

Acts 2 Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Five: Hebrews, Part 2 – Hebrews 8-13

Read Hebrews 8.

- 1) Imagine being a Jewish Christian in the first century and living under intense persecution from the Roman authorities, as well as from Jewish family members, who consider your Christian stance a betrayal. The traditions with which you were raised (and with which your parents and grandparents were raised) revolved entirely around the practices of Judaism, a way of life that was acceptable to the state. If you chose to renounce your Christian faith and return to Judaism, you would go back to a life of ritual, not the least of which would be the system of sacrifices. The Temple in Jerusalem was all-important to the Jewish way of life. What does Hebrews 8:1-6 have to say about the Temple (Tabernacle) and about Jesus' ministry that would influence your thinking about returning to your old life?

- 2) Define the word covenant.

- 3) Jesus instituted a new covenant with us.
 - a) What was the basis of the former ("old") covenant? See Deuteronomy 28:1-6, 15-19 and Romans 10:5.

 - b) According to Hebrews 8:7-13, how is the new covenant different from the old (see also Romans 7:15-25)?

 - c) What specific pattern of thinking or passion of your heart (8:10) will you ask God to transform?

Read Hebrews 9-10.

- 4) List the phrases in Hebrews 9:1-10:18 that explain the ways in which the sacrifice system of the old covenant was inferior to Jesus' sacrifice.

- 5) According to Hebrews 10:10, 14, 16, Philippians 1:6, 2:13, and Hebrews 13:20-21, how are those who enter God's new covenant made holy (acceptable to God)?
- 6) Summarize the encouragement and warning in Hebrews 10:19-39 and record things that sometimes deter you from "drawing near to God."

Read Hebrews 11.

- 7) What do these verses teach us about faith?
- a) Verse 1
 - b) Verse 6
 - c) Verses 10, 13-16, 26, 39
 - d) Verse 11
 - e) Verse 27b
 - f) Verses 29-30
 - g) Verses 32-38
 - h) Anything else from chapter 11?
- 8) Based on the verse immediately preceding chapter 11 (10:39) and the verse immediately following chapter 11 (12:1), what was the writer's purpose in mentioning all of the faithful people listed in chapter 11?
- 9) Why do you think that God providentially reminded you of these things today?

Read Hebrews 12.

- 10) For the encouragement of your discussion group, share a testimony about how God has used a particular hardship to discipline you.

- 11)** Read Hebrews 12:18-21 in the context of Exodus 19:10-21 and Hebrews 12:22-24 in the context of Psalm 2:6, Revelation 19:1-9, and 21:1-7. Which descriptive words in Hebrews 12:18-24 highlight the difference between living under the old covenant and living in the new covenant?
- 12)** What future scenario is described in Hebrews 12:25-29? Once you have thought about this, spend a few minutes in prayer, obeying the exhortation in verse 28 and using its words, and record how this verse impacted you.

Read Hebrews 13.

- 13)** Which ideas in chapter 13 reflect specific teachings given in chapters 1-12 (include verse numbers)?
- 14)** Summarize the subject matter of each of these verse groupings and make notes about anything the Holy Spirit prompts you to act upon.
- a) Verses 1-3, 16
 - b) Verse 4
 - c) Verse 5
 - d) Verses 7, 17
 - e) Verses 9-14
 - f) Verse 15
- 15)** Jesus Christ is the focus of the book of Hebrews. His work supersedes and nullifies all religion, He is superior to all created beings (human or heavenly), He has provided a superior sacrifice, He is our supreme representative, and He has ushered in a superior covenant, the basis of our hope. Reread Hebrews 12:2. From what or whom do you need to shift your eyes toward Jesus?