

Why I Believe Paul Did Not Write Hebrews

Preface

Every book in the New Testament section of the Bible has a human author (i.e., a man who either wrote the revelation down himself, or spoke it to a scribe who did) assigned to it except one, **1** the letter to the Hebrews. Because of where it's placed following Paul's epistles, and some of the language in it, it is a widely held belief by Bible expositors that its author is, indeed, the apostle Paul. The following essay, by Pastor Jerry Lockhart, lays out a strong doctrinal case for why this can't be.

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Scholarship being a short suite of mine has led me to depend on simple things found through simple study habits and, subsequently, producing simple statements to define what comes from it.

I believe the Book. The Bible. The Word of God. I don't limit its on-going ability to cause a change in what I believe. However, about 27 years ago, a friend of mine, since deceased, asked me if I would help him produce and publish a King James Bible which would, as a study aid, have the books which Paul wrote re-published as an addendum in the chronological order that Paul wrote them. I thought, 'What a great idea!'. Then the realization came to me that he believed Paul wrote Hebrews and I didn't. ("Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"-Amos 3:3).

Well, I liked my friend's idea and I liked my friend. I wanted this idea to work. So I decided to re-think my position; re-study Hebrews; re-evaluate what had brought about my opinion. After further review, the conviction holds---I do not believe Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. It follows then that we didn't publish a Bible together. The list included below was first written and sent to another brother who believed Paul was its author. I asked him for some proof that I was wrong, but he never responded.

Why this issue pops up and why it divides I will leave open to discussion. But, for the record, if an individual wants the church to be "spiritual Israel" in one form or another, they seem to believe Paul wrote Hebrews; if an individual believes the church(the body of Christ) began at Pentecost, they seem to believe Paul wrote Hebrews; if they think Paul was the first saved into the body of Christ, but believe it includes the 12 Apostles and all those in the first part of Acts, they seem to believe Paul wrote Hebrews....is there a pattern here?!?

When Baptist preacher Paige Patterson wrote a book several years ago stating that he believed the author of Hebrews to be Luke it caused a stir. He was selling the book to those who had relied on theologians which had taught that Luke was a Gentile. How incredulous! Patterson now made some sense about the authorship not being credited to Paul, but he brought in a whole new scenario! That a "Gentile" such as Luke were its author?!

Of course, the book came under great scrutiny. If Luke wrote Hebrews, then 1) he probably is not a Gentile; and 2) Paul didn't. Big dilemma for those who wish one of the above to be fact.

I don't know who wrote it. I don't think anyone does know. I don't think the Lord intended us to know. If He had, He would have told us, which He didn't. Let's look at some of the reasons why it could not have been Paul. (If, when I face the Lord, it turns out that I'm wrong about this, it'll be OK.) It is His book and He can have anyone author it, even Paul, without my approval. But, somehow, I'll need clearer understanding on these things:

1. For 13 straight N.T. books, Romans thru Philemon, the first word in verse 1 is "Paul". In Hebrews, the first word is "God,". If God had wanted us to believe Paul had written it, why would He have changed this pattern. Besides, Paul states in 2 Thess.3:17 that his name is on everything he wrote. If you look for his name, it is consistantly that first word. But, in this the Epistles to the Hebrews, the name of Paul is not in it.

2. In Heb.2:3, the writer says that "...salvation...was confirmed unto us by them that heard...(Jesus)..". Them that heard Christ would be the 12 or maybe all of the 120 folks of Acts 1:15, but none of those folks

nor the 12 confirmed salvation unto Paul. Gal. 1:11,12 avers that Paul received the (his) gospel by revelation of Jesus Christ (directly) and in Gal.2:6 he's emphatic that those who "seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me."; showing pretty conclusively that Paul was not the writer of Heb.2:3.

3. Paul, in his presentation of the gospel of Christ as the "power of God unto salvation...", never referred to our Lord as a priest, nor taught the priesthood in any way. Nothing about the description of the church, the body of Christ, is associated with the priesthood of the Bible. Yet, the Hebrews author makes sure his hearers know that A.) Christ is their High Priest, and B.) their Apostle, ch.3:1. In Romans thru Philemon, Paul refers to himself as our Apostle specifically 3 times and by context, a total of 14 times. This would be too inconsistent for the Lord's Word, if Paul wrote Hebrews for that would make those to whom Hebrews is written to have two Apostles.. The church, the Body of Christ, must needs have a Head(Col.2:19) and not a priest. By the time a reader comes to the book of Hebrews, we already have an apostle(Rom.15:15-19). Priesthood is then explained fully to those Hebrews to whom this is written in subsequent chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 12:22-25(which is like the doctrine of 2:3). The Hebrews, which turn out to be "kings and priests" in Rev.1:6, definitively need a High Priest, and have one in Christ(Heb.3:1).

4. The Apostle John, in Jn.1:17, made mention of Moses and Jesus Christ in the same verse comparing the Israel which became a nation under the law (given by Moses) with the Israel which became a new nation(Mt.21:43) through the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. In Heb.3:2-6, a comparison to Moses and Christ is made to show each one had a "house".

As Moses taught the law, Israel understood how she could attain unto righteousness. Likewise, as Christ taught the 12 Apostles, they were to understand the application of the law as in the sermon on the mount of Mt. 5,6,7. In both "houses", the doctrine of "hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."-Heb.3:6b, is instilled. Christ taught this doctrine of enduring to the end in Mt.24:13-15 and Mk.13:13. This is contrary to the doctrine of Eph.2:8-10; and would be set in stark contrast to the doctrine of "all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple....builded together for an habitation of God" of Eph.

2:19-22. We are not His house; we are His Body. The "house" in scripture is the "house of Israel".

5. Great assurance of salvation comes to us by Paul stating in several places, Col.1:12; Rom.8:15-17; 1Cor.3:22,23; Gal.3:26; and others, that we have already been made partakers of Christ by the Father and the Spirit. However, there is a giant **IF** in Heb.3:14 concerning how these folks become partakers of Christ. Could the same messenger from God have written these things? I don't think so. God is not guilty of duplicity.

6. The doctrine that one could lose his salvation is very prevalent in Hebrews. In ch.4:1; ch.6:4-6; and ch.10:26,27; anyone who might foul up and sin wilfully not only lost their hope of salvation, but they, like Esau, could not find a place of repentance(ch.12:16,17)and cannot be renewed. Their only expectation is one of damnation and judgment from the Lord. This is truly Israel's doctrine from the outset. Note that Christ taught this in conjunction with the expectation of the 7yr. Great tribulation period in Mt. 24,25. Daniel 9-11 speaks very clearly of prophecy of this "70th" week. Rev.2 & 3 tells of those churches which will face those things yet in the future. Our Apostle Paul tells us in Rom.5:9; 1Thess.1:10; 1Thess.5:9; and 2 Thess.1:7-10 that we will not be a part of that prophetic time of "Jacob's trouble"-Jer.30:7.

7. Paul wrote throughout Romans thru Philemon that we are established by the gospel of Christ(Rom.1:11-16; 16:25,26; 1Cor. 1:17-21) and have received forgiveness for all sins(Rom.5:11; Col. 2:13; 2Cor.5:19). The Hebrews author tells his audience that the **new covenant** is ready to be put into place when Christ returns and then they will have the forgiveness("atonement"), when that promise is fulfilled(Heb.8:8-13 & 9:27,28), which is in agreement with Peter and the 12's doctrine(Acts 3:19-21); but, which disagrees with what Paul says that we, the church, the body of Christ, have already received.

8. "Rest" is coming for those that Hebrews is written unto if they don't falter(Heb.3:12-4:11) . The Body of Christ, particular to the books which Paul wrote is already complete(Col.2:9,10), having received this position due to the work of Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit(Read Eph. 1:12-14 & Eph.2:4-10) We can't be in both these positions--having to worry about "losing it" and being sealed, at the

same time. An Holy and a Righteous God must make dispensational change concerning these things or be unjust to one or the other peoples. In other words, we can't be in the Body of Christ with its promises and be also in the Hebrews "church of the firstborn" with its conditional position at the same time. What then, would be the point of naming Paul our Apostle and having him write to someone whose doctrine is diametric?

9. The Hebrews author includes himself in the ch.10 passage about "sin willfully", etc. That being the case then, Paul could only be there if he lied in Rom.8:31-39; Eph.2:4-10; and Gal.2:18-20. A "holy man of God" speaking as he is "moved by the Holy Ghost" couldn't write about his own sin or sins in both these ways and have it preserved as doctrine in God's Holy Word.

10. In chapter 13, this writer tells these people that they must obey men who have the rule over them(v.7 & v.17) and submit to them, as you'll also find the Old Testament saints following the priests and leaders. But, Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, says we should follow him as he followed Christ(1Cor.11.1) and then makes sure we understand that he has no dominion over us nor our faith-2Cor.1:24. Rather, the doctrine for the dominion over us nor our faith-2Cor.1:24. Rather, the doctrine for the Body of Christ is that we must all appear before Christ individually---see Rom.14:10 & 12; 1Cor.3:12-15; 2Cor. 5:7-10.

11. The Hebrews author expected to be restored unto the people to whom he wrote, as in ch.13:19. If it were Paul writing early in his ministry, which some claim, he would have been less than truthful since he knew his call was to go to Gentiles. If Paul had written this late in his ministry, as some claim, he would have been less than truthful for he knew in 2Tim.4:6-8 that he was scheduled for death.

In light of all these 11 items, how could Paul have been the author of Hebrews? I don't believe he could've.

My friend, I hope this sheds some light on the controversy. The more I read the book of Hebrews, the more I know that I don't know who wrote it other than the Lord himself. The more I read Romans through

Philemon, the more I believe that that is what Paul wrote; 13 little books for us, the church, the Body of Christ.

My prayer for you in this study is not for you to agree with me. Rather, agree with the Lord's Truth. If, in studying in this manner, you believe I'm wrong, tell me. Point out scripturally where I am wrong and I will not dismiss it. I will study it and change what needs to be changed. If the Word is our guide, we must come to the knowledge of the truth of it.....and thereby obey 1Cor.1:10.

May the Lord bless you in His service.

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