they were going to stone him. They were not getting what they wanted and began to question the goodness of God.

READ HEBREWS 3:7-19

2. What is sin?
3. How did the Israelites hear God's voice?
4. What is it that the Israelites did that was a sin?
5. What is the deceitfulness of sin?
6. How can we harden our hearts hearing God's voice?

READ HEBREWS 4:1-16

7. How can we fall short of the rest?
8. How many times does the author write about speak / voice? Rest?
9. How does someone enter the rest?
10. To what does the word of God refer? Why?
11. How does God speak now (1:1-2)?
12. How does the voice lead us to rest?
13. How can we hear God speak?
14. If Jesus were to walk into the room now, what would He say to you?

Entering In ~ Study 5 The Great High Priest

1. What was the role of the priest for the Jews?
2. Why was Jesus a good priest (2:17-18)?

It is interesting the God would choose an entire tribe of Israel to be priests. It shows the importance of this role to the heart of God. He desired so much for His people to have a right relationship with God that He commissioned an entire tribe to solely work on keeping the people connect to Him.

READ HEBREWS 4:14-5:10

3. What are two commands for us since Jesus is our high priest?
4. Why is the first one a natural flow of Jesus being a priest?
5. Why is the second also a natural flow?
6. How are teachers different than priests?
7. Why don't we see priests in most protestant churches today?
8. How are you a priest?
9. Why does God assign all Christians as a royal priesthood?
10. What are some things you would do if you saw yourself as a priest?
11. How does God treat people who are not in a right relationship with Him?
11. What does it look like when people start coming into a right relationship with God?
What evidences would you see?
12. What are some things you can do to help that process?
What are two things you want to do this week?

Entering In ~ Study 6 Encouragement for Growth

1. How many times would you recommend a couple to get married?
What if there is infidelity but they want to stay married, do they need to get married again? Would they need another marriage license?

The author of Hebrews decides to take a detour at this point in the book. It doesn't the message of the rest of the book. While I thought of skipping it to maintain momentum, so many have a hard time with this passage, I wanted to address it in the context of connection with God.

READ HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

2. Why does the author change topics?
3. What are some of the characteristics of those who are mature?
4. How do you become mature?
5. What are the elementary teachings?
6. Is the author saying that the Hebrews have lost their salvation?
What makes you say that?
7. "It's impossible... if fall away... be brought back to repentance."
 - a. Had the Hebrews met the conditions of verse 4-5?
 - b. Were they trying to lay again the foundation for repentance (v.1)?
 - c. Is this phrase a warning to those who have fallen away about losing salvation or something else?
If so, what is it?
8. Check all that apply. How should we get people to stop sinning?
 - a. Make them feel bad.
 - b. Make them doubt their salvation.
 - c. Get them to keep repeatedly repenting publically.
 - d. Call them to something greater.
 - e. Tell them you believe in them.
 - f. Repeat God's faithfulness to them.
9. Tell us examples where you have seen this work.

Entering In ~ Study 7 How to Have Godly Faith

1. Give some examples of Abraham's faith.
2. How can we imitate Abraham's faith?

Everybody has faith in something. It maybe faith in education, money, or self. It may be faith in something bad will happen. Our faith reveals what we really believe. Let's find those whose faith reveal trust in God. Growth in faith will happen by either correcting wrong beliefs or changing our actions to imitate others that have faith in God.

READ HEBREWS 6:12-20

3. Why did God give an oath?
4. What are the two unchangeable things?
5. How do these things encourage us?
6. If faith reveals what we believe, how can imitating other people's faith help us?
7. What is our faith in?
8. What has God promised us?
9. Does God give specific promises to people individually?
Where do you see this in the Bible?
10. Why would we get specific promises from God?
11. How do we get specific promises?
12. On to what are the promises you are holding?

Entering In ~ Study 8 *Melchizedek*

1. Read Psalm 110. What are some things about Jesus from this psalm?

Melchizedek is a strange character in the Bible. In Genesis 14 Abraham rescues Lot from the raiders of Sodom. He looted the enemy and rescues all that was stolen. After the battle, the king of Sodom came out to greet Abraham and then Melchizedek appears and blesses Abraham. He comes out of nowhere, blesses Abraham, receives a 10th of the plunder, then is not heard from again. Now Jesus is his line of priesthood.

READ HEBREWS 7:1-10

2. What is the reasoning given that Melchizedek is great than Levi?
3. Why did Melchizedek bless Abraham?
4. Why is it that the lesser is blessed by the greater?
5. Who are we to bless then?

READ HEBREWS 7:11-28

6. Why did Jesus need to come through Melchizedek and not Levi?
7. What has been the change to the law?
8. In what two ways is Jesus a better high priest than those under the law in the line of Levi?
9. If Melchizedek blessed Abraham because he held the promises, what promises do you hold that Jesus wants to bless?

Entering In ~ Study 9 Earthy Tabernacle

1. What is something that you had only heard about or seen in pictures that when you actually saw it in person exceeded your expectations?

Shadows are not real; they represent something else. Shadows may have a nice appearance and we may enjoy certain aspects of them, however, they are not the real things. The priests of the Old Testament were just shadows of what was to come and walked in a sanctuary that was just a shadow of heaven itself. Shadows are always lesser in experience, magnificence, and importance.

READ HEBREWS 8:1-13

2. Why is it important that Jesus is in heaven?
3. Why did God only give us a copy of the sanctuary?
4. What was the first covenant?
5. What does it mean within this first covenant that God found fault with the people?
6. What is the new covenant?
7. Why is the new covenant better?

READ HEBREWS 9:1-10

8. What was the purpose of the earthly tabernacle?
9. How do we know it wasn't effective?
10. What was the Most Holy Place?
Why was it special?
11. Why could we not enter the Most Holy Place under the first covenant?
12. How can we enter the Most Holy Place now?
13. Why would we want to enter the Most Holy Place?
14. How often should we go? What would we do there? Can we go right now?

Entering In ~ Study 10 The Blood of Christ

1. Why did God give us the Old Covenant with its laws and rules if He was going to give us Jesus with better promises?

God wants us to know that sin is dangerous and destructive. However, while the Old Covenant was good at exposing sin, it often left people feeling guilty of their mistakes. Awareness of sin showed what was keeping us from God. We needed more than forgiveness to maintain our connection; we needed sin destroyed.

READ 9:11 - 10:18

2. From this passage what are the good things that are already here?
3. Verse 9:8 says the way into the Most Holy Place had not previous been disclosed...
 - a. How do we know it wasn't disclosed before?
 - b. From this passage how do we know it has been disclosed now?
 - c. What is the Most Holy Place (hint: 9:24)?
4. "Beforehand the sacrifices were an annual reminder of sins."
What do these passages say about sin now (9:14, 15, 26, 28, & 10:2)?
5. Since sin has been done away with, we no longer feel guilty, and our consciences have been cleansed, what are we to do now?
6. How would you explain 10:14?
How can we already have been made perfect and still being made holy?
7. Most Christians try to give the appearance of being perfect instead of realizing they are perfect. What is the difference between these two things?
8. Are there areas of your life that you hide from others?
Ask God to show you someone with whom you can share these that will model God's complete forgiveness to you.

*Entering In ~ Study 11
A Call to Persevere*

1. What would you do or go see if you were able to go to heaven and spend time with God?

The author of Hebrews is trying to convince us that we can go into heaven and be with God. We don't have to wait until the afterlife, because the blood of Jesus has made a way for us. There are no barriers; there are no restrictions. We can simply come.

READ HEBREWS 10:19-39

2. Since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place, what five things should we do?
3. Which one of these means the most to you and why?
4. How does encouraging one another and meeting together flow from entering the Most Holy Place?
5. Does God care if we sin?
Why?
6. What is deliberately keep on sinning?
 - a. lying to your boss
 - b. skipping church
 - c. road rage
 - d. overeating
 - e. anger at kids
 - f. trapped in addiction
 - g. not tithing
 - h. flirting with someone who is not your spouse

* other: what would this be?
7. What does it look like to give up on God?
Why would someone do that?
8. How does the author encourage perseverance?
9. What is our confidence?
Is it worth persevering? Why?

Entering In ~ Study 12 *Faith*

1. How is faith different from the “name it, claim it” theology?
2. How do we know what to have faith in like those in this chapter?

Faith is the pathway through which we access the supernatural ways of God. By believing He exists and wants to be involved, we listen and watch for what He is doing. He invites us to join in, and by faith we hold onto what He has invited knowing He will complete what He starts. We just need to hold on and follow His lead. We take what is unseen and make it visible.

READ HEBREWS 11

3. From this passage what are the main principles of faith?
4. How does God reward those that seek Him?
5. What is your favorite story included in this passage? Why?
What does it show you about faith?
6. Which story is the most surprising example of faith to you? Why?
What does it show about faith?
7. Each example took something unseen and tried to make it visible.
Do you agree / disagree? Why?
8. What is the goal of faith?
9. How sure was each person that God was leading them?
10. How are we to know what God has said to us?
11. What type of people does God call into His adventures?
12. What adventure do you think God may be calling you into?

Entering In ~ Study 13 *Discipline & Clouds*

1. Who are the great clouds of witnesses?

So much in the Western church is about you and God that we forgot the importance of others. We are affected by the faith of others, and they need our faith to grow too. We are part of a body. God has such amazing things prepared for us that we could never gain them on our own (11:40).

READ HEBREWS 12:1-3

2. What about the witnesses encourages us to throw off everything that hinders?
3. How do we know the race that is marked out for us?
4. Besides sin, what are the things that can hinder us?
How do they hinder us?
5. How may we grow weary and lose heart?
6. We are to focus on Jesus, but what was His focus?
How do we do this?
7. What is our joy?

READ HEBREWS 12:4-13

8. What does the Lord's discipline look like?
9. How does discipline look different than punishment?
10. How does being sons encourage us in the process?
11. What is the desired outcome of discipline?
12. How are these outcomes gained through discipline?
13. When was a time you experienced the Lord's discipline?
14. What is your normal reaction to His discipline?

Entering In ~ Study 14 Refusing God

1. During Moses' time God took the Israelites to Mt. Sinai to hear Him speak (Exodus 19:12-20:21). Why did they refuse the voice and only want to be spoken to through Moses?

There are two similarities between Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion: God speaks and He wants us to hear Him. God has something to say to us. Let's not refuse Him by not giving Him time to speak.

READ HEBREWS 12:14-29

2. What does it look like to live in peace with someone?
 - a. What if they disagree with you?
 - b. What if they don't like you?
 - c. What if they throw parties at night that keep your kids awake?
3. How can we be holy?
 - a. Can we truly stop all sin?
 - b. What else can it be?
 - c. What are some examples of how we can live this out?
4. How can we let people experience the grace of God?
What are some examples of this besides witnessing?
5. What is a bitter root?
6. What are some ways Christians can act godless?
7. What are some differences between the two mountains in this chapter?
8. What do we experience by coming to Mt. Zion?
9. How does coming to this mountain help us with v. 14-16?
10. What things does God want to speak to us about?
How often does He want to speak?
Is it easy for us to listen? Why?
11. How did the Israelites refuse God when they heard Him?
How can we refuse God now?

Entering In ~ Study 15
Final Exhortations

1. Have you ever thought you may have encountered an angel? Explain.

Chapter 12 ends with the exhortation of worshipping God acceptably with reverence and awe. Chapter 13 begins with encouraging us with how that worship can look like.

READ HEBREWS 12:28 – 13:25

2. How is right, holy living an overflow of living from a kingdom that can't be shaken?
3. How is the love of money cured by knowing God will never leave us?
Would your budgeting be different with this focus? Why/why not?
4. How do we strengthen our hearts by grace?
5. What does it mean we have an altar from which we are not allowed to eat?
6. How do we go outside the camp?
7. How is the city that is to come our motivation?
9. How do we please God?
Why does this please Him?
10. How can God not change His love for us but increase in His pleasure in us?