

Hebrews – “...looking unto Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith...”

#17 in series "Words of God to You"

March 22, 2009

1. Author – Origen said, “Only God knows for sure.”
 - Paul or Barnabas are possible; both have some early church tradition support.
2. Date – 67-69 A.D.?
 - Clement quotes Hebrews in I Clement, so Hebrews is not written after 95 A.D.
 - The destruction of the Jerusalem temple is not mentioned, so likely before 70 A.D.
 - Hebrews 13:23 says Timothy is still alive.
3. Destination
 - Believers – the author calls his readers “holy brothers” or “brothers” in 3:1, 12, 10:19, 13:22.
 - Probably Jewish – vast amounts of information about the Old Covenant system!
 - Possibly a Jewish believing community in Rome, Palestine or North Africa.
4. Purpose – “to encourage the Jewish believers to persevere under trial, to not go back to Judaism and to hold onto faith in Jesus Christ, which will result in great reward in His coming Kingdom.”
 - Persecuted – cf. 10:32-34, 12:3-4, 13:13 – “Let us go forth to Him...bearing His reproach...”
 - Tempted to leave faith in Jesus and return to Judaism – cf. 3:6-14; 6:6-11; 10:23-29; 11:30-12:2
 - Extensive instruction about the benefits of the New vs. the Old Covenant.
 - Better priest [5-8], sanctuary [9], sacrifice [10], altar [13], results [11:13-16]!!
 - Multi-faceted presentation of Jesus as “better” in every way:
 - Our God and exalted King [1:1-14]
 - Our brother [2:10-18]
 - The new Moses [3:1-6]
 - The Great High Priest [4:14-10:25]
 - The ultimate sacrifice for sins [9-10]
 - The Pioneer and Trailblazer of our faith [12:1-3]
 - The Great Shepherd of the Sheep [13:20]
 - Warning about the benefits/consequences of “holding fast” to Jesus, by faith...or not...
5. Outline [see back]