

BETTER THINGS | V. 9-12

- V. 9 - The writer turns to an encouragement toward the recipients of the epistle. Though the nation may be destroyed, this group will not be forgotten of God, and receive the salvation of the book of Hebrews whether in this age or at the resurrection of the dead
- Vv. 10-12 – The writer praises the recipients of the letter and prays for them.
  - Problem: . if the salvation of v. 9 is taken to be salvation in the age of grace, then such salvation becomes a product of **work and labor**.
    - Note that this is spoken in the plural, to a group. It is talking about “group salvation,” which is impossible if the subject is salvation to heaven (and the opposite would be impossible if the subject is salvation to the Kingdom).
      - When the Bible talks about salvation to heaven, it speaks in individual terms. Compare Mark 13:13, John 3:16-18, Romans 10:13, 1 Cor 3:15
    - Harm in interpretation is done by those who are unable to recognize that there is more than one gospel and more than one salvation.
      - There is only ONE Gospel which saved individuals to heaven.
      - This does not mean there is only one “good news” that “saves” a person or nation from some ill or danger unrelated to heaven and hell.
  - Prayer: Their diligence toward the full assurance of hope
    - The word **diligence** is from the Greek *σπουδω* [*spouden*], which is not only an earnest and diligent zeal, but involves the speed at which something is done. This fits with the time-pressure element in the purpose of Hebrews, the author longing for the salvation of Israel before the ultimate withdrawal of Kingdom possibilities in their age. "While a promise remains" they should be "quickly diligent." See Mark 6:25 and Luke 1:39 for the same word.
    - Literally, "full assurance of THE HOPE."
- What is "the hope?"
  - Jeremiah 17:13 says the Lord (YHWH) is "the hope of Israel." The context is the coming Kingdom.
  - Zech 9:12 speaks of the "prisoners of the hope," in a Kingdom context.
  - Acts 23:6, Paul says He is "on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead."
  - Acts 26:6 speaks of Paul as standing trial for "the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers" and "the hope of Israel."
  - Acts 28:20 Paul says he is chained "for the sake of the hope of Israel." In its context is the kingdom of God (note v. 23).
  - A number of non-Jewish epistles speak of "the hope of...," but it is used outside the context of "the hope," which is kingdom related (note Gal 5:5, Eph 1:18, Titus 1:2)
  - Hebrews 6:18-19 speak of "the hope set before us." The hope of vv. 18-19 must, by context, be the same as in v. 11. (see note, vv. 18-19).
  - Conclusion: "the hope" is the Messianic hope, which is the establishment of the Davidic Kingdom (see Acts 1:6). Thus, the writer desires a "godspeed toward the full assurance [reality] of the Kingdom."

- Verse 12 - There is no inheritance involved in the promise of salvation in Christ. It has nothing to do with family lineage nor law (the word "inherit" is *kleronomeo*, meaning "the one designated by law." By the law of God, Israel is the inheritor of the promises.

#### BETTER ASSURANCE | VV. 13-18

- The nation will inherit "the promises" (v. 12). One of those promises is mentioned in v. 13 (compare Luke 1:73-74). A second promise was to David, as noted in Acts 2:30.
  - God swore about this promise to Abraham. God is referred to as "swearing" a number of times in the Bible. Hebrews contains more references to this than any other book. For a study of this issue, look to Luke 1:73, Acts 2:30, Hebrews 3:11, 18; 4:3, 6:13,16, 7:21.
  - How did Abraham, "patiently wait?" See Romans 4:17-25, especially v. 20.
  - How did Abraham "obtain the promise?"
    - Hebrews 11:39 says that Abraham did not receive the promise –but these are reference to a different promise.
    - In v. 15, the reference is to offspring, namely, Isaac.
- Verse 17 - Literally, "to show the heirs...the unchangeableness of His plan," God did swear.
  - As in v. 12, the promise is considered "inheritable," and thus is not a promise of individual salvation.
  - Rather, the promise of God is the Kingdom to Israel.
  - To assure the "inheritors" that such promise would never change, God "interposed" with an oath (that is, inserted an oath between the promise and the inheritors.)
    - The word **confirmed** is μεσιτεύω [mesiteuo] – to insert something in the middle as confirmation.
- The two unchangeable things of v. 18 are
  - The **immutability of his counsel** (v. 17).
  - The oath which God interposed
- Those who have taken refuge are literally, "we who have fled off to hold the hope lying before us would have strong encouragement."

#### THE NATURE OF THE HOPE | VV. 19-20

- It is certain
- It is firm
- It enters into the veil
  - Enter can best be viewed as "extends into"
  - Thus, this hope (to which the Hebrews have fled to hold onto), takes them into the very presence of God.
  - Jesus is the "forerunner" for the Hebrews – having gone into God's presence (behind the veil) in advance.