

349: Oct 27; Nov 3. A Better Covenant (New Testament Weeks 43-44)

Schedule to the end of the year!

11/10: Hebrews 1-6

11/17*: Hebrews 7-13

11/24: James

12/1*: 1-2 Peter

12/8: 1-3 John; Jude

12/15*: Rev. 1-11

12/22: Christmas

12/29: Rev. 12-22

Central theme of Hebrews: Move forward into the future with faith. Don't slide backward into old habits. Cultivate a relationship with the Living God.

Framing: **how do we find our most excellent target for faith and spirituality and our relationship to God?** This might be my favorite topic. Just as the author of Hebrews proposes that Jesus is superior to Judaism, our present and future spirituality can be superior to the past versions. There's a level of irony in Hebrews where the author says Jesus is superior to Judaism in every way, but that his listeners should anchor themselves to what is past, their former spiritual experiences.

Our spirituality is quick and vibrant, Christ in us.

Sunday School

- Faith (chapter 11)
- Empathetic Savior (chapter 2)
- Type, shadow, and reality (chapter 10)
- Healthy and vibrant relationship to God

Summary of Basic Information

DATE: 60s or more likely 80s.

FROM: Not specified; greetings extended from "those from Italy."

TO: Addressees not identified but, based on content, to Christians who are attracted by the values of the Jewish cult; surmises would place them at Jerusalem or Rome, with the latter more likely.

AUTHENTICITY: Author not identified; later church attribution to Paul now abandoned.

UNITY AND INTEGRITY: Not seriously disputed.

FORMAL DIVISION: (see p. 690 below for Vanhoye's proposal).

DIVISION ACCORDING TO CONTENTS:

1:1-3: Introduction

1:4-4:13: Superiority of Jesus as God's Son

1:4-2:18: Over the angels

3:1-4:13: Over Moses

4:14-7:28: Superiority of Jesus' priesthood

8:1-10:18: Superiority of Jesus' sacrifice and his ministry in the heavenly tabernacle inaugurating a new covenant

10:19-12:29: Faith and endurance: availing oneself of Jesus's priestly work

10:19-39: Exhortation to profit from the sacrifice of Jesus

11:1-40: OT Examples of faith

12:1-13: The example of Jesus' suffering and the Lord's discipline

12:14-29: Warning against disobedience through OT examples

13:1-19: Injunctions about practice

13:20-25: Conclusion: blessing and greetings.

Scripture Study and Study Notes

The context of Hebrews:

Authorship of Hebrews:

Anti-Judaism and supersessionism

Faith is . . . the principle of action in all intelligent beings. (Joseph Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, 1:9)

But faith is not only the principle of action, but of power also, in all intelligent beings, whether in heaven or on earth. (Joseph Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, 1:13-14)

Briefly bring up anti-Judaism (Hebrews is one of the softer versions, but still problematic in ways we need to acknowledge “My approach to spirituality is better than yours” the issue is, we are all different, so our relationships with God will be different

Bring up Fowler’s stages of faith and the idea of stages of faith and how that is problematic. Again, because we need different things, our stages will look different. More importantly, spirituality isn’t a staircase. It isn’t a linear progression. It is a mysterious and organic and sacred relationship with what is greater than us, greater than anything we understand or are.