

# The Epistle to the Hebrews

## ▶ Purpose

- ▶ 13:22
- ▶ Exhortation: “a calling to one’s side”; an appeal, entreaty, encouragement, consolation and comfort; an urging to pursue a certain course of conduct; can include warnings
- ▶ This letter was written to urge Hebrew brethren in Christ to persevere *in Christ* and to not fall back into Judaism
- ▶ In order to do that, warnings and encouragement are given interspersed with argumentation to show why – to demonstrate the superiority of Christ

# The Epistle to the Hebrews

- ▶ Theme stated
  - ▶ 1:1-4
- ▶ Could think of it this way
  - ▶ “Superiority of Christ”
  - ▶ “The New Covenant vs. the Old”
  - ▶ “Why the Way of Christ is Better”
  - ▶ “The Necessity to Follow Christ Only”
- ▶ Some keywords include
  - ▶ Better, excellent, new, perfect, let us, believing, obeying, faithful, disobedience, rest, priest, promise, live, continually, forever, covenant, blood

# The Epistle to the Hebrews

- ▶ To whom?
  - ▶ “to the Hebrews”
    - ▶ Genesis 14:13
  - ▶ Hebrews – Hebrew-speaking Jews in and around Jerusalem
  - ▶ Hellenists – Greek-speaking Jews, scattered
  - ▶ Content

# The Epistle to the Hebrews

- ▶ Does the writer know his readers, and/or do the readers know the writer?
  - ▶ 5:11-14
  - ▶ 6:9-10
  - ▶ 10:32-34
  - ▶ Desired to be with them – 13:19
  - ▶ Asked for their prayers – 13:18

# The Epistle to the Hebrews

- ▶ Written from where?
  - ▶ Possibly Rome – 13:24
- ▶ Who wrote it?
  - ▶ Not identified
  - ▶ Early attributed to Paul. Why?
    - ▶ Knowledge of Greek language and culture
    - ▶ Most likely Jewish descent because of mastery of detailed knowledge of the law of Moses, prophecies, and the Levitical priesthood
    - ▶ Knew Timothy and spoke highly of – 13:23
      - ▶ Timothy constant helper and companion of Paul – Acts 16:1; Philippians 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:9-21

# The Epistle to the Hebrews



- ▶ When written?
  - ▶ Probably before 70 AD, destruction of Jerusalem, because:
    - ▶ Services of temple still going on – 8:4, 13; 9:4, 5, 8; 10:1, 8, 11; 13:10, 11
    - ▶ Serious Roman persecution began 65 AD under Nero, and 12:4
  - ▶ Likely between 65 and 70 AD

# Concerns that the author has for the recipients of the letter



- ▶ 2:1-4
- ▶ 3:12-13
- ▶ 4:11-13
- ▶ 5:11-14
- ▶ 6:4-6
- ▶ 6:11-12
- ▶ 10:19-39
- ▶ 12:12-17
- ▶ 12:25-29

# The Epistle to the Hebrews



- ▶ Why might Christians of Hebrew background be susceptible to falling back into Judaism?
  - ▶ Many years of history
  - ▶ Persecution



# Hebrews: Better



- ▶ The Better Messenger: The Son (1:1-2:18)
- ▶ The Better Apostle (3:1-4:13)
- ▶ The Better High Priest (4:14-7:28)
- ▶ The Better Covenant (8:1-9:10)
- ▶ The Better Sacrifice in the Better Tabernacle (9:11-10:18)
- ▶ The Better Way: Faith (10:19-12:29)

# Hebrews: Dangers

- ▶ Neglect (2:1-4)
- ▶ Unbelief (3:12)
  - ▶ Hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (3:13)
  - ▶ Disobedience (4:11)
- ▶ Immaturity (5:11-14)
- ▶ Spiritual laziness/apathy (6:11-12)
- ▶ Neglect of assembling to stir up love and good works (10:24-25)
- ▶ Willful sin and rejection (10:26-31)
- ▶ Lack of endurance (10:36-39)
- ▶ Weights and besetting sin (12:1)
- ▶ Weariness (12:12-13)
- ▶ Bitterness (12:15)
- ▶ Refusing Him who speaks (12:25)
- ▶ Being carried away by various and strange doctrines (13:9)