

# HIGHER GROUND CALVARY CHAPEL SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

## New Testament Survey

### Lesson 5

#### The General Epistles: Hebrews—2 Peter, Jude

##### I. Hebrews: The Gospel As Told to the Jews

###### A. Author: (?)

- Always attributed to P. from an early date by the Eastern Church. No consensus on its authorship in the West until 397 at the Council of Carthage.
- Is not an epistle, per se, though Chapter 13 appears to be a short epistle appended to it (13:22), but more of a thesis with no mention of an author or an audience by name
- 2:2-4 seems to suggest someone other than Paul as the author. since it indicates the author was converted due to the testimony of the apostles (cf. Gal. 1:12).
- The title “To the Hebrews” (no author indicated) appears to be an early patristic addition.
- Possible authors other than Paul suggested from antiquity: Barnabus, Silas, Luke, Apollos, Aquila & Priscilla, Timothy (but see 13:23).

###### B. Dates: A. D. 67-69

- Conjectural, since the author unknown.
- Must have been written before the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple in AD 70, because of mention in the text of the Levitical sacrifices being current practice. AD 69 is a late date accounting for that fact, but too late for Paul who had been executed before Nero’s suicide in AD 68.
- Timothy had been in prison, so persecution is increasing.

###### C. Audience:

- None indicated. Addressed to a group, not an individual, but who the group or groups are is not entirely clear. Perhaps several audiences are in mind:
  - Palestinian Jews: Familiar with the Temple sacrifices
  - Jews of the Diaspora (Hellenic): All OT quotations are from the LXX
  - Believing Jews tempted to fall back into the Law
  - Interested Jews
  - Unbelieving Jews

###### D. Occasion (5:9-14):

- Believing Jews were looking back to the levitical priesthood and Temple sacrifices rather than moving forward to a complete understanding of the person and work of Jesus Christ as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek

###### E. Purpose (6:1): To encourage Jewish believers not to look back to the Law, but to go on to maturity in Christ

###### F. Subject and Theme: The Superiority of Christ over Judaism

###### G. Structure: Five Warnings

1. Against Drifting from the Word (2:1-4)
2. Against Doubting the Word (3:7–4:13)

3. Against Dullness Toward the Word (5:11—6:20)
4. Against Despising the Word (10:26-39)
5. Against Defying the Word (12:14-29)

H Outline:

- I. A Superior Person: Jesus Christ (1—6)
- II. A Superior Priesthood: Melchizedek (7—10)
- III. A Superior Principle: Faith (11—13)

II. James

A. Author (1 Corinthians 15:7, Galatians 2:7-9):

- Only James, the half-brother of Jesus, and James, the son of Alphaeus, seriously considered as possible authors. James, the brother of John, martyred early (Acts 12) and could not have written it.
- Not a believer during the Lord's earthly ministry (Mk 3:31-35, Jn 7:1-5)
- Jesus appears to him after His resurrection (1 Cor 15:7)
- An associate of the apostles (Gal 1:18-19)
- Prays in the upper room with the disciples while they waited for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14)
- Is referred to as one of "the pillars of the Church" (Gal. 2:7-9)
- Chosen to lead the Jerusalem church
- Presides over the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)
- Martyred A.D.61- 62 (Josephus).
- Nicknamed "Camel Knees"

B. Date: A. D. 45-50

- Earliest NT book written
- Seems to pre-date the Jerusalem Council

C. Audience:(1:1; cf. Acts 8:1 & ch. 12).

- Jewish believers scattered in areas of the Diaspora due to two recent persecutions in Jerusalem: after stoning of Stephen and under Herod Agrippa (Acts 8:1 and ch. 12).
- James uses the word "synagogue" in 2:2, instead of "ekklesia" (church).

D. Occasion and Purpose (1:2-4):

- Jewish believers experiencing problems in their personal lives and in their churches as a result of persecution. They also appear to misunderstand the gospel of grace—that "the faith that saves is also the faith that behaves."
- His purpose is to address these difficulties, exhorting them to right thinking and righteous living in the testing of their faith.

E. Subject: (1:22; 2:14, 17).

The practical side of justification by faith apart from works. Paul addresses our standing before God; James addresses our witness before the world. :The faith that justifies bears fruit in works.

F. Theme: Faith is proven by what it produces in the midst of testing.

G Structure:

Structure like the Book of Proverbs; jumps from subject to subject as he describes real world evidences of faith in response to various trials.

#### H. Outline:

- I. Faith is Tested (1:1-12)
- II. Faith Distinguishes Between Trials and Temptations (1:13-18)
- III. Faith Obeys the Word (1:19-27)
- IV. Faith Does Not Discriminate (2:1-13)
- V. Faith Works (2:14-26)
- VI. Faith Controls the Tongue (3:1-12)
- VII. Faith Demonstrates True Wisdom (3:13-18)
- VIII. Faith produces Humility (4:1-12)
- IX. Faith Seeks God's Will (4:13-17)
- X. Faith Does Not Trust in Riches (5:1-7)
- XI. Faith Waits on the Lord (5:8-12)
- XII. Faith Prays Earnestly (5:13-18)
- XIII. Faith Seeks Out Wandering Brothers (5:19-20)

#### III. 1 Peter

- A. Author (5:12): Peter, with the help of Silas as his secretary
- B. Date: A. D. 64. Rome burns in July A.D. 64.
- C. Audience: (1:1-2)
  - “to those who reside as aliens scattered throughout...” (NASB),
  - “to God’s elect, exiles scattered throughout...” (NIV),
  - “to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in...” (NKJV),
  - “to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in...” (ESV).
  - Does not use “dispersion” with the definite article as in James 1:1 (THE Dispersion), so being used in the more figurative sense of spiritual pilgrims, believing Jews and gentiles, whose citizenship is in heaven, who reside in Asia and Asia Minor.
- D. Occasion & Purpose (5:13): Christians scapegoated for the burning of Rome and persecution spreads to areas addressed in Peter’s letter. Written from “Babylon” probably code for Rome. Purpose is to teach believers there how to live victoriously in the midst of suffering, persecution, and death.
- E. Subject and Theme: (1:13-15, 4:12-13)
- F. Structure and Outline:
  - I. Remember God’s Grace and Salvation (1:1—2:10)
  - II. Live Out God’s Grace Through Submission (2:11—3:12)
  - III. Rely on God’s Grace When Suffering (3:13—5:14)

#### IV. 2 Peter

- A. Author: Had been one of the “disputed books” along with James, Jude, 2 & 3 John. Was accepted late.
- B. Date: A. D. 66-68.
  - After his first letter and the advent of Neronian persecution, but before that emperor’s suicide in A.D. 68.

- Tradition says that Peter martyred (crucified upside-down) in Rome during Nero's persecution.
  - Probably written from prison as he awaited execution.
- C. Audience: Same as in first letter, Asia Minor
- D. Occasion: He has become increasingly concerned about infiltration of false teachers into the churches of Asia Minor.
- E. Purpose:
- Writes to instruct Christians in how to defend against false teachers.
  - 1 Peter written to help suffering Christians,
  - 2 Peter written to expose false teachers.
- F. Subjects:
1. True Knowledge
  2. False Teachers
  3. The Inspiration of Scripture and Paul's Letters
  4. Reasons for the Delay of the Lord's Coming
  5. Future Destruction of the World by Fire
  6. The Importance of Godly Character
- G. Theme (1:2-3): How to Know God
- H. Structure and Outline:
- I. Know Your Salvation (1:3-11)
  - II. Know Your Scriptures (1:12-21)
  - III. Know Your Adversaries (2)
  - IV. Know Your Prophecy (3)

## V. Jude

- A. Author: (vs 1; Matt. 13:55)
- Did not believe in Jesus prior to His resurrection (Mk 3:20-21, Jn 7:2-5)
  - Like James, prays in the upper room with the disciples while they waited for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14)
  - Traveled on missionary journeys with the apostles, his other brothers, and their wives (1 Cor. 9:5).
- B. Date: A. D. 68-70
- Shortly after 2 Peter and influenced by it. Quotes 2 Peter 3:3, acknowledging it comes from an apostle (vss 17-18).
  - 2 Peter says false teachers are coming (2:1-2); Jude says they have come (vs. 4).
  - Prior to destruction of the Temple in A. D. 70.
- C. Audience: Unknown. Appears to be Jewish.
- D. Occasion (vss. 3-5a):
- Had intended to write about "our common salvation, but changed his mind in light of recent events.
  - False teachers have crept into the church
- E. Purposes:
1. To condemn the apostates

2. To urge his readers to contend for the faith

F. Subject & Theme: To contend for the faith (vs. 3).

G. Structure

1. A number of OT illustrations

2. Argues the apostates' corrupt character, rather than their doctrine, as evidence of their heretical ideas.

3. Condemns the false teachers using seven Old Testament examples:

1. Israel (5)

2. Fallen angels (6)

3. Sodom and Gomorrah (7)

4. Archangel Michael vs. Satan (8-10)

5. Cain (11)

6. Balaam (11)

7. Korah (11)

H. Outline:

I. Contend for the Faith (vss 1-4)

II. Consider False Teachers (vss. 5-16)

III. Continue to be Faithful (vss. 17-25)