

The Letter to the Hebrews 2018

Halley's Bible Handbook says just as the Letter to the Romans was addressed to the Christians at the Gentile capital of the world, Rome, we have the Letter to the Hebrews addressed to the Christians at the Jewish capital of the world, Jerusalem.

While the Authorized Version claims Paul wrote the Hebrew Letter. The Hebrew Letter itself claims no author. Yet, the author certainly understood the OT scriptures and quotes them often.

The Eastern Church has always accepted Paul as the author while the Church in the West took a few hundred years to come to that conclusion.

In Hebrews 13:23 Timothy is said to be with the author. If indeed Paul the Apostle were writing this letter to the people in or around Jerusalem, he might not want to attach his name to the letter for fear the Jewish people might not read it.

Most modern-day scholars will say that only God knows for sure who wrote this letter. And while that is said, there seems to be little doubt that this letter belongs in the NT cannon, along with the other 26 books found there.

The date of its writing we estimate to be before AD 70 since the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem is not spoken of. Had the temple at Jerusalem been destroyed before the letter was written, it is believed the destruction of the temple would be spoken of in great detail!

The purpose of the letter appears to be to prepare the people for the coming destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem. After many Jews accepted Jesus as their Savior, they continued to be zealous in their observance of temple rites and sacrifices. Remember, many believed Jesus would soon return and set up an earthly Kingdom, headquartered at Jerusalem.

One of the teaching of Hebrews is that animal sacrifices observed by Jewish Christians were no longer needed as Christ was the one-time sacrifice for all sin. The shedding of blood by an animal was no longer needed to push back the sins of the people as Christ's sacrifice atoned for all sin of all time.

Think of how their thinking and world view was changed by the destruction of the temple at the hand of the Romans in AD 70. Hebrews 1:1-4 is one of the grandest passages found in your Bible telling us of how God spoke through His Son, Christ, in these final days.

If you like history you will enjoy the journey with the author through the passages of the OT, showing us again and again of the superiority of Christ over all the OT images compared to Him.