

NATIONAL BIBLE COLLEGE

WARNINGS OF HEBREWS

Introduction

The Epistle to the Hebrews has been the subject of much debate over the years: Who wrote it? Where was it written? When was it written? But nothing has caused more discussion than the question, "For whom were the warnings intended and what was the danger to that group?"

Many interpretations have been suggested by some very fine Bible teachers. It is not our intention to discuss all of those views. We will present only one view, the one which seems to us best to fit the grammar and the historical setting of the Epistle. The student may (and should) secure other commentaries and examine their views as well.

Regardless of your background or your present leanings, please watch and listen carefully. Learn as many facts as you can. Listen to the reasoning. Then, make up your mind based not on "what I have always thought" or "was always taught", or even "what I have experienced;" but on **what the Bible teaches**.

There are twelve lessons in this study. They are thirty minutes in length. If you are meeting with a class, you will watch one tape at each meeting. You should be sitting at a place where you can take notes in this study guide. At the end of each lesson there are questions for discussion or reflection. Your leader will give you opportunity to address those questions. Please participate. Your opinion will be a valuable contribution to the learning process of the entire class. These lessons are available on six video tapes or six audio tapes, or DVD including one study guide, from the National Bible College.

So, open your Bible, your study guide and especially your mind and let's see what the Bible teaches about the Warnings of Hebrews.

NOTE: On some lessons there is overlap of material. One lesson extends into a new section. The next lesson will review that material and then start the new material. Normally the questions which cover the overlapped material will be found at the end of the second of the two chapters involved.

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Lesson 1

NOTE--This topic is much neglected because the warnings have been considered to be only for unbelievers.

1. This opinion was a result of a reaction.
2. It was also a result of poor typology.
3. It may have been a result of human nature.
4. It came also from our tendency to follow the leader.

Recently some men have seen Hebrews in a different light. They see these warnings to believers--not that they will lose their salvation but that, if they do not progress in the Christian life, there is chastening waiting for them.

The Popular Proponent:

The Theologian:

The Scholar who is an authority on languages:

Five Main Warnings:

1. Warning against drifting—Hebrews 2:1-4
2. Warning against disobedience—Hebrews 3:7-19
3. Warning against disbelief—Hebrews 4:11-13
4. Warning against degeneration—Hebrews 5:11-6:20
5. Warning against despising Christ—Hebrews 10:26-31

WARNINGS AGAINST DRIFTING
Hebrews 2:1-4

Background of the warning:

Purpose of the book:

He argues along 2 lines:

The Person of Christ

The Priesthood of Christ

After showing that Christ is better than the prophets who spoke to Israel and the angels who were in attendance at the giving of the law, He stops to warn these believers that what this greater one says is more important and that anyone who disobeys Him cannot escape.

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE WARNING—Hebrews 2:1

II. THE DANGER IS MEASURED BY THE AUTHORITY

A. It was dangerous to neglect the law.

1. Transgression

2. Disobedience

B. The law was only spoken by angels.

1. Galatians 3:19

2. Acts 7:53

3. Deuteronomy 33:2

4. Psalms 68:17

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 1

1. Is any part of the Bible written to unbelievers or is the entire Bible written to God's people?
2. Why do some people feel that the warnings of Hebrews are directed toward unbelievers?
3. What is the purpose of the book of Hebrews?
4. How is that purpose carried out in the book?
5. How do we know that angels were at the giving of the law?

Lesson 2

III. THIS MESSAGE HAS THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY

A. In its original pronouncement

B. In its convincing proclamation

C. In its miraculous confirmation

IV. THERE IS NO ESCAPE FOR THOSE WHO NEGLECT THIS MESSAGE

The meaning of "neglect"

Hebrews 2:3

II Peter 1:12

I Timothy 4:14

Apocalypse of Peter 15:30

Matthew 22:5

How do we neglect salvation?

Newell--Hebrews Verse-by-Verse pg. 40

1. Ceasing to give attention to the things of salvation: Bible reading, prayer, church attendance—Hebrews 10:25

2. Absorption in selfish, earthly interests

3. Deadness of heart toward Christ and His sacrifice

4. Occupation with the affairs of this world and not of the world to come and the coming Lord

5. Loss of God--consciousness

6. No thought of judgment to come

7. Living like the "beasts that perish" as far as eternity is concerned

What does this passage teach about further revelation?

Discussion or Reflection Questions for Lesson 2

1. What is the original pronouncement of the new message?
2. How was this message confirmed?
3. What does it mean to neglect the message of Jesus?
4. How do Christians neglect the message of Jesus?
5. What are the chances of further revelation from God for the church?

Lesson 3

WARNINGS AGAINST DISOBEDIENCE

Hebrews 3:7-19

Background of the warning:

After Hebrews 2:1-4 he resumes his argument.

Maybe he answers a hypothetical question here.

1. God's plan instituted—Hebrews 3:5-8a

2. God's plan interrupted—Hebrews 3:8b

3. God's plan implemented—Hebrews 3:9-18

I. THE EXAMPLE OF ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS—Hebrews 3:7-11

A. The sin—Hebrews 3:7-9

B. The sentence—Hebrews 3:10-11

II. GENERAL APPLICATION—Hebrews 3:12-15

A. What we are to do—Hebrews 3:12

B. How we are to do it—Hebrews 3:13

C. Why we are to do it—Hebrews 3:14

D. When we are to do it—Hebrews 3:15

III. THE SPECIFIC APPLICATION

A. The delivered ones provoked, (rebelled)—Hebrews 3:16

B. They sinned and were punished—Hebrews 3:17

C. Their disobedience brought rejection—Hebrews 3:18

D. Unbelief caused them to forfeit the rest—Hebrews 3: 19

Typology of Hebrews 3 and 4

1. It is obvious that we are being told not to follow Israel's example and thereby miss the rest. Rather, we are exhorted to enter into that land of rest.
2. It is equally obvious that we are not to enter into the physical land of Palestine.
3. In I Corinthians 10 Paul writes about these same events and states in verse 6 and 11 that "these things" were examples (types, Greek: Τυ/ποι) for us.
4. In I Corinthians 5:7 Paul calls Christ, our Passover.
5. Therefore, there must be something(s) in the Christian life which correspond to these experiences of Israel.

1. What is the hypothetical question answered in Hebrews 2:5-18
2. How is God's plan for mankind laid out in Hebrews 2?
3. What is the specific sin of Israel referred to in Hebrews 3?
4. What is our responsibility in light of Israel's sin?
5. Why should we look for typology in Hebrews 3 and 4?

Lesson 4

The following is a suggested correspondence in the individual Christian's life to experiences of that generation of Israel. (Read also Victorious Christian Living--Alan Redpath...Moody)

Israel (that generation)

1. Physical bondage

2. Passover Lamb
(preparation for redemption)

3. Physical Redemption
(crossing Red Sea)

4. Wandering in the
wilderness

The Hebrews and all Christians (individually)

1. Spiritual bondage—Ephesians 2:15

2. Christ our Passover—I Corinthians 5:7
(salvation accomplished)

3. Spiritual Redemption
(salvation applied)

4. Failure to enter into God's place
of maturity and service

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 5. Crossing Jordan | 5. Entering into God's place of maturity and service—Romans 6; 12:1-2 |
| 6. Physical land of Canaan | 6. Place of maturity and service (not heaven) — Ephesians 1:3 |
| 7. Fighting physical enemies | 7. Fighting spiritual enemies—Ephesians 6:12-13 |
| 8. Serve God in physical ways | 8. Serve God in spiritual ways |

NOTE: Even after Israel got into the land it was not theirs apart from obedience. Later, because of disobedience, they were taken out of the land (722 B.C. North; 586 B.C. South). Yet, the nation remained God's covenant nation.

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 4

1. How is our bondage to sin like Israel in Egypt?
2. Compare and contrast redemption accomplished and applied to Israel and to the individual Christian.
3. Why is "Canaan land" not a picture of heaven and the Jordan River not a picture of death?
4. What is the believer's "Canaan land"?
5. Is it possible for a believer to lose his position in his "Canaan land" after he has entered? Is this the same as losing his salvation?

Lesson 5

WARNING AGAINST DISBELIEF Hebrews 4:11-13

Background of the warning:

I. THE DUTY—Hebrews 4:11a

II. THE DANGER—Hebrews 4:11b

III. THE DECLARATION

A. The Word of God

B. The Eye of God

WARNING AGAINST DEGENERATION
Hebrews 5:11-6:20

Background of the warning:

I. HE SHAMES THEM—Hebrews 5:11-14

A. They were sluggish in perception—Hebrews 5:11

B. They needed to learn the fundamentals—Hebrews 5:12-13

C. They were immature in their discernment—Hebrews 5:14

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 5

1. What is the duty of the believer—Hebrews 4:11?
2. What danger is involved?
3. How does the Word of God try men?
4. How does the eye of God try men?
5. How do both of these trials picture the Judgment Seat of Christ?

Lesson 6

WARNING AGAINST DEGENERATION Hebrews 5:11-6:20

Background of the warning:

-----**(Review)**-----

I. HE SHAMES THEM—Hebrews 5:11-14

A. They were sluggish in perception—Hebrews 5:11

B. They needed to learn the fundamentals—Hebrews 5:12-13

C. They were immature in their discernment—Hebrews 5:14

-----**(End review)**-----

II. HE EXHORTS THEM—Hebrews 6:1-3
to leave the principal (foundational) things

A. Concerning conversion—Hebrews 6:1

1. Repentance from dead works

2. Faith resting upon God

B. Ordinances

1. Baptisms

2. Laying on of hands

C. Eschatology

1. Resurrection of the dead

2. Everlasting judgment

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 6

1. What is the connection between Hebrews 5:12 and 6:1?

2. In what ways were the Hebrews immature? How is that same trait shown in believers today?

3. Does leaving the foundational things mean forgetting about them? What does it mean to us?

4. Paul says there is one baptism. Why does the writer to the Hebrews say "baptisms"?

5. What did the Old Testament teach about eschatology?

Lesson 7

III. HE WARNS THEM—Hebrews 6:4-8

A. He describes a class of people.

1. They were once for all enlightened.

φωτισθε/ντας

2. They have tested the heavenly gift.

γευσσαμε/νους

a. Hebrews 2:9

b. Acts 10:10—(Luke 14:24; 9:27)

c. But—see Matthew 27:34

Context:

Book:

Author:

Time:

3. They have become partakers of the Holy Spirit.

Μετοχου--4 times in Hebrews

a. Hebrews 1:9

b. Hebrews 3:1

c. Hebrews 3:14

d. Hebrews 12:8

4. They have tasted the good Word of God.

5. They have tasted the powers of the age to come.

6. They have fallen away.

NOTE: All six of these participles are introduced by one article Του and are parallel to each other. Therefore # 6 cannot be hypothetical (conditional) by itself. (See diagram on pg. 41 and Grace Journal 2:2 pgs. 327-332 by John A. Sproule)

1. What does it mean to be once for all enlightened?
2. What does the word "tasted" mean? What part does context play in that meaning?
3. Discuss the usage of "partakers".
4. To what does the "powers of the age to come" refer?
5. What evidence indicates that this warning is addressed to believers?

Lesson 8

Παραπε/σοντας--only here in N.T.

Ezekiel 14:13

Ezekiel 15:8

Ezekiel 20:27

Ezekiel 22:4 (cf. 18 and 22)

B. He states a fact concerning them—Hebrews 6:6a

"It is impossible to renew them again to repentance."

"Renew to repentance" = to be saved

Either:

1. to be saved the first time
2. to be saved again after they have lost their salvation
3. to be saved again because they are already saved

C. He explains the fact—Hebrews 6:6b (see diagram next page)

Question: Do the participles modify (1) fall away or (2) renew to repentance?

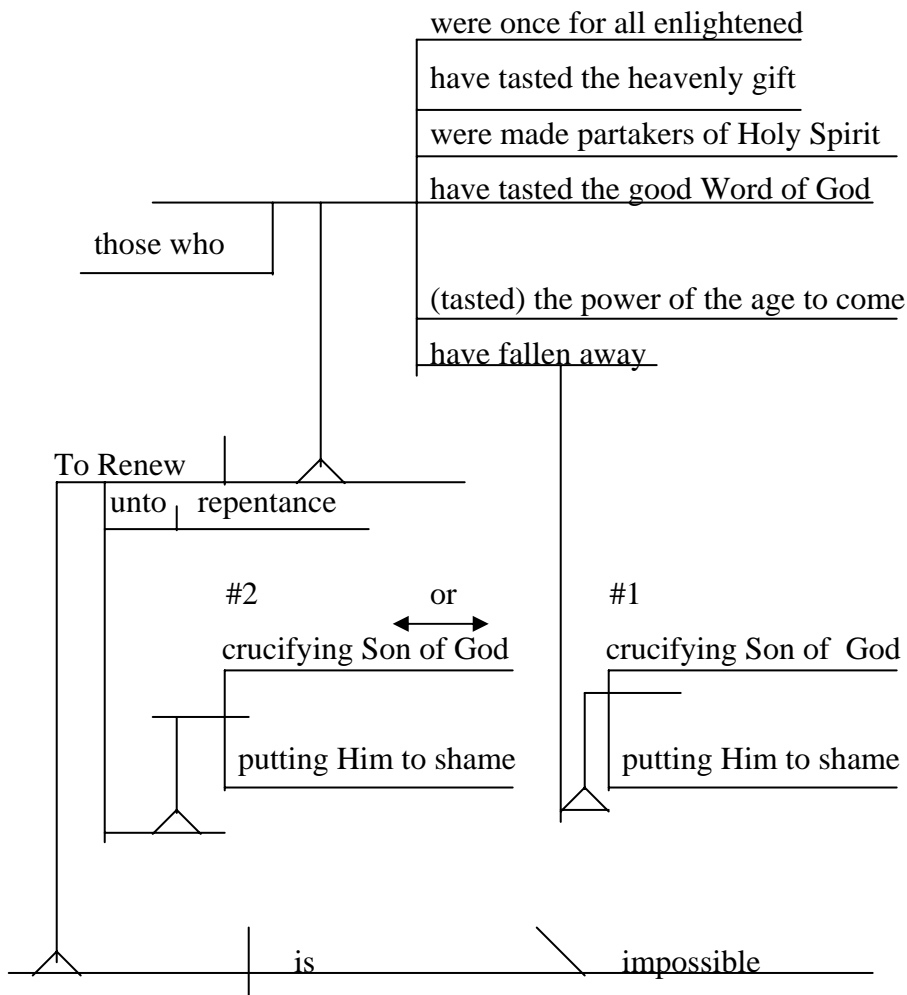
#1 K.J.V., N.I.V., N.A.S.B., N.K.J.V.
Since they crucify Christ, etc.

Seeing they crucify Christ, etc.

#2 Ryrie, Biblical Theology of the N.T.

Alford, Greek N.T. volume 2, p. 111

Diagram of Hebrews 6:4-6



Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 8

1. How does Ezekiel's usage of "fall away" help in determining the meaning of that word in Hebrews 6?
2. What is the impossibility?
3. What verb do the participles "crucifying" and "putting to shame" modify? Why?
4. Explain the repentance of verse 6.
5. What application can be made from Hebrews 6 to the believer today?

Lesson 9

Conclusion:

1. The warning is to true believers.
2. They have backslidden.
3. It is impossible for them to be saved a second time and start over.

D. He illustrates the fact from nature—Hebrews 6:7-8

1. The good land brings forth good products—Hebrews 6:7
2. The bad land brings forth bad products—Hebrews 6: 8
 - a. It is rejected.
 - b. It is near to a cursing.
 - c. Its end is to be burned.

IV. HE ENCOURAGES THEM—Hebrews 6:9-20

A. By his persuasion concerning them—Hebrews 6:9-12

B. By his persuasion concerning God—Hebrews 6:13-20

1. God gave an immutable promise to Abraham—Hebrews 6:13-15
2. He added His immutable oath to it—Hebrews 6:16-18
3. Both the promise and the oath give us great consolation—Hebrews 6:19-20
 - a. Because we serve the same God
 - b. Because we are included in the covenant

WARNING AGAINST DESPISING CHRIST
Hebrews 10:26-39

Background of the warning:

1. The greater priest
2. The greater covenant
3. The greater sanctuary
4. The greater sacrifice

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 9

1. If someone asked you for a concise explanation of Hebrews 6:4-6, how would you answer?

2. How does the illustration from nature help in the interpretation?

3. What does "rejected" mean? Can it happen today?

4. Explain God's promise and oath? How do they help us?

5. How are the other Old Testament covenants related to the Abrahamic?

Lesson 10

Practical Exhortation—Hebrews 10:19-39

To enjoy freedom and fellowship—Hebrews 10:19-25

1. Three things we have
2. Five things we are to do

I. THE POSSIBILITY—Hebrews 10:26a

II. THE PROSPECTS—Hebrews 10:26b-27

- A. There is no sacrifice for sins.
- B. There is a fearful prospect of judgment.
- C. There is a prospect of fiery indignation.

III. THE PEOPLE--BELIEVERS (various verses)

- A. "We," v.26, indicates that the writer is included. (Obviously, he is a believer)
- B. The reader was "sanctified by the blood of the covenant"—Hebrews 10:29

C. Previous context is obviously to believers—Hebrews 10:19-25

D. They have a better and enduring substance—Hebrews 10:34

E. Casting away confidence could result in loss of reward.—Hebrews 10:35

F. They need patience in order to receive the promise from doing the will of God—
Hebrews 10:36

G. They are said to be "not of those who draw back to perdition"—Hebrews 10:39

H. They are of those who are believing to the preserving of the soul—Hebrews 10:39

IV. THE PRINCIPLE—Hebrews 10:28-29
(a fortiori--from the lesser to the greater)

A. It was dangerous to despise Moses' Law—Hebrews 10:28

B. It is more dangerous to despise Jesus' sacrifice.

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 10

1. Did the Old Testament believers have any of the "three things" that New Testament believers have?

2. Could Old Testament believers do any of the "five things" that New Testament believers are exhorted to do?

3. How can there not be a sacrifice for sins for the believer?

4. Does God judge believers?

5. Discuss the evidence which has been given to show that the people being warned are believers.

Lesson 11

V. THE EXPLANATION—Hebrews 10:30-32

A. God judges His people as well as others—Hebrews 10:30

1. God says, “Vengeance belongs to me”—Hebrews 10:30a

2. The Lord will judge His people—Hebrews 10:30b

B. God's judgment is a fearful thing—Hebrews 10:31 (II Samuel 24)

Discussion and Reflection Questions for Lesson 11

1. What light does David's experience throw on the judgment of God's people today?

2. Does God still judge His people? What are some N.T. examples? What are some present day examples?

3. Does Hebrews 12:1 refer to former believers observing us running our race for the Lord? Why or why not?

4. What are some "weights" which some carry around today?

5. If all our sins have been forgiven, why does God chasten?

Lesson 12

INTRODUCTION: Exhortation: "Let us run the race."—Hebrews 12:1-2

- A. Having a great cloud of witnesses
- B. Putting aside the weight
- C. Putting aside the sin
- D. Looking off away unto Jesus

ENCOURAGEMENT CONCERNING CHASTENING—Hebrews 12:3-17

INTRODUCTION: —Hebrews 12:3-5

I. CHASTENING SHOWS THAT WE ARE SONS—Hebrews 12:6-8

- A. It comes from the Father's love—Hebrews 12:6
- B. It comes from the Father's concern—Hebrews 12:7-8

II. CHASTENING COMES FOR GOD'S PURPOSES—Hebrews 12:9-17

A. Chastening is for our profit—Hebrews 12:9-10

B. Chastening is for our progress—Hebrews 12:11

C. Chastening is for our protection—Hebrews 12:12-17

1. From defeat—Hebrews 12:12-13

2. From defilement—Hebrews 12:14-15

3. From default—Hebrews 12:16-17

Romans 12:1-2

I Corinthians 15:58

1. How does chastening show that we are children of God?
2. What is chastening of God designed to do for us?
3. From what does chastening protect us?
4. If we defaulted, what difference would it make?
5. Does the example of Esau teach that a believer can lose his salvation? Why or why not?