

# **In Defense of the Book of Hebrews**

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## **IN DEFENSE OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS**

Recently the Letter to the Hebrews has come under attack in some quarters of the Hebraic Roots movement. Among those better known Messianic leaders to question the validity of the Letter to the Hebrews is Monte Judah. The following is a response to some of the things Monte Judah has said about this very important book of the Scriptures.

### **THE HEBREW ORIGIN OF HEBREWS**

Monte Judah starts with a completely false premise saying:

The book [Hebrews] is really an epistle (a letter) entitled to the Hebrews, but... the writing and logic is Greek. It was written in Greek, quoting from Greek copies of the Scriptures, and using Greek definitions to explain and teach Hebraic things.

First of all the Book of Hebrews was originally written in Hebrew not in Greek.

Although the Greek version of the Epistle to the Hebrews has become the standard text used in Christendom, the "Church Fathers" of Christendom openly admitted that the Letter to the Hebrews had been originally written in Hebrew and was later translated into Greek.

Eusebius in the fourth century referred to a now lost writing by Clement of Alexandria written around the year 200 C.E. which Eusebius cites as follows:

In the work called Hypotyposes, to sum up the matter briefly he [Clement of Alexandria] has given us the abridged accounts of all the canonical Scriptures, the Epistle to the Hebrews he asserts was written by Paul, to the Hebrews, in the Hebrew tongue; but that it was carefully translated by Luke, and published among the Greeks. (Clement of Alexandria; Hypotyposes (c. 200 CE) referred to by Eusebius in Eccl. Hist. 6:14:2)

And Eusebius himself testified:

For as Paul had addressed the Hebrews  
in the language of his country; some say  
that the evangelist Luke, others that Clement,  
translated the epistle.  
(Eusebius (4th Cent.); Eccl. Hist. 3:38:2-3)

Finally Jerome wrote of Hebrews:

He (Paul) being a Hebrew wrote in Hebrew,  
that is, his own tongue and most fluently  
while things which were eloquently written  
in Hebrew were more eloquently turned into Greek.  
(Jerome (4th Cent.); Lives of Illustrious Men, Book V)

In 1537 Munster published Hebrew Matthew which he had obtained from the Jews (this Hebrew text was very similar to the Hebrew Matthew published in 1553 by Jean DuTillet). Twenty years later, in 1557, a second edition of Munster's Hebrew Matthew was printed, this time also containing the complete Hebrew text of the Letter to the Hebrews in an appendix. This second edition went largely unnoticed and was soon forgotten. It has since been printed in parallel columns with an English translation and is available at <http://www.lulu.com/nazarene>

It is important to note that the criticism that the Book of Hebrews has recently received has been aimed at the Greek text of Hebrews and not at the original Hebrew text of the book.

## **IS HEBREWS ANTI-NOMIAN?**

Monte Judah writes:

Let's conduct our own examination of the book of Hebrews to see if the author was "pro-Torah" using just a few clips of the writer's presentation.... He wrote that there must be changes to the Law of Moses (Heb 7:12) because the priesthood has

changed from Levite to Melchizedek....let's ask some fundamental questions at this point.

These are the questions that should cause you to pause and question whether this book is consistent with the rest of the Scriptures. ... Do we believe that some of the commandments given in the Torah should be changed?

He basis this on the Greek version of Hebrews 7:12 which reads:

For the priesthood being changed,  
there is made of necessity a change also of the law.  
- Heb. 7:12 KJV (from the Greek)

However the word for "change/changed" here in the Hebrew is SHENISHTANA from the verb root SH-N-H (Strong's 8131) meaning "to repeat, to do a second time" thus the Hebraic Roots Version reads:

It is saying that according to which there is a repetition of the office of the priesthood, of necessity it is saying there is a repetition of the Torah.  
- Heb. 7:12 HRV

In the original Hebrew there is no indication that the Torah or any of its commandments are changed, only that they are repeated. This repetition is all part of the renewal of Torah which is a primary paradigm of the Book of Hebrews in the original Hebrew.

Monte Judah also keys in on Hebrews 7:18:

For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.  
Heb. 7:18 KJV from the Greek

However the Hebrew actually reads:

To me in this there was a carrying away of the first by a weak work and by drunkenness and that which is not worthy for use.  
-Heb. 7:18 HRV from the Hebrew

The Hebrew word for "carrying away" is GISTAL'KAH. Jeremiah uses a form of this same word to describe the Babylonian captivity (Jer. 29:1, 4, 16, 20, 31; 46:19; 48:7, 11; 49:3). The "carrying away" here is that of the Babylonian captivity and the curse which has come upon Israel for having failed collectively to observe Torah as a people (see Deut. 28-29 and Lev. 26). The Torah promises that if after this curse comes upon us, we repent and turn back to Elohim as a people, he will regather us and renew the covenant with us (Deut. 30 and Jer. 31:31f). Hebrews is saying that a "carrying away" resulted from our failure to observe the Torah thus creating the need for a repetition of the Torah through a repetition of the priesthood.

Monte Judah however sees these passages of Hebrews as leading up to a renouncing of Torah in Hebrews 8:13 where the Greek has:

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old.  
Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish  
away.

- Heb. 8:13 KJV from the Greek

Judah writes:

All of these statements were put forth by the writer to support his conclusion that the Old Covenant was "obsolete," "becoming obsolete," "growing old," and "ready to disappear" (Heb 8:13).

However this is not at all what the Hebrew text of Hebrews says here. It reads:

And according to that which he said 'renewed covenant' he has antiquated the first to that which has put on antiquity and in coming days behold he offers that which is longed for.

- Heb. 8:13 HRV from the Hebrew

In the Hebrew text the idea here is that Israel has (by violating Torah) antiquated the Torah but that the days are coming when the the renewal of Torah that had been longed for would come.

The Hebrew word for "longed for" here is SHEY'KAMAH (Strong's 3642) meaning "to long for"; "to become pale" or "to vanish away". The Greek translator misunderstood this word as meaning "to vanish away" but in the Hebrew it clearly means that the renewal of the Torah was "longed for".

## **INCENSE IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES**

Monte Judah maintains that there are mistakes in the Book of Hebrews. One passage which he maintains is a mistake is Hebrews 9:3- 4 of which he writes:

There is a problem with this passage. ... 'And behind the second veil, there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden altar of incense...' [(Heb. 9:3-4)] This part is not correct as written. The altar of incense is in the first sanctuary with the lampstand and table, not in the Holy of Holies with the Ark of the Covenant.

While it is true that the "golden altar of incense" is outside the veil, the context here is that of the Day of Atonement (as we see in Heb. 8 where the High Priest is in the Holy of Holies). On the day of atonement the High Priest would take incense from the golden altar of incense and place it in the Holy of Holies (Lev. 16:12-13) so that Hebrews, in telling us that the Holy of Holies "had" the golden altar of incense because it was being filled with incense from that altar.

## **BLOOD OF THE COVENANT**

Monte Judah also finds fault with Hebrews 9:19-21 saying:

His [the author of Hebrews] description sounds authoritative and precisely detailed. But it is not accurate when compared to the Scriptures he seems to be referring to. And more confusion is created in the minds of those who would take the time to review the facts. Actually, there are two events being spoken of here, not one as the writer is suggesting. The first event was when Moses came down from the mountain, recounting the

Torah. The second was approximately a year later, after the tabernacle was set up at its inauguration. ... these were two different events, even though they are improperly combined by the writer, ... The writer says that Moses used the blood of calves and goats. He used water, scarlet wool, and hyssop. He sprinkled the book and the people. He goes on to say that Moses also sprinkled the tabernacle and its vessels with blood. ... The writer of Hebrews has made a much bigger mistake here than the placement of the altar of incense in the Holy of Holies we described earlier. Moses did not use the blood of goats; he used only the blood of bulls (calves). Moses did not use water, scarlet wool, or hyssop. Moses did not sprinkle the book; he read the book to the people and he sprinkled the altar and then he sprinkled the people. ... The writer also wrote that Moses also sprinkled with blood the tabernacle when it was established. So he makes another mistake.

Now let us examine each of these "mistakes":

First Judah complains that the author of Hebrews has "improperly combined" two events. Now the passage in question begins with the phrase "For IN THE DAY which Moses wrote to the people the words of YHWH in the Torah..." (Heb. 9:1 HRV). This passage is very similar to Jer. 31:32 "...the covenant which I made with their fathers IN THE DAY that I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt...". By Monte Judah's logic one could also argue that Jeremiah "improperly combined" the exodus from Egypt with the giving of Torah some fifty days later. These were two separate events. The Hebrew word YOM which is normally translated "day" can also have a much broader meaning referring to periods of time other than just 24 hours. This is the case in Jer. 31:32 and it is also the case in Heb. 9:1.

Secondly Judah complains that Hebrews mentions goats being offered while Exodus only mentions bulls being offered. While it is true that the KJV and some other versions mention goats in this passage, the original text of Hebrews made no such mention of goats. The Hebrew text of Hebrews and the Aramaic Peshitta and CPA texts of



Hebrews all lack the phrase "and goats" in Heb. 9:19. The phrase is also lacking in the oldest copy of Hebrews (P46) as well as many other Greek copies (8<sup>c</sup>; K; L 181; 1241; 1739).

Monte Judah's third objection is that Exodus 24 only mentions blood, not water, scarlet wool or hyssop. Judah seems to believe that any detail included in Hebrews that is not recorded in the Torah must be a mistake. However there are many places where the books of the "New Testament" mention details of Torah events which are lacking in the written Torah itself. For example 1Cor. 10:4 states that the rock in the wilderness followed Israel. This detail is lacking in the written Torah but is found in the Midrash (B'midbar Parshat Chukkat (Num. 20:16-2a)). 2Tim. 3:8 includes the detail of the names of Pharaoh's magicians. These names are not found in Exodus but are found in the Targum, the Talmud and the Book of Jasher. Jude 1:9 records a conflict between the angel Michael and HaSatan over the body of Moshe, while the Torah records no such conflict. Even the other books of the Tanak record details of Torah events which are not found in the written Torah. The Psalms record that Joseph was kept in fetters while imprisoned in Egypt (Ps. 105:17-18) a detail lacking in the Torah. Therefore why should it be a problem for Hebrews to include details in Torah events that are lacking in the written Torah?

In fact the Talmud records a tradition that the sprinkling with blood at Sinai was accompanied by a sprinkling of the waters of purification:

R. Johanan said to Resh Lakish: It is right according to me who infer from the Consecration; for this agrees with what we are taught: 'On both of them [the Priests] we sprinkle throughout the seven days [water] from all the sin-offerings that were there'; but according to you who infer from Sinai, was there any sprinkling done on Sinai? — But according to your own reasoning, it would not be right either, for in the consecration [ceremony the sprinkling was done with] blood, whereas here with water? — That is no difficulty.

For R. Hiyya taught: 'The water takes the place of blood', but according to you, was there any sprinkling on Sinai? — He answered: It was a mere additional provision.

(b.Yoma 4a)

This tradition is recorded in a section of Talmud which discusses the use of these waters to purify the High Priest before the Day of Atonement

ceremony. This water was a special water which had added to it the ashes of the red heifer (see Num. 19). These were the ashes of a red heifer burned with hyssop and scarlet wool (Num. 19:6).

Moreover Josephus records a tradition that Moses sprinkled the people with the waters of purification at the funeral of Miriam:

Moses purified the people after this manner:

He brought a heifer that had never been used to the plough or to husbandry, that was complete in all its parts, and entirely of a red color, at a little distance from the camp, into a place perfectly clean. This heifer was slain by the high priest, and her blood sprinkled with his finger seven times before the tabernacle of God; after this, the entire heifer was burnt in that state, together with its skin and entrails; and they threw cedar-wood, and hyssop, and scarlet wool, into the midst of the fire; then a clean man gathered all her ashes together, and laid them in a place perfectly clean. When therefore any persons were defiled by a dead body, they put a little of these ashes into spring water, with hyssop, and, dipping part of these ashes in it, they sprinkled them with it, both on the third day, and on the seventh, and after that they were clean. This he enjoined them to do also when the tribes should come into their own land. (Josephus, Antiquities, 4:4:6)

Monte Judah's fourth objection is that Exodus 24 does not mention any sprinkling of the book.

Again we should repeat, it is not a problem for Hebrews to include details of Torah events which are not to be found in the written Torah.

There is in fact a basis in the Hebrew to conclude that both the people and the book were sprinkled.

The Torah says:

And Moshe took half of the blood, and put it in basins;

and half of the blood he dashed upon the alter.  
And he took the book of the covenant,  
and read in the hearing of the people;  
and they said: 'All that YHWH has spoken will we do, and  
obey.'

And Moshe took the blood, and sprinkled it upon the people,  
and said: 'Behold the blood of the covenant,  
which YHWH has made with you in agreement with  
all these words.

(Ex. 24:6-8)

The phrase translated "in agreement with all these words" may also be translated "upon all these words". Moreover the first rule of Eliezer tells us that the Hebrew particles *AF*, *GAM* and *ET* indicate an inclusion or amplification. The Hebrew word *ET* has no parallel in English (it points to the next word as a direct object) but if we were to include it in the English it would read as follows:

And Moshe took half of the blood, and put it in basins;  
and half of the blood he dashed upon the alter.  
And he took the book of the covenant,  
and read in the hearing of the people;  
and they said: 'All that YHWH has spoken will we do, and  
obey.'

And Moshe took *ET* the blood, and sprinkled it upon the  
people, and said: 'Behold the blood of the covenant,  
which YHWH has made with you upon  
all these words.

(Ex. 24:6-8)

Since the word *ET* indicates an inclusion, the parallel phrases "upon the alter"; "upon the people" and "upon all these words" would imply that the blood was upon all three of these.

## **THE JEWISH PARADIGM IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS**

Monte Judah writes:

...the writing and logic [of Hebrews] is Greek. It was written in

Greek, quoting from Greek copies of the Scriptures, and using Greek definitions to explain and teach Hebraic things.

Now we have already demonstrated that the Book of Hebrews was written in Hebrew and that the Greek version is only a translation from the original Hebrew.

In addition the logic of Hebrews is very Hebraic and not at all Greek. This book, more than any other, uses Jewish Hermeneutics and forms of Midrashic Exegesis to formulate its arguments.

In fact the entire Book of Hebrews is an extended Homiletic Midrash on Psalm 110. This extended midrash is made up of five sub-midrashim. Each of these midrashim are in a special form of midrash known as a proem homiletic midrash. This is a form of Midrashic exegesis which utilizes Hillel's second rule (g'zara sheva -equivalence of expressions) to tie together two passages, present a drash (exposition) and then close by quoting a third verse which also ties through a phrase and which helps summarize the results of the exegesis.

These five proem homiletic midrashim which make up the Book of Hebrews are as follows:

I. THE MESSIAH HUMBLD AND EXALTED (1:1-3:6)  
(YHWH said to my Adonai, sit at my right hand. Ps. 110:1a)

A. Initial texts: (Heb. 1:5-13)(Ps. 2:7; 2Sam. 7:14; Deut. 32:46/Ps. 97:7; Ps. 104:4; Ps. 45:6, 7; Ps. 102:25-27; Ps. 110:1)

B. Exposition (1:14-2:5)

C. Second Text: (2:6-8a) (Ps. 8:4-6)

D. Exposition: (2:8b-3:6)

II. THE WORLD YET TO BE SUBJECT TO HIM (3:6-4:13)  
(until your enemies are made your footstool Ps. 110:1b)

A. Initial text:(3:7-3:11) (Ps. 95:7-11)

B. Exposition (3:12-4:3)

C. Second text (4:4) (Gen. 2:2)

D. Exposition (4:5-14)

### III. A MIDRASH ON MELCHIZADEK (4:14-7:28)

(A priest forever after the order of Melchizadek Ps. 110:4)

A. Introductory exposition (4:14-5:5)

B. Initial text: (5:6) (Ps. 110:4)

C. Exposition (5:7-11)

D. Parenthetical (5:12-6:12)

E. Second text (6:13-14) (Gen. 22:17)

F. Exposition (6:15-7:28)

### IV. THE PRIEST AT THE RIGHT HAND OF YHWH (8:1-9:28)

(Ps. 110:1 and Ps. 110:4 brought together)

A. Introductory exposition (8:1-7)

B. Initial text (8:8-12) (Jer. 31:31-34)

C. Exposition (8:13-9:19)

D. Second text (9:20) (Ex. 24:8)

E. Exposition (9:21-9:28)

### V. IN DEFENSE OF THE TEMPLE CEREMONIES (10:1-11:40)

- A. Introductory exposition (10:1-4)
- B. Initial text (10:5-7) (Ps. 40:6-8)
- C. Exposition (10:8-14)
- D. Second text (10:15-17) (Jer. 31:33-34)
- E. Exposition (10:18-35)
- F. Third text (10:36-38) (Hab. 2:3-4)
- G. Exposition (10:39-11:40)

In this first section Paul begins his commentary on Ps. 110:1 by showing that the Messiah was exalted and therefore was first in a humbled state. Paul begins with a very complex Proem Homiletic exegesis. He begins by citing six passages (2Sam. 7:14; Deut. 32:43/Ps. 97:7/Neh. 9:6; Ps. 104:4; Ps. 45:6-7; Ps. 102:25-27 and Ps. 110:1) which he uses the fourth rule of Hillel: Binyan av mish'bey k'tuvim "Building of the father [that is a rule] from two (or more) texts" to build a rule that The Messiah is of a higher order than angels (Heb. 1:4-14). Paul then gives an exposition using the first rule of Hillel (shown below in the commentary). Next Paul links these texts to Psalms 8:4-6 with Hillel's second rule (g'zara sheva "equivelence of expresions") using the key phrases: "angels" and "the works of your hands" as well as the concepts "crowned" and "you have put all things in subjection under his feet." Paul then gives a concluding exposition.

In his second midrash Paul gives a Proem Homiletic Midrash on Psalm 95:7-11 and Gen. 2:2 in Hebrews 3:7-4:10 (using the keywords "day"; "works"; and "rest") which is launched by the phrase if we hold fast the boldness and the boasting of his hope until the end correlating it with Psalm 95:8. Using g'zara sheva (Hillel's second rule) in this Proem Homiletic Midrashic Exegesis, Paul ties God's "works" in Ps. 95:9 with his "works" in Gen. 2:2 and his "rest" in Ps. 95:11 with his rest in Gen. 2:2. Paul also ties "today" (Lit. Heb. "the day") in Ps. 95:7 with "day" Gen. 2:2. The sabbath "rest" that is yet to come is the time

which Ps. 110:1 says "till I make Your enemies your footstool." In other words, Paul has made a case that the Messiah's current position is at the right hand of the throne, and that he will remain there until the time of the Millennial Kingdom. This is important because Paul wants to address the issue of what the Messiah is actually doing at the throne until the Kingdom comes.

In his third midrash Paul introduces Ps. 110:4 to his discussion. He creates another Homiletic Midrash on Ps. 110:4 (Heb. 5:6; 7:17, 21) ; Gen. 22:16-17 (Heb. 6:13-14) and Gen. 14:17-20 (Heb. 7:1-2) using the keywords "swear", "Melchizadek", "priest", and "bless."

Paul argues Melchizadek is greater than Levitical Priests because he blessed Abraham and the better always blesses the lesser (7:1, 7). Also, he argues, Abraham, who was Levi's great-grandfather (and therefore his elder) paid tithes to Melchizadek (7:1, 5, 9). Paul also indicates that both the Levites (through the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants) and Melchizadek, are priests because of Elohim's making an oath. Thus he argues that Yeshua can be a priest after the order of Melchizadek without being a Levite (7:13-15).

In his fourth midrash Paul ties the ideas of Ps. 110:1 and 110:4 together. The Priest in the Holy of Holies implies the Day of Atonement (the only time the High Priest ever enters the Holy of Holies). With the Day of Atonement ceremony as the setting (Lev. 16), Paul presents a Homiletic Midrash on Jer. 31:31-34 (Heb. 8:8-11); Ex. 24:8 (Heb. 9:20) and Is. 53:12 (Heb. 9:28) using the keywords: "sins" and "covenant." The keyword "swore" in the previous Midrash referred in Heb. 6:13-14 = Gen. 22:16-17 to the Abrahamic covenant. Paul had noted that the oath of Elohim in Ps. 110:4 also therefore implied a covenant as well (7:20-22). Since Ps. 110:1, 4 implies the Day of Atonement ceremony (since they place the priest in the throne room) and since it speaks of a time when the Messiah's enemies are made his footstool (the Kingdom), Paul keys this oath with the New Covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 in which sins are forgiven and the Kingdom is established. He cites Ex. 24:8 = Heb. 9:20 using the keyword covenant to argue that such a covenant must be sealed with blood. Citing Is. 52:12 (in Heb. 9:28) with the key word "sins", he argues that since the Messiah bears these sins it is his blood which seals the New Covenant.

In his fifth midrash Paul, having just made use of the Day of Atonement Temple ceremony, speaks out in favor of the Temple ceremonies. He does this by giving a Proem Homiletic Midrash on Ps. 40:6-8 (Heb. 10:5-9); Jer. 31:33-34(Heb. 10:16-17) and Hab. 2:3-4 (Heb. 10:37-38) using the keywords "pleasure/will"; "come"; "Law in the heart" "sin" and "[no] offering." Paul begins this midrash by quoting Ps. 40:6-8 (Heb. 10:5-10). Paul ties this passage to Jer. 31:34 (Heb. 10:16-18) based on the key words SIN and IN THEIR HEARTS (which appears in Ps. 40 but is truncated off in Paul's quote) and [no] OFFERING. Finally, Paul concludes by quoting Hab. 2:3-4 (Heb. 10:37-38) through the key words HE WHO IS COMING and HAS NO PLEASURE. I believe Paul's source here is the Aramaic of the Peshitta Tenach, for it is only here that the word "pleasure/will" is the same in Ps. 40 and Hab. 2:4 and the LXX does not agree with the wording of Hab. 2:3-4 = Heb. 10:37-38.

The context of Heb. 10 is that Paul has just discussed Yeshua in relation to the Yom Kippur ceremony in Heb. 8 thru 9. Then in Heb. 10:1-3, Paul argues that the sacrifices continue as a remembrance. Paul then opposes those who oppose the Temple and encourages Temple attendance (Heb. 10:25). The keywords tell us what Paul's subject is: The offerings, and what is and is not pleasing to Elohim. Paul argues that the end of offerings for sin in Ps. 40:6-8 and the placing of the law in the heart (Ps. 40:8) tie Psalm 40:6-8 to the New Covenant in Jer. 31:34 which has yet to occur. To Paul, Ps. 40 describes a time when sin offerings will not be offered because sin will not be remembered, all of this because Elohim does not have pleasure in sin offerings because they result from sin which he will, when the New Covenant is fully realized, forget. Thus the offerings will end with the coming of the New Covenant (Heb. 11:18 see also Heb. 8:13). Paul closes by citing Hab. 2:3-4 (giving what seems a polemic against the interpretation given in the Hab. commentary at Qumran) All of this Paul ties to the [second] coming of the Messiah and the establishing of the New Covenant.



## **The Blood Covenant Paradigm in Hebrews**

Monte Judah writes:

By introducing the death of the one who made it into this paragraph, the writer of Hebrews has just defined the New Covenant as being a last will and testament rather than being an agreement between God and man. But the New Covenant described by Jeremiah (31:31-33) using the word brit is not a testament or will left by a dead person. It is an agreement, a covenant between God and His chosen one people. The writer has switched the meanings to make a Hebrew covenant into a Greek will and testament.

Like many others, Monte Judah has completely misunderstood Hebrews 9:16-17 and the overall paradigm of the Book of Hebrews.

Judah wrongly believes that the topic of Hebrews 9:16-17 is that of a "last will and testament". However the concept of basing inheritance on such a document is a hellenistic idea. In Jewish law inheritance is divided evenly among the sons, except for the firstborn who gets a double portion. It has nothing to do with what someone writes on a piece of paper.

Hebrews does not refer to a last will and testament, but to the inheritance rules related to the ancient Jewish custom of making a blood covenant.

When two people entered into a blood covenant they became members of each others house including heirship rights. There are two good examples of the making of such a covenant in the Tanak. The first is to be found in Gen. 31:43-54 (between Ya'akov and Lavan) and 1Sam. 18:1-4 (Between David and Jonathan). It was through his blood covenant with Jonathan that David inherited the throne of Saul. David had a covenant with Jonathan making him Jonathan's joint heir, when Saul and Jonathan died in the same battle, David inherited the throne. In the same way we have a covenant with the Son of the King, when the son of the king died, we were his joint heirs.

This inheritance is the theme of the Book of Hebrews. Paul's topic is the Blood Covenant and Inheritance. He shows that the Messiah was "made heir of all things" (1:2, 4) and the "firstborn" (1:6;12:23) (an inheritance term, see note to 12:23). He shows that the oath which made Abraham's seed the chosen people was a covenant (6:13-14), and that the oath which makes the Messiah a priest after the order of Melchizadek (7:20-22) is the renewal of the Covenant (Heb. 7:22; 8:6-13). He also shows that this is a blood covenant sealed with the Messiah's blood (Heb. 8 & 9). Paul argues that because of this covenant relationship, we have an inheritance (9:11-22). Since we are blood covenantors with the Messiah who is heir of all things (i.e. the Kingdom (1:13; 2:5-9) we inherit with him (1:14; 2:10-18; 9:11-22; 12:23). To Paul this inheritance is the "rest" of Ps. 95:7-11 (Heb. 4:9). A rest which has not yet been entered (4:9-10), an inheritance covenant promise like that of the Abrahmic Covenant (6:13-20) but with its promise yet to be received (11:39-40).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Book of Hebrews was written in Hebrew according to the Hebraic Paradigm. In this book Paul makes use of Jewish rules of Hermeneutics in order to interpret the Hebrew Tanak as it had come down to him. This book is a most valuable writing among those of the books of the Ketuvim Netzarim (known commonly today as the "New Testament").

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## **The Great Torah Debate**

Can you answer the strong Christian claim that the Torah has been abolished?

Do you know about Dispensationalism and why Christians believe the Torah is not for today?

On November 10th and 17th of 2004 Messianic Jews and Christians gathered together in Arlington Texas for:

The Great Torah Debate: Is the Torah for Today?

This was perhaps the first time a Nazarene/Messianic Rabbi had ever publicly debated with a Christian Pastor on this topic.

Messianic/Nazarene Rabbi James Scott Trimm of Beit Netzarim Congregation in Hurst Texas argued "Yes-- The Torah is for today."

Christian Pastor Mark Carr of Arlington Community Church in Arlington Texas argued "No-- The Torah is not for today."

The Great Torah Debate is now available on DVD at:  
<http://www.lulu.com/nazarene>