

# HEBREWS

## *A Study in Contrasts*

### Study Discussion Questions

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## General Bible Study Questions

- **Why is it helpful to branch out to another translation sometimes?**
- **When would it be helpful to know the Greek behind our English translations?**
  - **How could you find this out?**
- **Why do people sometimes come up with different interpretations of the same text?**
- **What should we do when we disagree about the interpretation of a text?**
- **What genres of literature are in the Bible?**
  - **Why is it important to correctly identify the genre of a book or passage? What would be the result if we mistook one type of writing for another?**
- **What parts of your Bible are NOT inspired?**
- **(As review:)**
  - **What is the difference between indicatives and imperatives?**
  - **Suggestion: offer some passages to evaluate. Use these follow-up Q's:**
    - **Indicatives: Can I learn anything from this about what pleases God?**
    - **Imperatives: To whom is this command addressed?**
- **Why would a NT author quote an OT passage or verse?**
- **How does the OT point to Jesus?**
- **Consider words that we direct to others: what are these words FOR? What's their purpose? (it's helpful to list all the different verbal actions that we use words for – e.g., giving or getting info., rebuking, warning, inviting, commanding, etc. – because you'll want to be alert for how the author changes from one mode to another.**
- **When have you ever taken time and labor to understand something in the Bible or in the faith, where you felt it was really WORK?**
  - **What do we gain by putting in the work?**

- **Continuity & Discontinuity:**
  - ***From OT to NT:***
    - ***In what ways do they say the same thing? (continuity)***
    - ***In what ways do they speak of something different? (discontinuity)***
  - ***From this world to New Heavens & New Earth – what stays the same?  
What will change?***

## Hebrews 1

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews in General

- *From your previous reading of Hebrews, what words or ideas do you already expect to encounter in the text?*
- *What words or feelings do you already associate with the book?*
- *Do you already have any favorite verses from this book?*

### ➤ Hebrews 1:1-4

- *What is the initial contrast introduced here?*
- *What was true in the past?*
- *What were some of the “various ways” that God used to communicate?*
- *What was God saying in these “various ways”?*
- *What is true in the present?*
- *How is this different? How is it an improvement?*
- *How is Jesus superior to the earlier forms of communication?*
- *What do we learn about God here, incidentally? (that he communicates! Special v. general revelation here!)*
- *What has God communicated through Jesus?*
- To anticipate as we read Hebrews:
  - *How did the old channels communicate Jesus?*
  - *What is the new message?*
  - *How is it different?*
- (v.2 – heir, creator)
  - *What does Jesus inherit?*
    - *When does this happen? (now? Not-yet?)*
  - *What does this statement imply about the Son?*
  - *What words do you think of that describe the material creation?*
  - *Do you know of any other verses where the Son is said to have been involved in Creation?*
- (v.3)
  - *In what ways is Christ described here as being the SAME as God?*
  - *Can you think of any other biblical references to God or Jesus being LIGHT?*
  - *Powerful word – can you think of any times in the Gospels when Jesus performed a miracle simply by SPEAKING?*

- *What could the Son do because he was incarnate (made human)?*
  - *What did Jesus finish or accomplish, according to these verses?*
  - *What does the phrase “purification for sins” assume about human beings?*
  - *What happened AFTER the cleansing was accomplished?*
  - *What is significant about the Son being seated “at the right hand”?*
  - *What is significant about “a more excellent name”?*
- **Hebrews 1:5-14 – “The String of Pearls”**
- *For what purpose is the author launching into this string of OT quotations?*
  - *(v.5a) Psalm 2 – What relationship is stressed here?*
    - *In what ways do we see this relationship confirmed in the Gospels?*
  - *(v.5b) 2 Sam. 7:11b-16*
    - *What part of Israel’s history is told in 2 Sam.?*
    - *What is the gist of this passage?*
    - *In what ways is Jesus connected with David?*
  - *(v.6) Deut. 32:43*
    - *What part of Israel’s history is told in Deut.?*
    - *What questions occur to you, reading Heb. 6 & Deut 32:43?*
      - *(This will require some research on your part!)*
    - *What is the gist of Deut. 32? (skim it!)*
    - *How does this quotation support our author’s purpose in this section?*
  - *(v.7) Psalm 104:4*
    - *What is the gist of this psalm?*
    - *How does this quotation serve the author’s purpose?*
  - *(v.8-9) Ps. 45:6-7*
    - *What is the gist of this psalm?*
    - *What theme that we’ve noted previously is reinforced here?*
    - *How does this quotation serve the author’s purpose?*
  - *(v.10-12) Ps. 102:25-27*
    - *What is the gist of this psalm?*
    - *What theme that we’ve noted previously is reinforced here?*
    - *How does this quotation serve the author’s purpose?*

- **(v.13) Ps. 110:1**
  - *What is the gist of this psalm?*
  - *Where have we seen the “right hand” before in Hebrews?*

- **v.14 – Chart to fill out together:**

	<b>Angels</b>	<b>Jesus</b>
<b>Position</b>		
<b>Nature</b>		
<b>Role</b>		

## Hebrews 2

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

➤ **Connecting back:**

- **What has the author said so far about the Son before his incarnation?**
- **What has been said so far about his incarnation?**
- **What has been said about his exaltation? What's involved in this part of the story?**

➤ **Heb. 2:1-4**

- **What command is given here?**
- **What reason is given for this command?**
- **What does the author mean by "what we have heard"? Are there any clues defining it here? Where did it come from?**
- **What two things are being compared here? (2 messages)**
- **What detail has you scratching your head?**
  - **How might you research this?**
  - *(you need to do some significant homework here!)*
- **Did you notice the warning? What's the danger here?**
- **What theological puzzle does this raise in our minds (whether or not the author is concerned about this himself)?**
  - **How do we reconcile this message with the doctrine of "eternal security," or the "perseverance" or "preservation" of the saints?**
- **What do we know of the church, and of human nature, that would make the warning valid and yet preserve the idea that a true believer can never be kicked out of the family?**
  - **Wheat & tares, Mt. 13:24-30**
  - **1 John 2:19 – some are "not of us"**
  - **Fair to ask a group of Christians to test themselves (2 Cor. 13:5a; 1 John)**
  - **The wise listen to rebukes (Prov. 25:12)**
- **How might the warning have applied to its original hearers?**
- **How may we apply it today?**

➤ **Heb. 2:5-9 – Midrash on Psalm 8**

- **What point does our author seem to be making about Jesus?**
- **How does this quotation from Psalm 8 reinforce his theme?**
- **Read Ps. 8 – What was it originally talking about?**
  - **In what ways is it appropriately applied to Jesus?**

Hebrews 2, cont'd

- **What does “taste death for everyone” mean?**
  - **Are there any limits on “everyone”?**
  
- **Hebrews 2:10-18 – Solidarity**
  - **Who is the active subject of v.10?**
  - **What statement is puzzling here? (“made perfect”)**
    - **What would it mean in OUR case?**
    - **What CAN it mean in Jesus’ case?**
  - **What form of writing do you see in vv.12-13? What’s the purpose of it? (see end of v.11 for a clue)**
    - **How does each statement reinforce this idea of Christ’s solidarity or identification with his people?**
  - **(v.11) What is the common heritage between Jesus and his brothers?**
  - **(vv.14-18) What has been accomplished through Jesus’ solidarity with his brothers and sisters?**
  - **Why has death always been a fearful thing for human beings?**
    - **In the face of death, what coping mechanisms did people have in ancient times?**
    - **How about in the present day?**
  - **What has happened through Christ that takes the sting from death?**
    - **Why did a death disarm the devil?**
    - **In what sense did the devil “hold the power of death”?**
  - **(v.16) What is our connection with Abraham?**
    - **In which letters does Paul especially elaborate on this?**
  - **(v.18) What does this solidarity accomplish for us now, in the present moment?**
    - **What kind of help would we be needing?**
    - **How was Jesus “tempted”?**



## Hebrews 3

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews 3:1-6

- **What ideas are introduced here for the first time?**
- **Were there any connector words joining this section with the previous passage?**
- **What is the author doing with his words in this paragraph?** (comparing, commanding)
- **What could we say is the main idea expressed in this paragraph?**
- **What comparisons are being made between Moses and Christ?**
  - **How is Jesus LIKE Moses?**
  - **How is he GREATER THAN Moses?**
- **What could be meant by “house”?**
- **What is the OT story referred to here? How is this relevant to the Hebrews’ present situation?**
- **What is the imperative here?**
- **What was the imperative in ch. 2? How are they related?**
- **What is Jesus called?**
  - **How is this like Moses?**
- **Why “apostle”? What does this bring to mind?** (teacher, prophet, speaker of words, appointed messenger, authority)
- **(3:6) – implied warning: “if indeed we hold fast”**
  - **Why was this conditional statement necessary for the original readers?**
  - **How might it apply to people in the church today?**
- **What questions does this paragraph raise in your mind?**

### ➤ Hebrews 3:7-19 – Psalm 95

- **Psalm 95:**
  - **What’s familiar?**
  - **What are the two moods of the Psalm?**
  - **When was it written? What past event does it refer to?**
- **What is meant by “rest” here?** (possibilities?)
- **What words from this section describe unbelief? What is it characterized by?**
- **Read Num. 13:31-14:4**
  - **What is implied here about the people’s belief about God? What is the wrong content in their minds?**
- **In the book of Hebrews so far, what kinds of wrong notions has the author likely been addressing?**

- **Read Num. 14:7-9.**
  - **What is the right content that Joshua is trying to remind the Israelites about?**
- **What is the right content that the author to the Hebrews has been reminding his audience of?**
- **Read Luke 8:11-15 (parable of sower; Jesus' teaching on unbelief)**
  - **What circumstances mentioned here are likely to derail a God-centered version of reality?**
  - **What wrong views creep in because of the devil? ...testing? ...cares? ...riches? ...pleasures?**
  - **What characterizes the life of faith?**
- **Heb. 3:12-14 – looking out for one another**
  - **Who in the church has oversight for the beliefs of the believers?**
  - **What must the elders be alert for, among the people in their care?**
  - **What does this kind of daily encouragement or exhortation towards right thinking look like in your life, whether you are the exhorted or the exhorter?**

## Hebrews 4

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews 4:1-11

- **What new ideas are present here?**
- **What is confusing?**
- **What seems to be the writer's main concern?**
- **How does verse 1 compare with v.11?**
  - **Just from these two verses, what is the author's concern?**
- **On Psalm 95**
  - **What OT incident was Ps. 95 referring to?**
  - **What characterized the unbelief of the wilderness generation?**
  - **Who offered a believing perspective by contrast, and what was it?**
  - **Why did our author bring up Ps. 95 in the first place?**
  - **Three parts to the midrash:**
    - **Quotation of the Psalm (3:7-11)**
    - **Negative application – DON'T do that (3:12-19)**
    - **Positive application – DO do this (4:1-11)**
- **(v.1) What indicative statement is made here?**
- **(vv.4-8) What three biblical time periods are mentioned here?**
- **What does the reference to Gen. 2:2 imply about how long this rest has been around, and what is the nature of it?**
- **In what way are we to understand God to have "rested" after his work of creation? (not inactivity, but a ceasing from a particular task; cf. John 5:17)**
- **Why mention Joshua?**
- **Why mention David?**
- **(v.9) When you hear "Sabbath rest," what do you think of?**
  - **WHEN is this to occur? (ambiguous – what are the possibilities?)**
- **(v.11) What commands and helps has our author given so far, that we may carry this out?**

### ➤ Hebrews 4:12-16

- **What is your understanding of v.12?**
- **What do soul/spirit, joints/marrow, and thoughts & intentions of the heart have in common? (they are all secrets!)**
- **What secret needs to be discovered by the living and active word of God? (the secret of belief or unbelief!)**
- **Where else have we seen the heart mentioned in Hebrews?**

- ***What is troubling about v.12 for a believer?***
- ***What could “word of God” refer to?***
  - ***How is God’s word being used in 3:7-11? For what purpose?***
  - ***How is God’s word (generally) already shown to be “living and active” in Hebrews?***
- ***(v.13) The watchful eye of God – Does this sound like good news or bad?***
  - ***What emotions does this verse inspire?***
  - ***What need does it evoke?***
  - ***Where else in Scripture do we find God’s watchfulness?***
- ***(v.14-16) Can you find any links with what has gone before? (Words, phrases, concepts)***
  - ***What are the main ideas about Christ here?***

## Hebrews 5

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews 5:1-4 – the Back Story

- **What historical link is introduced here?**
- **Where is this told about in the OT? (Ex. 28:1; Ex. 29:9b)**
- **What is stressed here about the human high priest's role?**
- **What expectations or qualifications are noted for this office?**
- **Why is Aaron mentioned here?**
- **What similarities do you observe between the human high priest and Christ?**
- **What contrasts have already been brought out?**

### ➤ Hebrews 5:5-10 – Christ's Priesthood (Jesus' Resume)

- **What jumps out at you in this section? What would you like to talk about?**
- **Where have you seen the first quotation before?**
- **What is similar between these verses? (someone is being appointed to a title & office)**
- **Who is Jesus, according to God's appointment?**
- **What new historical figure is introduced?**
  - **Where does he figure in the OT story, and whose story does he intersect?**
  - **What similarities are implied here between Jesus and Melchizedek?**

### ➤ Hebrews 5:11-14 – Marks of Maturity/Immaturity

- **What is the tone here? How would you summarize the author's message in this paragraph?**
- **What is the congregation chided for here?**
- **List the characteristics of someone who is "immature" and of someone who is "mature."**
- **What are the three marks of maturity given here? (able to handle more difficult material; able to teach; able to discern)**
- **What went wrong with them? (note the verb "become"! This is a change in state – it doesn't have to do with intellectual ability, which does not change.)**
- **What is the root of the problem here? Is it that they had poor teachers? (cf. 2:3-4; they are one generation removed from the eyewitnesses and Jesus!)**
- **What is implied here about the learners?**
- **What can interfere with our learning?**
- **When are students blameworthy for their ignorance?**

- ***When are ignorant students NOT blameworthy?***
- ***When is “milk” appropriate for a learner?***
- ***What specific wrong thinking would have threatened the learners’ receptivity in the original setting?***
- ***What are the author’s intentions in this letter?***
- ***If maturity comes to those whose powers of discernment have been “trained by constant practice,” what ideas or images does this bring to mind?***
  
- ***Why is this section very easy to apply directly to US?***
  - ***What is the knee-jerk take-away message that you get here?***
  - ***Let’s say a pastor had to preach this. What legitimate application COULD he land on?***
  - ***What CAN it mean (for us)? What CAN’T it mean?***
  - ***Should we seek a DIRECT or an INDIRECT application?***
  - ***(Note that the author does not know US – so these very specific things he is saying apply directly only to the people he does know!)***
  - ***Do our hearts ever resist the teachings of the faith, where we encounter the gospel’s demands on our lives? Give examples.***
  
- ***What are these listeners truly blameworthy for, regarding their learning? What phrase captures it?***
- Making progress towards maturity here has to do with understanding how Jesus fulfills and replaces an OLD way with something NEW.
  - ***Why would this be EXCITING information for Jewish Christians?***
  - ***Why would this be SCARY for these same people?***
  - ***(This is an emotional moment! It’s a point of crisis that identifies the rift between believers and unbelievers. Should they go forward in Christ, or back to Judaism?)***

## Hebrews 6

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews 6:1-8 – The Warning

- *(vv.1-3) How are each of these basic things related to Christ?*
- *Why might the people cling to and not wish to progress past these elementary things?*
  
- *(vv.4-6) Why do Christians get nervous about this passage?*
  - *How do people try to resolve the tension?*
- *What investment, expectation, and results are being illustrated by the agricultural metaphor in these verses?*
  - **Read Isaiah 5:1-7**
    - *Who is Isaiah talking about? (Locate in redemptive history)*
    - *What had been invested? What was expected? What were the results?*
  - **Recall (or summarize) Numbers 13-14; Psalm 95**
    - *What had been invested in these people?*
    - *What was expected?*
    - *What were the results?*
  - **Read John 15:1-6**
    - *Who is Jesus talking about?*
    - *What has been invested?*
    - *What is expected?*
    - *What will be the consequences for different results?*
  - *What is the same in ALL OF THE ABOVE parallel passages? (a group of God's people, in whom God invests, does not live up to expectations – God reaps the harvest and judges those who DID NOT ACTUALLY BELIEVE. Fruitlessness is the result of a lack of genuine relationship to the vine/vinedresser.)*

### ➤ Hebrews 6:9-12 – Positive Hopes

- *How is the author's personal knowledge of this congregation evident here?*
- *The gospel – though GOOD NEWS! – has its sharp edges, closed doors, and deadlines; yet it is comforting, open, and eternal for those who receive it with a noble and good heart. Can you recall what we've heard in Hebrews already of these two sides of the gospel (sternness and grace)? (make a list together)*

➤ **Hebrews 6:13-20 – Abraham, Oaths & Promises**

- *This is a “hinge” paragraph, transitioning back to the argument that the author interrupted with his personal rebuke & exhortation. **Do you remember what he had been talking about previously?***
- **What pronouns did you hear in vv.13-20?** (*we, our*)
  - **How wide is the “we” here? Do you think it just refers to those people “back then,” the original writer and readers of Hebrews? Or is this true of all believers at all times – including us? What clues do you have to support your answer?**
- **Oath:** *guarantees that the promise will happen.*
- **Promise:** *the content; what the promise intends to do.*
  - **Read Gen. 22:15-18**
    - **Which part is the oath? Which is the promise?**
  - **Read Ps. 110:4**
    - **Which part is the oath? Which part is the promise?**
- *(Review Q:) **What is the difference between oaths and promises?***
- **What has the author directed his readers to do in v.12?**
- **Will his readers be concerned with the SAME promises as Abraham was?**
- **(v.16)** *(a reference to experience with oaths in the ancient world)*
  - **Is this attitude toward oaths the same today? Or are we more skeptical now?** *(There may be a cultural divide here that interferes with our impression of the FIRMNESS described by the author when he mentions God’s oath and uses the analogy of human oaths.)*
  - **If I were trying to communicate something to you about my own integrity, is there anything that I could say or do to remove all doubt in your mind?** *(e.g., in a legal setting – there would be the possibility of litigation and risk of livelihood if I broke a promise or lied; contracts; notary; sign your pledge that this is true; etc.)*
- **(vv.17-18)**
  - **Who are the heirs to the promise?**
  - **What is Paul’s argument about believers being heirs to Abraham and the promises? Where does he make it?**
  - **Which promises is our author concerned with?** *(high priest forever & order of Melchizedek)*



Hebrews 6, cont'd

- *(Review Q:) What is the specific oath-bound promise that the author to the Hebrews wants to reinforce? (see 6:20)*
- *What is the significance of this promise, if it's true?*
  
- *(vv.19-20)*
  - *What has Jesus done for us? What are the results?*
  - *What is said to be "the anchor of our hope"?*

## Hebrews 7

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

- **Heb. 7:1-3 – Melchizedek’s similarity to the Son**
  - **Read Gen. 14:18-20**
    - ***What do you notice? What more do you want to ask?***
  - **Read Heb. 7:1-3**
    - ***What do you get from a straightforward, literal reading?***
      - ***Why is this problematic?***
      - ***(Do your homework here!)***
    - ***What similarity is the author trying to bring out?***
      - ***Notes: Literarily speaking, Melchizedek is like the Son in having a unique, unending, unrestricted priesthood. Jesus fulfills these things in an unqualified way, while Melchizedek (through the Holy Spirit’s limited description of him in Gen. 14) illustrates these characteristics in a literary way.***
  - ***What is special and different about Melchizedek?***
  
- **Heb. 7:4-10 – Melchizedek’s superiority to the Levitical priests**
  - ***What does Abraham communicate about rank by tithing to Melchizedek?***
  - ***What does Melchizedek communicate about rank by blessing Abraham?***
  - ***How does our author emphasize Abraham’s high dignity (and therefore increase Melchizedek’s dignity in our eyes)?***
  
- **Heb. 7:11-19 – Logical implications of the Melchizedekian Order**
  - ***“perfection” – What does this say about God’s intention for the Levitical priesthood?***
  - ***What do you know about Paul’s arguments about the Law and its purpose?***
    - ***How do his arguments complement what we read here in Hebrews?***
  - ***In what ways is Jesus a DIFFERENT priest? (several!)***
  - ***(v.16) “Indestructable life”***
    - ***What does this phrase suggest to you?***
    - ***What do you think our author is referring to here?***
  - ***(v.18-19) Why was the Law “weak and useless”?***
  - ***Why is ours a better hope?***
  
- **Heb. 7:20-25 – Oaths about Forever**
  - ***Why were oaths important to the author already? (see Ch. 6)***

- **What's different about the Psalm 110 quotation this time?**
  - **Why did the author cut it off where he did?**
- **"Better covenant"**
  - **What is in the "better covenant"?**
  - **What good things can you name from Hebrews so far?**
  - **How is this covenant fixed and guaranteed?**
- **Many priests v. One priest**
  - **What contrast is being drawn here between the Levitical priesthood and Jesus' priesthood?**
  - **Where have we seen the pattern of "many" and "one" before?**
- **"save to the uttermost" – What does this phrase bring to mind?**
- **"he always lives to make intercession" – what does this bring to mind? What is Jesus doing?**
- **What is the "fittingness" that is described in v.26? What makes Jesus 'fit' to be our high priest?**
- **What is emphasized about Jesus' character here?**
  - **What significance do these words have?**
- **What contrasts are reiterated here between the human priests and Jesus the great high priest?**
- **How are WE involved in this paragraph? How does it relate to us?**
- **What's our relationship to this high priest?**
- **Where is he presently located?**
- **What details about the earthly priesthood are mentioned?**
- **How does his priesthood compare with the earthly one?**

## Hebrews 8

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Chapter 8 Overview

- *(read whole chapter:) What were the main topics in this chapter?*
- *What idea is being conveyed about each of these main topics?*
- *What hints are given here that the heavenly tabernacle is superior to the earthly one?*
- *What evidence is given here that the new covenant was to be superior to the old?*
- *What are the uses of the OT here?*
  - *Exodus: What's the author's purpose with this quote?*
  - *Jeremiah: What's the purpose?*

### ➤ Hebrews 8:1-6 – Sanctuaries

- *What is different about the heavenly sanctuary?*
- *What do we learn about the earthly one?*
- *What priestly work happens in the heavenly sanctuary?*
- *What's going on here? What is this section saying about reality itself?*
- *Where else in Scripture do we get heavenly realms breaking into the earthly?*
- *What did Moses see and copy? (What can we say for sure about it?)*
- *What continuity (sameness) do we see between the Earthly tabernacle and the Heavenly one?*
- *What discontinuity (difference) do we see between them?*
- *What difference would there be in their PURPOSES?*
- *What is our high priest doing (and NOT doing) now?*

### ➤ Hebrews 8:7-13 – New Covenant

- *Where did this quoted passage and its human writer originally fall on the redemptive-historical timeline?*
- *What other parts of the timeline does it refer to?*
  - *Looking BACK*
  - *Looking FORWARD*
- *What questions come to your mind after reading this section?*
- *Who/what was found faulty? (manuscript difference – do your homework!)*
  - *What are the two possibilities? (vv.7, 8)*

- *Can you think of other verses that we've read in Hebrews that suggested that there has been a significant change, even a replacement of the Law?*
- *Can you think of verses that suggest the people were at fault?*
- *What makes the New Covenant better?*
  - *What elements do you see the prophetic passage celebrating?*
- *What is the continuity and discontinuity here?*
- *Has the New Covenant arrived? What does the author think?*
  - *What parts of the timeline COULD this passage be about?*
  - *Could it be about more than one? What would be the "Now" and the "Not yet" of each of these elements of the New Covenant (considered above)?*
  - *What does our author think?*
  - *What indications do we have so far that the forgiveness Jesus achieved is complete?*
- *What about "not needing teachers"? What could this mean?*
  - *What is problematic about this prophetic statement?*
  - *Can you point to evidence in the NT & in Hebrews itself that TEACHERS were still part of God's plan for his church?*
  - *What could be the "now" and the "not-yet" of the fulfillment of this prophecy?*
- *Where are the terms of the New Covenant spelled out?*
  - *What parallels do we see between the Old Covenant and the New?*
  - *Where do you find guidelines for life under the New Covenant? Give examples.*

## Hebrews 9

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

➤ **Review:**

- *What do we know so far about Christ's priesthood, and what does it have to do with us?*
- *Read 8:8b-12 and list key word relating to the New Covenant.*

➤ **Hebrews 9:1-5 – Old Covenant Nouns**

- *What is the topic now?*
- *What key words from this paragraph were also found in the discussion of the New Covenant?*
- *What do you know about Aaron's staff? (see Num. 17)*
- *What Old Covenant Nouns are named here?*
  - *(do your homework on these – how do they each point forward to Christ?)*

➤ **Hebrews 9:6-10 – Old Covenant Verbs**

- *What is the topic now?*
- *What Old Covenant verbs are used here?*
- *What is the significance of the blood?*
- *What is anticipated by the Old Covenant objects, places, and rituals?*
- *What were the limitations of the Old Covenant?*
- *What ages or epochs are named here? (see vv.8-10)*

➤ **Hebrews 9:11-14 – New Covenant Mediator and Sacrifice**

- *What is already true for us in Christ?*
- *What is yet to come?*
- *What contrasts are brought out here?*
- *What kind or degree of effectiveness was present in the Old Covenant sacrifices?*
- *What are we saved FROM?*
- *What are we saved FOR?*
- *What is gained by the once-for-all sacrifice?*
- *Where is this goal of salvation also taught in the New Testament?*
- *How is the Trinity involved in Jesus' sacrifice?*
- *If we didn't have the background knowledge already, what would we have to figure out in order to understand and begin to appreciate the significance of this section (9:1-14)?*

- *Can you explain any of the nouns or rituals that are mentioned here?*
- *What does the Day of Atonement ceremony point to?*
  
- **Hebrews 9:15-22 – An Old Covenant Picture**
  - *(v.15) – Mediator: Where have we encountered this designation before?*
  - *Where did we see a Moses-Jesus comparison before?*
  - *What role do we see Moses playing in this OT picture?*
  - *How is DEATH woven into this paragraph?*
  - *WHEN do these things occur?*
    - *What occurred in the ongoing historical past?*
    - *What acts are already accomplished and done?*
    - *What are the ongoing realities?*
    - *What is the present condition of believers?*
    - *What is our future hope?*
  - *Where does Ex. 24 fall in the storyline of Israel?*
  - *What's the point of showing this OT snapshot? (compare with Heb. 9:23-28)*
    - *What's the gain for us?*
  
- **Hebrews 9:23-29 – the Contrast of Christ**
  - *How is Christ's priestly action different?*
  - *How might the Reformers have used v.26 as a counterargument to the Catholic Mass?*
  - *What "Whens" (epochs) are mentioned here?*
  - *In what ways did the Old Covenant sacrifices resemble the bloody sacrifices of the pagan religions in that age?*
  - *What is significantly different about the Jewish sacrifices? (prescribed by law; significance is revealed; personal relationship with Lawgiver)*
  - *What was the MEANING of the Jewish animal sacrifices?*
  - *Where do you see yourself in this passage?*
  - *What background information helps you understand and resonate with this section?*
    - *Could a brand new believer with no prior knowledge identify with these same things?*
    - *What would they have to get straight before this part makes any sense to them?*
  - *(v.23) Why did the heavenly things need cleansing?*
    - *(What possible answers can you think of?)*

## Hebrews 10

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews 10:1-4

- **What are the inadequacies of the Levitical sacrifices?**
- **Does our author introduce any new ideas here, or is all of this familiar from Hebrews so far?**
  
- **“Consciousness of sin” – So if the ideal (perfection) has to do with not having a consciousness of sin, what about us? Are we free yet from the consciousness of our sins? Will we ever be?**
  - *Note difference between true guilt (what the author is referring to with “consciousness of sin”) and guilty feelings, which we may have even after being legally pardoned. What we feel about it is not necessarily true – what is true is not necessarily how we feel about it.)*
  
- **What’s a healthy, gospel-informed attitude to have about our sins, current and past?**
  - *Sorrow and repentance*
  - *Resting in forgiveness – Why is this hard?*
- **Note: Our author does not imply that when “consciousness of sins” is removed, the believers would simply forget their histories: he means that they could stand up straight again because the histories no longer define them.**
  
- **How do we treat people who have sinned against us?**
  - **Are we careful to encourage them in the gospel after they’ve sought forgiveness?**
  - **What about the reality of patterns of sin, or grave sin that has ongoing consequences? Does forgiveness automatically mean returning the relationship to what it was, same as before? Why or why not? How can we be wise and yet full of gospel grace?**
  
- **What is our status before God, of we are in Christ?**
- **What will God do if we confess our ongoing sins?**
- **How can we help one another to combat the tendency for the wrong SUBJECTIVE feelings to overtake the OBJECTIVE truth of the gospel in our hearts and minds?**



Hebrews 10, cont'd

- *How might we contribute to the problem of others in the Body of Christ not being able to experience a SUBJECTIVE sense of forgiveness? What can we take care NOT to do, in the case of someone we have forgiven?*
  
- **Hebrews 10:5-10 – Psalm 40**
  - *Any observations or questions to begin with (after reading this passage)?*
  - *How is the excerpt from Psalm 40 used here? What is the author's point?*
  - *When a similar message about sacrifices and offerings is given in the OT, what is usually the author's point?*
    - *In this case, what is presented as BETTER?*
  - *What is meant by v.9? What is abolished, and what is established?*
  
- **Hebrews 10:11-14 – The Seated Priest**
  - *What is the point of Psalm 110 here?*
  - *Hebrews makes a strong statement about the ineffectiveness of the sacrifices. How are we to make sense of this, in light of God's promise in the OT about forgiveness connected with the sacrifices?*
  
- **Hebrews 10:15-18 – Jeremiah 31 revisited**
  - *How was Jeremiah 31 used in ch. 8? What was the author's point there?*
  - *What is his purpose in using it here?*
  - *Note the compression: what is being emphasized?*
  - *Note the alteration at the beginning – can you tell what it is? Why would our author have made this change? How does it fit his purpose here?*
  
- **Hebrews 10:1-18 (Review so far)**
  - *List the effects and the new realities of Christ's sacrifice from ch. 10.*
  - *In the NT, how do the words "temple," "sacrifice," and "priests" take on new meanings?*
  - *What contrast is painted in chapter 10 so far?*
  - *What is Christ able to do that the law cannot?*
  - *What's the author's point in using Ps. 40?*
  
- **Hebrews 10:19-25**
  - *What is the author's purpose in this section? What does he use his words to do?*
  - *What is the tone?*
  - *What does this remind you of, elsewhere in Hebrews?*

## Hebrews 10, cont'd

- *The pastor's job is partly objective (telling what we need to know) and partly subjective (tending to our subjective experience – including emotions, relationships, motivations, etc.).*
  - ***How does our author accomplish any of these things in this paragraph?***
  - ***What questions do you have, or what strikes you as interesting here?***
  - ***What words connect this section with the rest of Hebrews?***
  
- ***Compare Hebrews 4:14-16 and 10:19-22***
  - ***What links do you notice between these passages?***
  - ***What's the source of the confidence to enter?***
  - ***What expressions and ideas are new?***
  
- ***(10:23-25 – the Invitational Imperatives)***
  - ***What's being implied here by the author about the habits of some Christians?***
  - ***What possible reasons might they have for behaving this way?***
  - ***How are you encouraged by your believing friends towards a stronger faith?***
  
- ***Transition to the warning – “the Day” – What is pending?***
  - ***What could this mean? What options are there for interpreting it? Are there any clues, one way or another, in the text itself? Does it matter if it's referring to 70AD or The End?***
  - ***How can we maintain this sense of expectation?***
  
- **Hebrews 10:26-31 – Warning Passage**
  - ***How do you feel about thinking of the gospel as STRICT?***
  - ***In what way(s) is the gospel EXCLUSIVE?***
  - ***What are its time limits and closed doors?***
  - ***Note:*** *All the warning passages have to do with HEARING but responding with UNBELIEF. Think about how often the theme of HEARING or SPEAKING the gospel is part of Hebrews!*
  - ***What do we learn in the passage about what our response should NOT look like?***
  - ***Compare with Heb. 3 – Who were the models of faith at that time in biblical history, who responded to God's words with belief? What were the rest of the people faulted for?***
  - ***What is worrisome about this passage?***

Hebrews 10, cont'd

- ***What do we hope it is NOT saying?***
- ***How are OT quotations being used here? What is being communicated?***
- ***What are we called to do? (take the opposites of the charges laid out in v.29!)***
  
- **Hebrews 10:32-39 – Personal Encouragement**
- ***What are the tone and purpose of this paragraph?***
- ***What questions does it raise in your mind?***
- ***What personal historical information do we already know about these people? Where has our author directed the reader's attention previously to his specific audience, so that we find we know things about them?***
  
- ***According to this paragraph, what did they do right in the past?***
  - ***What motivated their actions and attitudes?***
  - ***Why would the author call them to remember such hard times?***
  - ***What might have harmed their motivation in the meantime?***
- ***What is being depicted here?***
- ***Why would the author think this would be motivational?***
  
- ***What hints do we have in this letter that the author thinks these people are motivationally compromised (i.e., they're stuck, they need help advancing to maturity)?***
  - ***Where does his concern for their perseverance come out in his words?***
- ***What might have interfered with their former zeal?***
- ***What does the author's focus on Jesus' high priesthood in this letter suggest about their motivational handicap?***
  
- ***When we are stuck somehow – in a sin, a mood, or a view of reality – what do we need?***
- ***What has he provided in this letter so that they can move beyond their impasse, whatever it is?***
  - ***How does he appeal to the head AND the heart?***
- ***What interferes with your joy and zeal in the Lord?***
- ***What are our sources of suffering?***
- ***Why does suffering interfere with our motivation to persevere?***
- ***What is the antidote?***
  - ***Do you have any favorite verses that put things in perspective?***

## Hebrews 11

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ **Hebrews 11 Overview – The Exempla**

- (Pre-reading:) **What do you already know about this chapter?**
  - **What is its main theme?**
  
- (read whole thing through for an impression)
  - **What details do you want to call to our attention right away (significant, interesting, puzzling)?**
  - **How do you suggest we tackle this?**
  - **How is it organized?**
  - **Where are the author's commentary statements?**
  - **What is the overarching theme?**
  - **What are you particularly curious about?**
  - **Did you notice any striking translation differences between your version and the one being read?**
  - **Which biblical figures get sustained attention?**
  - **What are some of the key words that get repeated in this chapter?**
  - **How is v.3 unique among the exempla?**
  
- (Review of Hebrews to understand Ch. 11's context)
  - **What were some of our author's main theological themes so far?**
  - **What concerns the author about the real people he is writing to?**
    - **3:12-14 – What is the concern here?**
      - **What is his hope for this flock? (list)**
    - **6:11-12 – What is his concern here?**
      - **How is this hope similar to what he expresses in 10:35-39?**
    - **10:35-39 – How does chapter 11 address the need brought out in this warning & exhorting passage?**
  
- Note: *In Hebrews, Christian faith is not a blind leap in the dark. It is hearing and responding with persevering obedience to the One in Whom we trust, even in hard times. Like the saints of old, our possession now is a VERBAL PROMISE backed up with HISTORICAL REALITIES.*
  
- **What are some of the reasons spelled out by our author so far to trust God's promises?**

➤ **Hebrews 11:1-6**

- **(vv.1-2) What aspects of faith is our author concentrating on? (note that it is not a full definition!)**
  - **Hope: Read Romans 8:23-25 – What is the specific future hope anticipated here?**
  - **Things Unseen**
    - **What sorts of things are unseen? (see Heb. 11:27)**
  - **What is the purpose of faith?**
  - **What is its result?**
  
  - **Note: A wrong understanding of biblical faith caricatures it as being a “leap in the dark.” But biblical faith is always grounded in the character and communication of God.**
    - **Where has our author shown us the character of God?**
    - **Where has he been concerned with God’s communication?**
  
  - **(Ongoing questions to investigate – sometimes the answer will be only implied in the relevant texts:)**
    - **What is the specific revelation that grounds the faith of each of these biblical figures?**
    - **What historical reasons do they have to trust God?**
  
- **(v.3) – Creation**
  - **How is this one unique among the exempla? (Note the SUBJECT of the sentence – Who is exercising faith?)**
  - **(Special revelation:) Where would we find this information in Scripture?**
  - **Can we simply look at creation and believe that it was made by God?**
    - **What does Paul say about this?**
    - **What are the limitations of general revelation?**
    - **Can one simply read the Genesis account and believe that it tells the truth about the origins of creation? (cf. WCF I.v; 1 Cor. 2:14)**
  - **Why is Christ’s resurrection the historical basis for trust re. the truth of the creation account? (logic – the resurrection validates the speaker; the speaker validates the Hebrew Scriptures.)**

- **(v.4) – Cain & Abel**
  - **How does our author reach the logical conclusion that Abel had faith? (His faith isn't mentioned in the Genesis account!)**
  - **What implications does this have for our understanding of what went wrong with Cain's offering?**
  - **What special revelation can we surmise in this case? (What did C&A probably know about God & righteous actions?)**
  - **What prior historical evidence of God's gracious but holy character was available to them?**
  - **How shall we understand the phrase about Abel continuing to speak?**
  
- **(v.5-6) – Enoch: an example & a principle**
  - **How can we tell that Enoch had faith?**
  - **What special revelation probably helped him know God's character and expectations?**
  - **What historical evidence was probably available to him?**
  - **What can be imitated here?**
  
- **Hebrews 11:7 – Noah**
  - **How is Noah's story unique among those we've looked at so far?**
  - **What special revelation helped him know God's character & his expectations?**
  - **What historical basis would have confirmed God's character to Noah?**
  - **What is the content of Noah's faith? (When he took God at his word, what was he believing about God?)**
  
  - **Contrast with wilderness generation:**
    - **How do you know they didn't believe in God's goodness?**
    - **What makes you suspect they didn't take him seriously as a holy judge, too?**
  
  - **Contrast with Ananias & Sapphira:**
    - **What makes you suspect they didn't take God seriously as a judge?**
  
  - **"in holy/reverent fear" – Why is this appropriate for a believer?**
  - **What do you think of this biblical concept – fear of God – and its intersection with the way we approach God personally and corporately?**
  - **Is there continuity and discontinuity regarding the concept of "fear of God" between the OT and the NT?**

- **What is the element of the UNKNOWN here for Noah? (the “unseen”)**
  - **“Obedience of faith” (Rom. 1:5) – What Paul calls the “obedience of faith” ends up making faith embodied in the world in some way. It may look quite different for different believers. Noah’s faith looked like an ark!**
    - **What does OUR faith look like when obedience gives it visibility? Give examples!**
  - **What were the results of Noah’s obedience, as he took God at his word?**
    - **“he condemned the world” – What is meant by this curious phrase?**
      - (Do your homework!)
  - **How could Noah’s story relate to and motivate these believers? What are the parallels?**
  - **Does God speak today?**
    - **How do we know?**
    - **How do we react?**
    - **How can we evaluate if we are being called to DO something?**
- **Hebrews 11:8-22 – Abraham**
- (Prereading:) **How has Abraham figured in Hebrews so far?**
    - **What was he promised?**
    - **What promises has our author labored to articulate to his friends in this letter so far?**
  - (After reading:)
    - **What promises are in view here?**
    - **What was UNKNOWN for Abraham at this point in his story?**
    - **How come he could readily set out from his homeland? What was he believing about God?**
    - **What special revelation was given to him?**
    - **What historical basis does he have for belief? (speculate)**
    - **How do we know that Abraham never actually received the promised LAND?**
    - **What does our author conclude about Abraham’s insight into God’s deeper promises? (God’s “rest”)**
    - **What part of the promise was still future for him when he died?**
    - **What did the “obedience of faith” look like in Abraham’s life?**
  - **How did the wilderness generation feel about the country they had left and the one they had been promised?**
  - **Parallel with us – we are presently camping on our inheritance (the earth!).**
    - **Can you support this idea scripturally? (Mt. 5:5; 1 Cor. 3:21-23)**

- **What were Abraham's challenges to faith?**
- **What did he believe?**
- **What did obedience of faith look like for him?**
- **What are OUR "unknowns"? What do we worry about the most?**
- **(vv.20-22 – The Patriarchs)**
  - **Why are they included?**
  - **How does this part of their history contribute to our author's theme and purpose?**
  - **What is it that all three are counting on coming true?**
  - **When Isaac blesses Jacob – What part of this blessing is incompatible with a nomadic lifestyle?**
  - **Jacob blesses Manasseh & Ephraim – Is he actually in possession of the land grants he is bequeathing?**
  - **Joseph – In what way does his blessing invoke a future promise?**
  
- **Hebrews 11:23-28 – Moses**
  - **How has our author made use of Moses' name and reputation previously?**
  - **What did his parents have as the basis for their faith? (what were they believing when they protected him?)**
  
- **Hebrews 11:29-31 – Exodus & Conquest**
  - **(v.29) – Whose faith is being exercised here?**
  - **(v.30) – In what way was this an exercise of faith?**
    - **How is this in keeping with Joshua's character, as we know it from Scripture?**
  - **(v.31) – Rahab – How come this pagan woman has faith in the one true God?**
    - **What is a reasonable assumption? (Read Joshua 2:8-11)**
    - **In what ways does Rahab respond differently to God's promise about inheriting the land than the wilderness generation? (Ironic, considering that she is from the nation that they feared the most!)**
  
- **Hebrews 11:32-34 – The Triumphant Composite**
  - **List what these figures were enabled to do.**
  - **Any suggestions for WHO they might be?**
  - **How is FAITH related to these outcomes? (The obedience to do something strange or beyond you – strength in obvious weakness!)**
  - **Why are the first four surprising? ("There was not one of them whose faith did not halt," says Calvin)**



- **Read Gideon's story – Judges 7:1-22**
  - **Where is the FAITH here?**
- **In what situations are WE given seemingly impossible things to do or think?**
  - **What specific "marching orders" do we read in the Gospels or Epistles that seem hard to carry out?**
- **When we're in a situation where any of these commands fit, then we know what our marching orders are. So why would we shy away from doing what we know we should do?**
  
- **Hebrews 11:35-38 – Affliction Composite**
  - **What's stands out most strongly as a contrast between the first composite and the second here?**
  - **What helped these saints keep their suffering in perspective?**
  - **(Do your homework – Screwtape Letters!)**
  
- **Hebrews 11:39-40 – Conclusion**
  - **What has the exempla reinforced about biblical faith?**
  - **Compare with 1 Peter 1:3-9**
    - **What is this faith based on?**
    - **What challenges faith?**
    - **What is the outcome of faith?**

## Hebrews 12

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

➤ **Hebrews 12:1-3**

- *What is happening now in the letter? What is the author doing with his words? (What was he JUST doing, in ch. 11?)*
- *Where else in the letter has this author addressed these people out of personal knowledge and concern?*
  
- *How is Jesus LIKE and UNLIKE the examples given in ch.11?*
- *How is he named here? What does this mean?*
- *What else has our author said about Jesus' death and sufferings?*
- *What else has our author said about Jesus' trusting obedience?*
- *What other examples from elsewhere in the NT come to mind?*
- *What is "the joy set before him"? (see 1:3; 2:13b)*
  
- *What is true of US?*
- *What distracts? What easily entangles? What burdens or impedes our running?*
- *What is asked of us?*
- *What is "the race marked out for us"?*
- *How does looking at others' examples help you run with perseverance?*
- *What motivates you to keep going for the long haul in any areas of long-term relationship, especially when the relationship is a difficult one?*
- *How does looking to Jesus help, both for laying aside sin and for running with perseverance?*
  
- *Think about what sorts of things are for YOU the heaviest and most entangling thing that typically impedes your running on this race course of faith. (Emotions? Anxieties? Fears? Ill health? Relationships? Weariness? Etc.)*
  
- *Now think about what it's like to feel "light of heart and fleet of foot," so to speak.*
  - *What is usually true of you when you're in that zone? (What's going on in your life and your spirit when you feel this way?)*
  - *Does this give you any clues about what might help you obey the imperatives here?*

- *How do we “fix our eyes upon Jesus”?*
- *How should we understand the “cloud of witnesses”? (Do your homework!)*
  
- **Hebrews 12:4-11 – on discipline**
  - *What is your usual or initial reaction to this passage?*
  - *What have you learned and understood about it already?*
  - *How might it be understood? How might it be misunderstood?*
    - *(Caution about overinterpretation of events in our lives!)*
  
  - *What are different ways that we can think of DISCIPLINE? What forms does it take?*
  - *What is discipline intended to accomplish?*
    - *Correction (true guilt)*
    - *Strength-training (getting prepared for the fight)*
  - *Strength Training: What does God want his people to be able to DO?*
  - *When and why is God’s discipline needed?*
  
  - *When would a believer need each of these two different kinds of discipline?*
  - *Is “punishment” ever relevant after the cross?*
    - *What shall we call it if our wrongdoing as a Christian has long-term consequences that we have to suffer through?*
  
  - *Do you ALWAYS use painful consequences to correct or steer your children when they are in the wrong?*
    - *Give some examples of how Jesus treated different sinners in different manners, while still calling sin “sin.”*
  
  - *Do you ever arrange “hardships” for your children, even when they haven’t been in the wrong about something, so that they will gain character or skills? Give examples.*
  
  - *Do the original people receiving the letter need CORRECTION? If so, how do you know?*
  - *Do they need STRENGTH TRAINING? If so, how do you know?*
    - *What might be coming down the road for them?*
  
  - *What message would you give a friend (and remember yourself) during difficult and painful circumstances?*

➤ **Hebrews 12:12-17**

- *How can we encourage and “make level paths” for ourselves?*
- *How can we do this for one another?*
- *What kinds of sins has the audience of Hebrews been guilty of?*
- *How has this pastor dealt exactly right with them?*
- *(v.14) How do we live at peace with others?*
- *(v.15 – the bitter root)*
  - *What do you think of when you hear this expression?*
  - *Do your homework!*

➤ **Hebrews 12:18-29**

- *What contrasts do you notice here?*
- *What did you find hard to understand?*
- *What are you curious about?*
- *What is the author doing with his words in this section?*
  - *Explaining – what?*
  - *Warning – what is the warning?*
  - *Exhorting/encouraging – what imperatives are given?*
  
- *What are the features of each mountain? (list)*
- *When do we get to Mt. Zion? (at worship? At conversion?)*
- *What did Abel’s blood speak? What does Jesus’ blood speak?*
- *(v.25) Where have we read a similar warning, arguing from the lesser to the greater?*
  
- *Haggai 2:6 – Heb. 12:26-29*
  - *What’s the shaking FOR, in the original passage?*
  - *What gets shaken?*
  - *What kind of shaking occurs?*
  - *How are we to understand this passage in Hebrews 12?*
    - *Do your homework!*
    - *When does this happen?*
    - *What is shaken?*
    - *What kind of shaking?*
  
- *(vv.28-29 – Acceptable worship)*
  - *What fear is appropriate?*
  - *What fear is unnecessary?*

## Hebrews 13

Questions can be used for initial study or for review.

### ➤ Hebrews 13:1-16

- **What is the author doing with his words in this section?**
  - *Note the pattern of imperatives and motivations for action!*
- **Is there anything that puzzles you here?**
- **What are the imperatives?**
- **What theological concepts are important to the author in this section?**

### ➤ Hebrews 13:1-8

- **(v.2) What's the motivation for hospitality?**
  - **Where do angels show up as houseguests?**
  - **Do you think he really meant for us to expect actual angels to show up?** (*See my commentary, Vol. 5, for my take on this – I argue that it's a gently humorous allusion to ancient stories and legends, but not a serious expectation.*)
  - **Application: What is the cultural context? What was travel like, and why was hospitality needed more often in the ancient world?**
  - **What biblical wisdom can help us apply this today? (i.e., do you read this as an imperative that must be followed for the sake of ANY stranger?)**
- **(v.3) What is the author asking them to do?**
- **(v.4) Why might the author have felt the need to include this basic instruction about morality within marriage?**
- **(v.5-6) How does this compare with Paul's teaching in 1 Tim. 6:6-10?**
- **(v.7) What leaders does this prompt you to think about?**
  - **How does "remembering" them help you to persevere?**
- **(v.8) Is this a non-sequitur, just a theological truth? Or can you relate it in any way to what has just been said about the leaders, and what is said next about "diverse teachings"?**

### ➤ Hebrews 13:9-16 – Outside the Camp

- **What contrasts do you note in this section?**
- **What are the imperatives in v.13?**
- **Where in Hebrews have we read about Jesus' identification with us?**
- **What are the two aspects of sacrifice described in vv.15-16?**

- **Why are confession and praise considered SACRIFICES?**
  - **How are they sacrifices for you?**
  - **How might they have played out sacrificially for these people?**

➤ **Hebrews 13:17-25 – Leaders and People**

- **(v.17) What are the duties of and the benefits that come to leaders and people in the church? (list)**
- **What decisions on YOUR part can promote JOY in your leaders?**
- **What decisions on your part can promote GROANING?**
- **Do church members have to accept what leaders say and obey them without questioning?**
  - **What kind of questioning and checks & balances can we do without causing groaning?**
- **(vv.18-19) What's the connection between claiming "a good conscience" and prayer here?**
- **Does anything strike you as unusual about the way the author speaks about himself and his companions? (note how positive his evaluation is!)**
- **What hints do you get about the author's theology of prayer?**
  - **What does he expect?**
  - **What is the purpose of it?**
- **Can you think of any other places where prayer is mentioned in Hebrews?**
- **What hints do you have here of this author's special relationship with these people?**
- **Given what you know about his personality through his writing by now, what do you think this congregation valued about his company?**
- **(vv.20-21) What is the author doing with his words here?**
- **What's the biblical significance of the SHEPHERD?**
- **Where might our author have gotten this metaphor?**
- **What is his specific request?**
- **How is he an answer to his own prayer?**

## Hebrews Study – Concluding Questions

- *Where have you noticed grace, truth, and beautiful things in Hebrews?*
- *What themes can you remember from this book?*
- *What contrasts do you recall from the author's arguments?*
- *Can you summarize in one word or phrase what this pastor wants his congregation to do?*
- *Consider some famous verses from Hebrews, and answer these questions about them:*
  - *What is the original context of this verse?*
  - *What's your take-away about it?*
    - *What will you remember about the original argument, author, or audience?*
    - *In what way does this intersect your life? (either directly or indirectly)*