

Episode: Other Letters Series No. 03

Narrator: Barnabas

Primary Scriptures: Hebrews 7-13

Story Summary: Overview of the last seven chapters of *Hebrews*.

Location: Roman Empire

Time: 60-70 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Hebrews 7:25-26; 8:1, 8:10; 9:14, 9:27-18; 10:24-25; 11:1-3, 11:19; 12:1-2, 12:11; 13:1-3, 13:5

The main theme of the first six chapters of Hebrews is to show that Jesus is always the better choice for people to make. The author then warns against falling away from Jesus while demonstrating that God is just and will fulfill his promises to those who are faithful to Him.

Chapter 7 returns to the theme of Jesus being the better choice. The author talks about the mysterious Melchizedek, the priest who took an offering from Abraham, long before there were priests in the line of Aaron. Chapter 8 talks of Jesus being the Great High Priest because he serves in the true temple, Heaven. The author continues by showing Jesus as the Mediator of the New Covenant, which completes the Old Covenant. Rather than having a covenant written on stones, the New Covenant will be written in the minds and hearts of God's people.

The author continues by showing that Jesus provided the perfect one-time sacrifice, which brings salvation. Since we have the perfect high priest and perfect sacrifice, the author contends we should hold fervently to the hope of eternal life and spur on each other to love and good deeds. On the other hand, we should dread the thought of continuing to sin instead of persevering in the faith of God.

The first ten chapters lay the basis for understanding what faith is and what faith means. Hebrews 11:1 is one of the clearest definitions in the Bible: faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see. Chapter 11, the "faith in action chapter," shows numerous examples of Old Testament characters who demonstrated their faith through their actions and their endurance of persecution. However, even with their faithfulness, they did not receive the promise... the promise fulfilled through Jesus.

Jesus is the Founder and Perfecter of our faith. With this in mind, nobody should become tired or give up. Jesus provides the endurance and strength to continue in faith.

Returning to an Old Testament analogy, the author shows that God wants a new kind of sacrifice and obedience. Followers of Jesus are to show love to everybody, keep their lives free from sexual immorality and the love of money, and to stay true to the teachings of Jesus.

The ending of the book shows a little irony: even though we do not know the author or the target audience of *Hebrews*, it is clear the author and his audience knew each other well.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Genesis 14:1-20, with special attention to Genesis 14:18-20. What details might you notice through a careful reading and study of those three verses?
 2. Discuss what Hebrews 9:28 means.
 3. What does Hebrews 11:6 mean?
 4. According to Hebrews 11:19, what was Abraham able to reason? How many people had been raised from the dead before Abraham's test?
 5. Hebrews 13:23 says that Timothy was released? What does that indicate?
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1. Salem is probably the same place as Jeru-salem. This occasion might be the first communion, along with an offering. The tenth given by Abraham might be a prefigure of the tithe commanded by Moses. Melchizedek was a king and priest, just like Jesus. Melchizedek was a priest of God long before God established Aaron and his descendants as priests. 4. That God could raise the dead. 5. That Timothy had been in jail. Other than this verse, there is no record in the New Testament that Timothy had been in jail.

Application Questions:

1. Does Hebrews 10:24-25 give you good reason to attend church regularly? Should you only consider yourself when evaluating whether to attend church?
2. According to Hebrews 11:1, do you think you have faith in God? According to Hebrews 11, is faith typically tied to some type of action?
3. Why was Abram considered righteous according to Genesis 15:6? According to Hebrews 11:17, how did he show his faith? How would you prove your righteousness and faith?
4. Do you read Hebrews 13:5 as being tied to Hebrews 13:4, or are the two verses independent of each other?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. Does Hebrews 10:26-27 mean you can never sin, or does it mean that you should avoid sinning on purpose?
2. Understanding that science is not meant to answer why, but what: does Hebrews 11:3 conflict with current scientific understanding of the beginning of the universe?
3. Hebrews 12:1 says to throw off everything that hinders you or sins that cause you to be entangled. What sort of things keep you from having a closer relationship with God?
4. Hebrews 12:6 says the Lord disciplines those He loves. Does discipline always include punishment? How are some ways you can be disciplined?
5. Do Hebrews 12:4 and 13:1 describe the way you and your friends interrelate?