

Why Would They Quit?

As we consider the book of Hebrews we must consider the question of why. Why would they quit Christianity and return to the outdated system of the law of Moses and Judaism?

Tired of Torment: The Jews did not give up on persecuting the church. Saul had reformed, but the priests had not. Many Jews looked on the church as a contamination of the righteousness of the old law. They hated Christians. Those who were Christians may have grown tired of the persecution and sought to quit Christ and go back to Judaism to avoid the torment.

Fond of Family: Jesus warned of divisions that would take place within the family. When some obey the Gospel they become separated from those who do not. The friction in the home may have caused many of the Christians to want to return to having peace in the family. As parents age, siblings die, and children develop; we get a strong yearning to return to the home life we once enjoyed.

Fear of Future: When the Israelites wished to return to Egypt it was partially because of the fear of what was ahead. They had a fear of the unknown like most of us. They did not know what happened to Moses at one point. They did not know the wilderness they wandered in. They did not know where they would get water and food to feed their families. The familiar past always seems more enticing when we do not know what lies ahead. The Hebrew Christians likely wrestled with similar concerns as the civil unrest and the Roman armies became more threatening.

Failure of Faith: Ultimately the problem is one of a weak faith. They did not believe in Jesus well enough. When people go back to the world, a denomination, or to Judaism; it is because they do not trust in the Lord and His power to deliver them.

Ron Roberts

Mooreville church of Christ

720 N. Indianapolis Road

Mooreville, IN 46158

May 26, 2019

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship

5:00 p.m. Worship

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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Elders: Randy Allen and
Ron Roberts

Moorevillecoc.com

Announcements

We rejoice over the addition of Phoebe Sam to our number. Please add her information to your directories 2481 Ascent Way, Apartment 410, Plainfield, IN 46168 phone: (804) 888-2947

Our annual singing is Friday. We will meet at 7:00.

We express our sympathy to the Stanley family after Opal's passing.

Dewey is in Millers. He should be there for a few weeks. He is limited in the use of his arm because of the new pacemaker. He is doing well.

We will be switching to trimesters for the downstairs classes in September. The sign up sheet is on the board. You can sign up for the shorter period of July and August if you prefer.

Remember Jill, Julie, Marcia and Shelby's daughter in your prayers for good health.

A gift does
not benefit us
until we
receive it

The Book of Hebrews

Ron Roberts

The adult class will begin studying the book of Hebrews on Wednesday evenings after our current study is completed. I thought a little preview of the book might be helpful.

The first thing we normally note about the book is that the author is not identified. Some are adamant about the author being Paul. The Apostle was expert on the Old Testament law, but it can be argued that he signed all of his other letters. Why not this one? Others feel it may have been Barnabas or Apollos. They too would be familiar with the old system. Barnabas was a Jew. Apollos was a scholar of the Scriptures. Arguments could be made for Luke, the beloved historian, as well. The Holy Spirit is actually the author. The penman who copied down His information will have to remain a mystery.

The receivers of the letter were Christians who had come out of Judaism and were contemplating returning to it. This is particularly valuable to us because many Christians today seek to return to their past after they are converted. Some start to miss the denomination they grew up in. Some start to yearn for the worldly practices they used to enjoy. The unique thing about these Hebrew Christians was that they were going back to a system God had authorized in the past. It was not a man made doctrine like Mormonism. The Jews used to be God's people and lived under the law He gave to Moses. However, the law of Moses has been replaced with the Gospel. The law was not intended to be everlasting. It ended at the cross, and now the church is God's people. The old law was a bridge between the promise given to Abraham and the fulfillment of it in Jesus. It was temporary in God's design.

The epistle emphasizes the superiority of Jesus to anything the Jews had in the Old Testament. Jesus is a better priest, a better king, a better sacrifice, and a better prophet. The covenant was better. The tabernacle was better. The promise was better. There was no reason to go

back from the treasure they had gained in the Gospel. Nothing in the old system compared. It reminds us of the Israelites desire to return to Egypt when the land of promise lay before them. The desire to return to something less valuable instead of pushing ahead was pointless.

The book was written about AD 66. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70 was on the horizon. Those who trusted in the law of Moses and sought a miraculous deliverance would be destroyed. Those who were faithful to Jesus would heed His instructions and flee the city to safety. You can find this warning in Matthew 24.

Wilkinson and Boa (Talk thru the Bible) outline the book this way.

The Superiority of Christ's Person: 1:1-4:13

Over Prophets 1:1-3

Over Angels 14-2:18

Over Moses 3:1-4-4:13

The Superiority of Christ's Work: 4:14-10:18

Better Priesthood 4:14-7:28

Better Covenant 8:1-13

Better Sanctuary and Sacrifice 9:1-10:18

The Superiority of the Christian's Walk of Faith 10:19-13:25

Assurance of Faith 10:19-11:40

Endurance of Faith 12:1-29

Exhortation to Love 13:1-17

Conclusion 13:18-25

Familiarity with the Old Testament would be a great help in understanding the book of Hebrews. The writer makes reference to the Old Testament priests, tabernacle, sacrifices, and covenant. He talks of Old Testament characters like Abraham, Moses, Enoch, and Melchizedek. He makes comparisons of what they knew in the past to what they need in the future.

I look forward to directing the study (probably starting in September if the Lord wills). I appreciate the one who suggested the book and welcome other suggestions for future studies.