

The Epistle to the Hebrews

Objectives

To study the epistle and understand the correlation between the Old and New Testaments

References

The Epistle to the Hebrews by Fr. Tadros Malaty

Scriptural Verse

“For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come” (Hebrews 13: 14)

Lesson Outlines

About The Epistle

- ❖ This book relates the Old and New Testaments.
- ❖ It declares to Christians from Jewish origin after being expelled from the temple that they are sharing the Lord Jesus Christ in His crucifixion outside Jerusalem and they have gained more than what they have lost.
- ❖ St. Paul was known to be the apostle for the Gentiles and since this epistle was directed to the Jews it was appropriate not to mention his name lest they would not read it.
- ❖ Instead of the Jewish temple, St. Paul revealed the Christian temple, the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and the new priesthood. He transformed us from the shadow to the truth.

Characteristics

- ❖ Its teachings and proofs are based on the well known books of the Old Testament.
- ❖ It handles the issues of the Jewish regulations, the Temple and the Jewish citizenship.
- ❖ Two chapters were devoted for practical commandments of love, obedience, and strife.
- ❖ Focused on the Priesthood of Christ and the intercession of His Holy Blood.

Divisions and Contents

1. Christ and the prophets, the Angels, Moses, Joshua & Aaron (Chapters 1 – 5, 7, 8, 9, 10)

Superiority of Christ over the prophets

- ❖ Moses was the Jewish leader (Revelation of the Divine Truth); Aaron was the high priest (Practical aspect of worship and sacrifices). The two acts accompany and complement one another. But the Lord Jesus alone is the complete Truth revealed through His Sacrifice.
- ❖ God talked to the Fathers through the prophets, but now He talks to us through His Son.
- ❖ The Only-Begotten Son is the One able to reconcile us with the Father to be in Him forever.

- ❖ As He inherits everything we will also inherit with Him and in Him.
- ❖ The Lord Jesus is the Creator of heaven and earth and is fulfilling in us the new creation
- ❖ He is the brightness of God's glory and the image of His Person (same essence with the father).
- ❖ Upholds all things by the word of His power (He cares for us).
- ❖ He paid the price of our sins through His Holy Blood shed to purify us.
- ❖ He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty and will take us to enjoy His eternal glory
- ❖ Despite His apparition in the flesh and His dwelling among us yet His divinity remains not separate from His Father, and He fills the heaven and the earth.
- ❖ Moses was a great leader but his people fell on the desert because of their disobedience. Our Lord Jesus gives us a new capacity to avoid falling by being the members of His body.

Much better High Priest

- A divine call with an oath according to the order of Melchizedek.
- Melchizedek was a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ and Abraham submitted to Him.
- God promised a new priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek, and not according to Aaron.
- Aaron offers sacrifices for his sins first, and then he intercedes for the sins of his people by offering bloody sacrifices for them. But our Lord is sinless. He intercedes with His Unique Sacrifice offered once for the sake of all, that never grows old to carry us in Him to the bosom of the Father.
- His Self-Sacrifice is acceptable to the Father and is making us the subject of God's pleasure.
- He was called by His Father not by an outside appointment as Aaron, but it is the call of the Light to His inseparable Brightness.

The Lord Jesus Christ is incomparable with His Angels

- ❖ His Greatness as the only begotten Son.
- ❖ Their submission to Him (His coming to the world did not affect His Divinity, nor prevented the angels from worshipping Him).
- ❖ His anointment for our Salvation (No man or Angel was entrusted for our salvation).
- ❖ His Eternity; He is the Creator and the conqueror of the power of darkness.
- ❖ The Lord Jesus Christ humiliated Himself more than the angels to give us the only road to submit to God.
- ❖ He raised us to Him when He descended to us so He is not ashamed to call us His brothers

2. Talks about Faith (Chapters 6, 11, 12)

Enlightenment and repentance

- ❖ Repentance from dead works and faith toward God.
- ❖ Baptism and Confirmation.
- ❖ Hope in Resurrection and Eternal Judgement.

Living in strife

- ❖ He wanted to warn them lest they become unfruitful while opening for them doors of hope lest despair.
- ❖ We are not alone but we have the cloud of witnesses and the Lord's sufferings.
- ❖ Obligation to continuous struggle to enjoy Redemption: Strife till the end, accept the Divine rebuke and help others.

Promise to Abraham by Oath

- ❖ An oath is the language which people understand to confirm a promise. However, man has to be patient to receive the practical faith. The gift is free, awesome, and assured, but no one receives it except he who lives in patience and faith!
- ❖ What is Faith and Who are the Heroes of faith and what they did?
- ❖ St. Paul is lifting up their eyes to a heavenly temple. He compared between the way the Law was received in the Old Testament and the Divine Word received in the New Testament to emphasize the effectiveness and blessings of the New Kingdom.
- ❖ As Christians of Hebrew origin felt bitter because they were deprived of their holy places, St. Paul revealed to them the new kingdom and calls it by their favorite places like Mount Zion, City of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem....

3. Concluding Commandments (Chapter 13)

- ❖ Brotherly love and Love for strangers.
- ❖ Marital love and Love for the Pastors.
- ❖ Fleeing from heresies and Suffering with the Lord Jesus Christ
- ❖ Praise and Submitting to those who rule over us
- ❖ Conclusion by St. Paul's apostolic blessing.

Conclusion

The Old Testament is great as a shadow of the truth in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Activities/Discussion Points

Discuss the differences between Aaron's priesthood and the Lord Jesus Christ's.