

Set in Stone

Introduction

Joshua 24:27, 1 Kings 8:9 are two scriptures that are not necessarily prominent in themselves but nevertheless they yield remarkable insights into **“the scripture of truth”** Daniel 10:21 according to 1 Corinthians 2:13 **“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”**

The insights from Joshua 24:27, 1 Kings 8:9 are *set in stone* because these scriptures focus on *stone*. In reality that stone is the Stone of Matthew 21:42 **“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”**



www.pbase.com/jamesnesbitt/image/111623765/medium

Joshua 24:27

“And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God” Joshua 24:27.

Dr Ruckman states in the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 376 that all audio tape material comes from ground rock and that iron oxide, chromium oxide and computer chips come from sand, silicon and germanium, all from stones. He states that sound-sensing equipment in 1993 could pick up sound waves from stone twenty-four hours after the sound had been broadcast.

That revelation gives further *technological* insight into Luke 19:40 **“And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”**

1 Kings 8:9

Stone Contents

“There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt” 1 Kings 8:9.

Note first that for *saved* individuals **“...that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you...”** 1 Corinthians 3:16 and therefore just as **“the two tables of stone”** dominated the ark **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”** Colossians 3:16.

Note then that to help confirm his status and credibility for his readers as **“an Hebrew of the Hebrews”** Philippians 3:5 Paul, who *did* write the Book of Hebrews, see attached study **The Book of Hebrews; Second Advent, “God,” Author, Patriarch, Israel** pp 5-8, gives the complete inventory of the original contents of the ark in Hebrews 9:4 **“the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.”**

Fate of the Missing Contents

It has been noted that it would have been possible insofar as centuries elapsed between Moses and Solomon for the pot with manna and Aaron's rod to have been removed though it isn't stated explicitly in scripture how this happened. Attempts by the Israelites to do so would have been fatal because the ark could be a lethal device as shown in 1 Samuel 6:19 **"And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter."**

One possibility is that given **"...the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months"** 1 Samuel 6:1 even though they did not try to scrape off the gold layer on the ark's exterior, the Philistines removed the pot with manna insofar as the pot was made of gold, very attractive to Gentiles in particular and Aaron's rod, being obviously a very striking artefact for anyone not governed by 2 Corinthians 5:7 **"(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"** Maybe they sent the manna and the rod to the universities of **"Ashdod...Gaza...Askelon...Gath...Ekron..."** 1 Samuel 6:17 for forensic analyses and got nothing because **"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God..."** 1 Corinthians 1:21. It is possible indeed mandatory that unlike **"the men of Bethshemesh"** God spared the Philistines when they ransacked the ark because **"the times of this ignorance God winked at"** Acts 17:30.

That would explain why God did not strike down the Philistines when they manhandled the ark but He did so when an Israelite did, or tried to.

"And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain" 1 Samuel 4:11.

"And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God" 2 Samuel 6:6-7.

Stone Contents Disdained

The Philistines left **"the tables of the covenant"** 1 Kings 8:9 alone because they were worldly men like most men today and had no use for **"the scripture of truth"** Daniel 10:21 even after their experiences of 1 Samuel 5-6. They just wanted rid of it, **"the ark...the two tables of stone"** 1 Kings 8:9 and they were satisfied when they had got rid of it by returning it to the Israelites as revealed in 1 Samuel 6:16 **"...when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day."** This is like the lifelong atheist George Bernard Shaw who said in his will of the copy of the King James Bible that he possessed that he had retained it only as a curiosity, that it was a most undesirable possession and that he wanted rid of it. According to Dr Ruckman in the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1396 Shaw's copy of the AV1611 was sold at auction for \$50 after Shaw's death.

Shaw's attitude permeates **"...the body of Christ, and members in particular"** 1 Corinthians 12:27 today in large part because **"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"** Galatians 5:9.

Missing Contents Superseded

Dr Ruckman states in the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 522 on 1 Kings 8:9 that the reference is prophetic in that Israel will have no need for manna in the Millennium because **"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt"** Amos 9:13 in that **"the hills shall flow with milk"** Joel 3:18.

It should be understood that King Solomon's reign is a type of the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 515 and:

www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/968

www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/h/a/i/hailord.htm Crüger

*Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
To take away transgression, and rule in equity...*

*He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.
Before Him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,
And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow...*

*Kings shall fall down before Him, and gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him, His praise all people sing;
For He shall have dominion o'er river, sea and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion or dove's light wing can soar*

and these scriptures:

“And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life...And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon” 1 Kings 4:21, 25.

“Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son...He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him” Psalm 72:1, 6-11.

“For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” John 5:22.

Dr Ruckman then states that Israel will have no need of Aaron's rod because **“now is Christ risen from the dead”** 1 Corinthians 15:20 **“...the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus”** Hebrews 3:1.

Stone Contents Permanent

However Dr Ruckman states further that **“the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments”** Exodus 34:28 remain and are permanent – though we don't have them inscribed in tablets of stone as such, see remarks below on Exodus 34:1, 28 - because **“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”** Matthew 24:35, with Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33.

Note in turn that insofar as **“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)”** 2 Corinthians 5:7 God saw to it that tangible evidence of the miraculous i.e. the manna, Aaron's rod, was providentially removed from the ark i.e. leaving no chance for them to be venerated as objects of worship. Concerning **“the two tables of stone”** 1 Kings 8:9 note these scriptures:

“And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God...And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables” Exodus 31:18, 32:16.

“And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount” Exodus 32:19. Note that *all* of the Ten Commandments are liable to be broken in anger and that *all* of the Ten Commandments are liable to be broken at a dance. See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 159.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest...And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments” Exodus 34:1, 28.

Exodus 31:18, 32:16, 19, 34:1, 28 show that the first set of **“the tables of the covenant”** 1 Kings 8:9 bore evidence of the miraculous being given directly to Moses by God, Exodus 31:18 and **“written with the finger of God”** Exodus 32:16 in that they would therefore have borne no evidence of either a cutting tool or **“a graving tool”** Exodus 32:4 and would therefore have been vulnerable to veneration as objects of worship. However, providentially they were destroyed – **“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee”** Psalm 76:10 – and replaced by tables where *Moses* cut out the tables, Exodus 34:1 and **“And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments”** Exodus 34:18, that is, *Moses* wrote the words *not* God but *Moses* did so at *God’s* dictation.

The second set of tables would therefore *have* borne evidence of a cutting tool and **“a graving tool”** and in turn would have been perceived as man-made in a material sense and therefore *not* vulnerable – or not as vulnerable - to veneration as objects of worship. *Nevertheless it was as though they were* **“written with the finger of God”** Exodus 31:18 *because God said* **“I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest”** Exodus 34:1. *Moses* was *God’s amanuensis* – see remarks above - like *Tertius* was *Paul’s amanuensis* for the Book of Romans. **“I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord”** Romans 16:22.

The lesson is that today we don’t have stone tablets but instead we have a *Book* that is man-made in a material sense and it’s not ‘the original’ but Exodus 31:18, 32:16, 19, 34:1, 28 show us that it is *still* **“the book of the LORD”** Isaiah 34:16 **“the scripture of truth”** Daniel 10:21 **“written with the finger of God...and the writing was the writing of God...”** Exodus 31:18, 32:16 because **“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”** Matthew 24:35, with Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33.

The question arises, how is it that God doesn’t reveal the above items to the modern-versionist ‘originals-onlyists’ that this writer knows of but He reveals them to a rank-and-file KJB believer? Perhaps the answer to that question lies in the only recorded event in the Gospels that made the Lord Jesus Christ joyful. This writer trusts that it makes readers joyful. See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1255.

“At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” Matthew 11:25.

“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight” Luke 10:21.

Conclusion

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” 2 Corinthians 3:3.

The Book of Hebrews; Second Advent, “God,” Author, Patriarch, Israel
“What saith the scripture?” Romans 4:3

See Dr Ruckman’s commentary *The Book of Hebrews, Introduction, Preface, Chapters 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 10, 13*, his article *The Big Flap* and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 34, 629, 957-958, 1067, 1161, 1234, 1286, 1367, 1432, 1434, 1457, 1458, 1466, 1598-1599, 1601, 1603-1607, 1609-1612, 1657 for details. Some most significant aspects of Hebrews follow.

The Most Important Event, 2nd Advent

**“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come,
and will not tarry”**
Hebrews 10:37



“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints” Jude 14
“Wherefore comfort one another with these words” 1 Thessalonians 4:18
Says it all. www.idolphin.org/Sadvent.html

“The most high God” Hebrews 7:1

“God...at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets” Hebrews 1:1.

Hebrews exalts **“the most high God.”** It is the only Book of scripture that begins with the word **“God.”** That beginning in itself is a pointer to Paul as the author of Hebrews.

This writer believes, for reasons to follow, that Paul wrote Hebrews 1-12 soon after his conversion in about 35 A.D. That date would make Hebrews the first New Testament Book written and attach a special significance to the Book beginning with the word **“God.”**

Note that the word **“God”** appears 1367 times in the New Testament, almost half of which are in Paul’s Epistles if Hebrews is included; 568 times Romans-Philemon with 72 times in Hebrews. Paul clearly has a particular emphasis on **“God.”** It would not be surprising therefore to find that, with Hebrews as Paul’s first Letter and the earliest Book of the New Testament, Paul would begin the Book of Hebrews with the word **“God.”**

It therefore appears that, *historically*, even if not chronologically, God wanted the *first* New Testament word written as it appears now in English to testify to *Himself* as in Genesis 1:1 **“In the beginning God.”** If so, that is entirely proper, in this writer’s view.

The Most Likely Author, Paul *“the forerunner”* Hebrews 6:20

The scripture shows that Paul is definitely *“the forerunner”* for the authorship of Hebrews:

- *The writer’s use of the word “God” Hebrews 1:1*
See remarks under *“The most high God” Hebrews 7:1* and Paul’s use of the word *“God”* that testifies to Paul as *“the forerunner”* Hebrews 6:20 for writing Hebrews.
It should be noted that Paul has the word *“God”* in the opening verse of each New Testament Epistle stated to have been written by him with the exception of Philippians and Philemon i.e. in 11 out of 13 Epistles. That is a considerable emphasis.
- *The writer’s heart for Israel, Romans 9:1-3, 10:1*
God’s concern for Israel shapes Paul’s concern, another pointer to Paul as the writer of Hebrews i.e. *“to the Jew first”* Romans 1:16. *“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh...Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved”* Romans 9:1-3, 10:1. Paul’s heart for Israel makes him *“the forerunner”* for writing Hebrews.
- *The writer’s reference to God’s promise that Sara would give birth, Hebrews 11:11*
“For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son” Romans 9:9 with Romans 4:19-20 and Galatians 4:22-23.
- *The writer’s mastery of “the Jews’ religion” Galatians 1:14*
Paul *“...profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers”* Galatians 1:14. No-one could write Hebrews better than Paul on the basis of Old Testament understanding.
- *The writer’s apparent identity as “an Hebrew of the Hebrews” Philippians 3:5*
Paul was *“an Hebrew of the Hebrews”* Philippians 3:5. Who else could write Hebrews better than Paul – for God’s and His people’s gain, not Paul’s, Philippians 3:7?
- *The writer’s reference to “conscience” Hebrews 9:9, 14, 10:2, 22, 13:18*
The term *“conscience”* occurs 32 times in the New Testament and 21 times in Romans-Philemon i.e. Paul’s known letters. It is overwhelmingly a Pauline expression.
- *The writer’s reference to “the God of peace” Hebrews 13:20*
The expression *“the God of peace”* is wholly Paul’s. It occurs 5 times in scripture, the other 4 times all in Paul’s known letters; Romans 15:33, 16:20, Philippians 4:9, 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
- *The writer’s reference to “our brother Timothy” Hebrews 13:23*
As will be explained, the content of Hebrews 1-12 suggests that Paul wrote those chapters soon after his conversion, in approximately 35 A.D. Paul then appears to have added Hebrews 13 almost thirty years after writing Hebrews 1-12, towards the end of his life and ministry, as the reference to *“our brother Timothy”* Hebrews 13:23 shows. Note especially *“Timothy our brother”* 2 Corinthians 1:1, Philemon 1, *“Timotheus our brother”* Colossians 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 3:2 matching Hebrews 13:23.
- *The writer’s unchanged identity, from Hebrews 1-12 to Hebrews 13*
Paul’s authorship of Hebrews 13 must make him *“the forerunner”* Hebrews 6:20 for having written the rest of the Book, in that in the known Pauline Epistles, any direct contribution from another writer is specified. See Romans 16:22 and the salutation by Tertius. *“I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.”*

- **“The token in every epistle” 2 Thessalonians 3:17**

2 Thessalonians 3:17-18 refer to **“The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”** Paul’s **“token”** in his letters was the grace that he extended to his readers that also denotes that he was the author. Peter, 1 Peter 5:14 and John, 3 John 14, by contrast, extended **“peace.”**

This token with respect to **“grace”** may be found at or near the end of all of Paul’s other letters known to have been written by him. Therefore note especially Hebrews 13:25. **“Grace be with you all. Amen”** identical with Titus 3:15.

Paul therefore clearly wrote Hebrews 13 according to his token of grace to his readers, again making him **“the forerunner”** Hebrews 6:20 for the authorship of Hebrews.

Paul’s authorship of Hebrews 13 is why the King’s men entitled the Book *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews*. What follows further is the most compelling piece of evidence to show that Paul wrote Hebrews 1-12 *early in his conversion i.e. 35 A.D.*

- **Paul a type of “the man child” Revelation 12:13**

Paul is like **“the man child”** in several respects. See www.timefortruth.co.uk/bible-studies/alan-oreillys-studies.php Hebrews 1 Study, God, Paul, Melchisedec, Israel pp 10-12 and the Summary study p 4. Crucially, Paul is the only New Testament writer to be in the wilderness, like the man child. Note that in what follows **“The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD”** is **“the man child”** Revelation 12:13.

“Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness. The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen” Lamentations 4:19-20.

Note now the scriptures that show Paul in the wilderness like **“the man child”** Revelation 12:13.

“as the Arabian in the wilderness...thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness” Jeremiah 3:2. Despite the negative connotation Paul was **“as the Arabian in the wilderness”**:

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace...I went into Arabia” Galatians 1:15, 17. Note also the reference to Paul’s physical birth as **“a man child”** Revelation 12:5.

Paul appears then to have used his time in Arabia early in his conversion to write Hebrews 1-12 **“to the Jew first”** Romans 1:16 to prepare him for **“the time of Jacob’s trouble”** Jeremiah 30:7, when Israel is in **“the wilderness”** Revelation 12:14. Note that the Book is written to Hebrews, not Hebrew Christians or Christian Jews etc.

The association therefore between **“the man child”** Revelation 12:13 during **“the time of Jacob’s trouble”** Jeremiah 30:7, Paul and aspects of Hebrews 1-12 on salvation during **“the time of Jacob’s trouble,”** to be addressed, show that Paul is the **“the forerunner”** Hebrews 6:20 for writing Hebrews. *He is definitely best man for the job.*

Lessons for the Christian – Paul, best man for the job, God’s calling and faithfulness

God calling Paul to write Hebrews shows the Christian that whatever his calling, **“according to the power that worketh in us”** Ephesians 3:20, *he, like Paul, is the best man for it.*

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” 2 Corinthians 9:8.

Paul’s writing of Hebrews spanned his lifelong 30-year ministry, *proving that God is faithful:*

“And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” 2 Timothy 4:18.

The Most Royal Patriarch, “Melchisedec, king of Salem” Hebrews 7:1

“**Melchizedek**” Genesis 14:18 most closely matches Shem, the second son of Noah, Genesis 5:32, 10:21. Melchisedec is an outstandingly spiritual man and so is Shem:

- *Shem is particularly devoted to blessing God*

Shem above all the patriarchs merits the title “**priest of the most high God**” Hebrews 7:1 as Genesis 14:18 declares that “**he was the priest of the most high God.**” That follows from Noah’s prophecy in Genesis 9:26 “**And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem**” and Melchisedec’s blessing of God in Genesis 14:20. “**And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.**”

- *Shem can fulfil Hebrews 7:3 via a priesthood, even though not as an individual*
“Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.”

Paul therefore draws a contrast between Melchisedec and “**the Levitical priesthood...the order of Aaron**” Hebrews 7:11. The Aaronic priesthood of necessity is not “**without descent**” as Hebrews 7:23 shows. “**And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death**” in contrast to the priesthood of the Melchisedec or Shem and indeed of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as Hebrews 7:24 states. “**But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.**”

Note that, for now, Melchisedec, or Shem, “**made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.**” He does not as “**every priest standeth daily ministering**” Hebrews 10:11. He may however resume his priestly role at the Second Advent to bring repentant Gentiles to the Lord according to Psalm 65:2 “**O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.**” See later on the term “**priest**” in Hebrews.

- *Shem is the ruling patriarch at the time of Abraham*

Shem survived the flood, Genesis 8:18 and lived 600 years, Genesis 11:10, 11. Genesis 11:12-26 show that Shem outlived Abraham by 35 years and Abraham would have known Shem all his life. It would be fitting that “**this man...unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils**” Hebrews 7:4 was Shem, who “**received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises**” Hebrews 7:6. See again Genesis 14:20 “**And he gave him tithes of all.**”

- *Shem was the progenitor of the Semitic peoples and therefore Abraham’s progenitor*
 See Genesis 11:10-26 with respect to “**the generations of Shem.**” Abraham would have perceived Shem as his elder and “**better**” and it would be fitting that Shem as Melchisedec “**blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth**” Genesis 14:19 insofar as “**without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better**” Hebrews 7:7.
- *Shem was therefore the progenitor of them to whom “were committed the oracles of God” Romans 3:2, namely “the Jew” Romans 3:1*
- *Shem would therefore be a secret name for Melchisedec, like Emmanuel, Whose name was secret*

“**And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?**” Judges 13:18. “**Thou shalt call his name JESUS...Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us**” Matthew 1:21-23 with Isaiah 7:14.

Lesson for the Christian – Shem the secret name of Melchisedec, a Study in Humility

If Melchisedec was Shem, then Shem, whose name is therefore secret, typifies the Lord Jesus Christ Who is identified as ***“Immanuel”*** in the Old Testament, Isaiah 7:14, 8:8 but Whose name ***“JESUS”*** Matthew 1:21 is secret in the Old Testament, Judges 13:18. That similarity suggests that Shem was a man of ***“lowliness of mind”*** Philippians 2:3, not wanting attention drawn to him in Genesis 14:18-20 but to Melchisedec as *typifying “Immanuel” of Whom Psalm 110:4 later prophesies “The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”* See also Hebrews 7:17, 21. Shem would therefore be a humble man who could say with David ***“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory”*** Psalm 115:1. The Christian, like Shem, should be a man of ***“lowliness of mind”*** Philippians 2:3 and follow Psalm 115:1.

If the question arises is it important to know who wrote Hebrews or who Melchisedec was, it is if lessons in God’s calling and faithfulness, grace abounding, giving God glory and ***“lowliness of mind”*** are important.

The Most Favoured Nation, Israel

Israel – Subject of a Transitional Book

Like Matthew and Acts, Hebrews is a *transitional* Book. The transitional nature of those scriptures may be illustrated with reference to the manner of salvation as set out in the early and later chapters of the Book of Acts.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” Acts 2:38 i.e. water baptism is necessary for salvation.

“And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith...But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they” Acts 15:8-9, 11 i.e. water baptism is no longer necessary for salvation. Acts therefore clearly shows the transitional nature of some scriptures.

Matthew takes the reader from the Old to the New Testament, Acts from Israel to the Church and Hebrews from the Church Age to the time of ***“great tribulation”*** Matthew 24:21 of the End Times, when ***“...he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved”*** Matthew 24:13 i.e. salvation at that time is conditional on faith *and* works, as Hebrews also sets out. See Hebrews 2:3, 3:6, 14, 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 10:26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39; 24 verses on faith *and* works Tribulation salvation.

Faith *and* works Tribulation salvation comes into effect *after* the Lord returns for the Church, as 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 show. The 24 faith and works Hebrews verses apply *after* that. The designated intended recipients of Hebrews *doctrinally* are therefore *Jewish Tribulation saints*, Revelation 7:14, *not Christians*. See for example Hebrews 1:1 with respect to ***“the fathers”*** and related verses Hebrews 3:9, 15-19, 4:1-8. ***“The fathers”*** are the forbears of the *Jewish* nation, *not the Church*. Paul uses them to point the *Jewish* readers to Israel’s wilderness experiences *which she will undergo again in “these last days”* Hebrews 1:1.

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her...and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt” Hosea 2:14-15 with Revelation 12:14. The fulfilment of Hosea 2:14-15 is yet future i.e. in ***“these last days”*** Hebrews 1:1.

That said, as a transitional Book, Hebrews does contain Christian doctrine with respect to salvation. Hebrews 2:9 for examples refers to ***“Jesus...by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”*** That is Church Age Christian doctrine like 2 Corinthians 5:15 ***“And that he died for all.”*** See also Hebrews 2:10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 9:12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18,

24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 10:12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 38; 24 verses with Romans 1:17, 3:24, 5:8, 9, 10, 6:23, Galatians 3:11 giving the Book contemporary Church Age application *but the main setting of Hebrews is Israel's future wilderness experience as Hosea 2:14-15 set out.*

Israel – Subject of a Tribulation Salvation

The Tribulation emphasis of the Book of Hebrews means that the expression **“these last days”** refers prophetically to the **“perilous times”** of **“the last days”** 2 Timothy 3:1 that close out the Church Age and persist until the Second Advent. Paul is bracing for those **“perilous times”** his Jewish readers who will have to minister Tribulation salvation to all saints who must **“keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”** Revelation 12:17, 14:12, which are statements of Tribulation faith-works salvation.

Hebrews therefore has an emphasis on the term **“priest”** that occurs with its derivatives 37 times in 34 verses; Hebrews 2:17, 3:1, 4:14, 15, 5:1, 5, 6, 10, 6:20, 7:1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 8:1, 3, 4, 9:6, 7, 11, 25, 10:11, 21, 13:11. *Jewish Tribulation saints as priests will have to minister salvation to Gentile Tribulation believers because the priesthood of all believers 1 Peter 2:5, 9 as in the Church Age will not apply. Note:*

“But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves” Isaiah 61:6 i.e. **“carnal things”** for **“spiritual things”** 1 Corinthians 9:11.

“For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts” Malachi 2:7.

The Book of Hebrews is the vehicle for this ministry, which explains Paul’s admonition:

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” Hebrews 5:12.

“The Priests of the LORD” must get up to speed for their Tribulation ministry to Gentiles.

Note again the 24 scriptures listed earlier with respect to Tribulation salvation; Hebrews 2:3, 3:6, 14, 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 10:26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39. These are associated with Hebrews i.e. the nation of Israel and differ from Church Age doctrine on salvation. Note first that the Christian’s salvation is inviolate:

“in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” Ephesians 1:13-14 with respect to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian is sealed with God’s Spirit and therefore eternally saved.

Now consider Hebrews 10:26-29, 39 as an example of a Tribulation salvation passage. Hebrews 10:26-29, 39 show that the recipients’ salvation is not inviolate. *They could lose it during “the time of Jacob’s trouble”* Jeremiah 30:7.

“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?...But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” Hebrews 10:26-29, 39.

Hebrews 10:26-29, 39 do not apply to the salvation of any Christian, insofar as every Christian sins wilfully after having **“received the knowledge of the truth.”**

Paul admonishes the Christian not to *grieve* the Holy Ghost, which wilful sin does, *but that does not affect the Christian's salvation*. **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"** Ephesians 4:30 i.e. you're secure.

The Tribulation saint by contrast is *not* **"sealed unto the day redemption"** by **"the holy Spirit of God"** and can forfeit salvation by wilful sin such as taking **"the mark of the beast"** Revelation 16:2. Note the angelic warning during the time of Tribulation or **"the time of Jacob's trouble"** Jeremiah 30:7 that has not been issued yet. Note that Revelation 14:9-12 is predicated on faith and works Tribulation salvation i.e. have faith that Jesus is **"the Lord's Christ"** Luke 2:26, keep **"the ten commandments"** Exodus 34:29 and don't take the mark or **"worship the beast"** the Devil's 'Christ' Revelation 13:1, 2.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God...and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" Revelation 14:9-12.

Hebrews 10:26-29, 39 therefore apply to *Tribulation saints*, especially *Jewish Tribulation saints*, as a warning against forfeiting salvation e.g. by idol worship, Revelation 13:14-15, 14:9-11. They will have to follow Daniel's three friends, Daniel 3:16-18, to stay saved.

Israel – Subject of **"a new covenant"** Hebrews 8:8, 10, 12 with Jeremiah 31:31, 33, 34

Paul refers to the time of God's promise **"when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"** Hebrews 8:8 with Jeremiah 31:31.

God's **"new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"** Hebrews 8:8 is *unique to the nation of Israel*. It is not **"my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"** Matthew 26:28. Don't confuse the two.

God's **"new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"** Hebrews 8:8 makes no reference to God's blood, Acts 20:28 **"shed for many for the remission of sins"**. **"My blood of the new testament"** – note the word **"testament"** as distinct from **"covenant"** – makes no mention of God writing His laws on anyone's heart after the manner of Hebrews 8:10 with Jeremiah 31:33 **"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts."** No Christian today could recite, say, even Exodus 20, without a conscious effort to **"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom"** Colossians 3:16 but the recipients of God's **"new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"** will not have to make that effort. *God will do it for them instead.*

Remember also that Christians are *not* **"the house of Israel and...the house of Judah."** They are **"the household of God"** Ephesians 2:19 and Israel and Judah are not God.

Observe further that Hebrews 8:12 with Jeremiah 31:34 **"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"** refers *not* to the First Advent *but to the Second Advent* as Peter tells **"Ye men of Israel!"** Acts 3:12. **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord"** Acts 3:19. **"The times of refreshing shall come"** at the Second Advent. They did not come at the First Advent.

In sum, God's **"new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"** Hebrews 8:8 and **"my blood of the new testament"** Matthew 26:28 are *not* the same. It is wresting the scriptures, 2 Peter 3:16, to insist otherwise. Hebrews 8:8 is God's *special covenant* with His favoured nation – Israel. **"He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his stat-**

utes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD” Psalm 147:19-20.

The Christian should note Jeremiah 31:35-37, following the promise of the new covenant. Jeremiah 31:35-37 emphasise *the permanence of Israel*. See also Jeremiah 33:19-26.

“Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD” Jeremiah 31:35-37.

The Christian should also note that Paul, ***“rude in speech”*** 2 Corinthians 11:6, states that the Christian who denies the permanence of Israel is *conceited and ignorant*.

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in...As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance” Romans 11:25, 28-29.

Conclusion

In sum, the Book of Hebrews with respect to **“God,”** Paul, Melchisedec, Israel has:

- The emphasis **“God”** Hebrews 1:1
- The **“forerunner”** Hebrews 6:20 as author Paul **“a Hebrew of the Hebrews”** Philippians 3:5
- The patriarch Shem aka **“Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God”** Hebrews 7:1
- The transition Church Age to **“the time of Jacob’s trouble”** Jeremiah 30:7
- The doctrine **“hold fast...firm unto the end”** Hebrews 3:6 with Matthew 24:13 for salvation during **“the time of Jacob’s trouble”** Jeremiah 30:7
- The promise **“a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah”** Hebrews 8:8 for God’s favoured nation of Israel.

Paul’s admonition to the Christian therefore is that God is *not* all through with Israel as a nation. **“Boast not against the branches...because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again”** Romans 11:18, 20-21.

God will do so at the Second Advent when **“a nation be born at once”** Isaiah 66:8 and **“I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day”** Zechariah 3:9 with Acts 3:19.

“And so all Israel shall be saved” Romans 11:26 according to the promise of 2 Corinthians 1:20. Being a Church Age passage 2 Corinthians 1:20 is in turn a great encouragement for the Christian.

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen.”