**Hebrews Lesson 19**



**Hebrews 12:14-29 (NIV)**   
14  Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.   
15  See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.   
16  See that no one is *sexually immoral, or is godless* like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.   
17  Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.   
18  You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm;   
19  to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them,   
20  because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned."   
21  The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."   
22  But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,   
23  to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,   
24  to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.   
25  See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?   
26  At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens."   
27  The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken--that is, created things--so that what cannot be shaken may remain.   
28  Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,   
29  for our "God is a consuming fire."



[12:14-17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A14-17) Exhortation to holy living (see [4:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+4%3A1); [6:4-8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A4-8); [Gal 5:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Gal+5%3A4) and note).

[12:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A14) without holiness no one will see the Lord. Cf. [1Pe 1:15-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+1%3A15-16) and note on [1:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+1%3A16); see also [1Co 1:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+1%3A2) and note; cf. [1Jn 3:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Jn+3%3A2-3).

[12:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A15) misses the grace of God. "Falls short of" or "fails to lay hold of" God's grace (see [6:4-8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A4-8) and notes). bitter root. Pride, animosity, rivalry or anything else harmful to others.

[12:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A16) godless like Esau. See [Ge 25:29-34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+25%3A29-34). He had no appreciation for true values (cf. [Php 3:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+3%3A19)). He "despised his birthright" ([Ge 25:34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+25%3A34)) by valuing food for his stomach more highly than his birthright.

[12:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A17) he was rejected. Because he only regretted his loss, and did not repent of his sin ([Ge 27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+27); cf. [Ge 4:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+4%3A13) and note). His sorrow was not "godly sorrow" that "brings repentance that leads to salvation," but "worldly sorrow" that "brings death" ([2Co 7:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+7%3A10)). could bring about no change of mind. Could not undo what he had done (cf. [6:4-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A4-6) and note). blessing. Of the firstborn. The readers may have contemplated compromising their faith in order to gain relief from persecution. But to trade their spiritual birthright for temporary ease in this world would deprive them of Christ's blessing. with tears. Not tears of repentance. See [Ge 27:34-38](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+27%3A34-38).

[12:18-29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A18-29) Crowning motivation and warning (the fifth; see note on [2:1-4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+2%3A1-4)—including an exposition of [Ex 19:10-23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+19%3A10-23) in [vv. 18-24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+19%3A18-24)).

[12:18-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A18-21) These verses recall the awesome occasion when the law was given at Mount Sinai (see [Ex 19:10-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+19%3A10-25); [Dt 4:11-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+4%3A11-12); [5:22-26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+5%3A22-26)).

[12:22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A22) Mount Zion. Not the literal Mount Zion (Jerusalem, or its southeast portion), but the heavenly city of God and those who dwell there with him (see [11:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A10),[13-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A13-16); [13:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A14); [Php 3:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+3%3A20)). The circumstances under which the old covenant was given ([vv. 18-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A18-21)) and the features of the new covenant ([vv. 22-24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A22-24)) point up the utter contrast between the two covenants, and lay the foundation for one more warning and exhortation to those still thinking of going back to Judaism. thousands upon thousands of angels. See [Rev 5:11-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+5%3A11-12).

[12:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A23) church of the firstborn. Believers in general who make up the church: (1) Reference cannot be to the angels since these have just been mentioned ([v. 22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A22)). (2) "Firstborn" cannot refer to Christ (though he is called firstborn, [1:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+1%3A6); [Ro 8:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+8%3A29); [Col 1:15-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Col+1%3A15-18); [Rev 1:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+1%3A5)), since here the Greek word is plural. (3) The fact that the names of these "firstborn" are recorded in heaven reminds us of the redeemed (see [Rev 3:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+3%3A5); [13:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+13%3A8); [17:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+17%3A8); [20:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+20%3A12); [21:27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+21%3A27)). The designation of them as "firstborn" suggests their privileged position as heirs together with Christ, the supreme firstborn and "heir of all things" ([1:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+1%3A2)). God, the judge of all. See [4:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+4%3A13); [Ro 14:10-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+14%3A10-12); [1Co 3:10-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+3%3A10-15); [2Co 5:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+5%3A10); [Rev 20:11-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+20%3A11-15). spirits of righteous men made perfect. For the most part, these were pre-Christian believers such as Abel ([11:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A4)) and Noah ([11:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A7)). They are referred to as "spirits" because they are waiting for the resurrection and as "righteous" because God credited their faith to them as righteousness, as he did to Abraham (see [Ge 15:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+15%3A6); [Ro 4:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+4%3A3) and notes). Actual justification was not accomplished, however, until Christ made it complete by his death on the cross (see [11:40](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A40); [Ro 3:24-26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+3%3A24-26) and notes; [4:23-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+4%3A23-25)).

[12:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A24) mediator of a new covenant. See [8:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+8%3A6) and note. better word than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood cried out for justice and retribution (see [Ge 4:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+4%3A10) and note), whereas the blood of Jesus shed on the cross speaks of forgiveness and reconciliation (see [9:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+9%3A12) and note; [10:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+10%3A19); [Col 1:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Col+1%3A20); [1Jn 1:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Jn+1%3A7)).

[12:25-29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A25-29) The fifth warning (see note on [2:1-4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+2%3A1-4)).

[12:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A25) him who speaks. God. warned them on earth. At Sinai. him who warns us from heaven. Christ, who is both from and in heaven ([1:1-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+1%3A1-3); [4:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+4%3A14); [6:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A20); [7:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+7%3A26); [9:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+9%3A24)). Since we have greater revelation, we have greater responsibility and therefore greater danger (see [2:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+2%3A2-3) and notes).

[12:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A26) shook the earth. See [Ex 19:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+19%3A18); cf. [Jdg 5:4-5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jdg+5%3A4-5); [Ps 68:7-8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+68%3A7-8).

[12:27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A27) once more. During the great end-time upheavals associated with the second advent of Christ (see [Mt 24:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+24%3A29); [Mk 13:24-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mk+13%3A24-25) and note; [Lk 21:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lk+21%3A11),[25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lk+21%3A25); [Ac 2:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+2%3A20)). what cannot be shaken. The kingdom ([v. 28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A28)).

[12:28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A28) worship God acceptably. See [Jn 4:19-24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+4%3A19-24); [Ro 12:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+12%3A1).

[12:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A29) See NIV text note; cf. [10:27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+10%3A27) and note; [Ex 24:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+24%3A17); [Dt 9:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+9%3A3).

[13:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A2) entertain strangers. See [Mt 25:35](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+25%3A35). strangers. Members of the Christian community not personally known. entertained angels without knowing it. As did Abraham ([Ge 18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+18)), Gideon ([Jdg 6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jdg+6)) and Manoah ([Jdg 13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jdg+13)).

[13:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A3) Remember those in prison... and those who are mistreated. Especially fellow believers (see [10:32-34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+10%3A32-34); [Mt 25:36](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+25%3A36); [1Co 12:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+12%3A26)).

[13:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A4) See [Ex 20:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+20%3A14) and note. Marriage should be honored. See [1Co 6:13-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+6%3A13-18); [7:1-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+7%3A1-15); [Eph 5:26-31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eph+5%3A26-31); [1Ti 4:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ti+4%3A3). adulterer and... sexually immoral. See [1Co 6:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+6%3A9).

[13:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A5) love of money. See [Lk 12:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lk+12%3A15),[21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lk+12%3A21); [Php 4:10-13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+4%3A10-13); [1Ti 6:6-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ti+6%3A6-10),[17-19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ti+6%3A17-19). be content. See [Php 4:11-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+4%3A11-12); [1Ti 6:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ti+6%3A8).

[13:7-17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A7-17) A unit framed by the exhortation to "Remember your [past] leaders... and imitate their faith" and the exhortation to "Obey your [present] leaders and submit to their authority."

[13:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A7) leaders, who spoke the word of God. See [2:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+2%3A3); [5:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+5%3A12). Consider the outcome of their way of life. Consider how they persevered in their faith and entered into the promised inheritance (see [6:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A12)). imitate their faith. See [6:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A12); [Eph 5:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eph+5%3A1); [1Th 1:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Th+1%3A6) and notes; cf. [1Co 4:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+4%3A16).

[13:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A8) Jesus Christ is the same. A confession of the changelessness of Christ, no doubt related to the preceding verse. The substance of their former leaders' faith was the unchanging Christ. yesterday. Probably the days of Christ's life on earth, when the eyewitnesses observed him ([2:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+2%3A3)). today. The Christ whom the eyewitnesses saw was still the same, and what they had said about him was still true. forever. And it will always be true. To compromise his absolute supremacy by returning to the inferior Aaronic priesthood and sacrifices (see chs. 5-10) is to undermine the gospel.

[13:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A9) not by ceremonial foods. As the legalistic Judaizers were teaching. The old Mosaic order was done away with at the cross and must not be revived.

[13:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A10) We have an altar. Probably refers to the cross, which marked the end of the whole Aaronic priesthood and its replacement by the order of Melchizedek, of which Christ is the unique and only priest. no right to eat. The priests could not eat any part of the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, but we can partake of our sacrifice, so to speak—through spiritual reception of Christ by faith (see [Jn 6:48-58](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+6%3A48-58)). We have a higher privilege than the priests under the old covenant had.

[13:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A11) burned outside the camp. See [Lev 4:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+4%3A12) and note; [16:27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+16%3A27).

[13:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A12) Jesus also suffered outside the city gate. Christ's death outside Jerusalem represented the removal of sin, as had the removal of the bodies of sacrificial animals outside the camp of Israel.

[13:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A13) go to him outside the camp. Calls for separation from Judaism to Christ. As he died in disgrace outside the city, so the readers should be willing to be disgraced by turning unequivocally from Judaism to Christ (cf. [Ac 5:41](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+5%3A41)).

[13:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A14) city that is to come. See notes on [11:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A10),[14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A14),[16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+11%3A16).

[13:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A15) sacrifice of praise. Cf. [Ro 12:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+12%3A1). For the OT background see notes on [Lev 3:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Lev+3%3A1); [Ps 7:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+7%3A17); cf. [Ps 51:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+51%3A17) and note.

[13:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A16) sacrifices. See [Php 4:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+4%3A18) and note.

[13:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A17) your leaders. Their present leaders, as distinct from their first ones, now dead, mentioned in [v. 7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A7) (see note on [vv. 7-17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A7-17)). submit to their authority. Dictatorial leadership is not condoned by this command (see [2Co 10:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+10%3A8) and note), but respect for authority, orderliness and discipline in the church are taught throughout the NT.

[13:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A19) restored to you soon. The identity and whereabouts of the writer are not known to us, but "restored" suggests that somehow he had been delayed in visiting those to whom he was writing, perhaps by his current ministry. That he was not under arrest is clear from [v. 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A23).

[13:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A20),[25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A25) peace... Grace. See note on [Ro 1:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+1%3A7).

[13:20-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A20-21) This benediction provides a fitting conclusion to the letter.

[13:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A20) God of peace. A title for God used frequently in benedictions (see [Ro 15:33](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+15%3A33); [16:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+16%3A20); [Php 4:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+4%3A9); [1Th 5:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Th+5%3A23) and note). blood of. See [10:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+10%3A29) and note. eternal covenant. The new covenant (see note on [8:8-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+8%3A8-12)). What Jeremiah designates as the new covenant in [31:31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jer+31%3A31) he describes as everlasting in [32:40](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jer+32%3A40) (cf. [Isa 55:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+55%3A3); [61:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+61%3A8) and notes). great Shepherd. See, e.g., [Ps 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+23); [Isa 40:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+40%3A11); [Eze 34:11-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eze+34%3A11-16),[23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eze+34%3A23); [37:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eze+37%3A24); [Jn 10:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A2-3),[11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A11),[14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A14),[27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A27); [1Pe 2:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+2%3A25); [5:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+5%3A4).

[13:21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A21) everything good. Such as faith, faithfulness, obedience and perseverance.

[13:22-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A22-25) A postscript.

[13:22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A22) Brothers. See note on [Ro 1:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+1%3A13). word of exhortation. See Introduction: Literary Form. The main thrust of the letter is to go on in Christian maturity and not fall away from Christ. short. Compared to the lengthy treatise that would be necessary to explain fully the superiority of Christ.

[13:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A23) Timothy. See Introduction to 1 Timothy: Recipient.

[13:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A24) leaders. Mentioned in [v. 17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A17). Those from Italy. From this brief greeting no firm conclusion can be drawn concerning the source or destination of this "letter." The writer may simply be passing on to his readers greetings from some Italian believers.

[13:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A25) with you. Cf. note on [2Co 13:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Co+13%3A14).

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| **The "Greater-Thans" in Hebrews** | |
| One of the author's main points in Hebrews is that Jesus is greater than all those things associated with the Jewish religion and way of life. Sometimes he actually uses the words "greater than"; sometimes he does not. But in all cases the theme is clear. | |
| **Theme** | **Passage in Hebrews** |
| Jesus is greater than the prophets | [1:1-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+1%3A1-3) |
| Jesus is greater than the angels | [1:4-14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+1%3A4-14); [2:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+2%3A5) |
| Jesus is greater than Moses | [3:1-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+3%3A1-6) |
| Jesus is greater than Joshua | [4:6-11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+4%3A6-11) |
| Jesus is greater than the high priest | [5:1-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+5%3A1-10); [7:26-8:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+7%3A26-8%3A2) |
| Jesus is greater than the Levitical priests | [6:20-7:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+6%3A20-7%3A25) |
| Jesus as the high priest after Melchizedek is greater than Abraham | [7:1-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+7%3A1-10) |
| Jesus' ministry is greater than the tabernacle ministry | [8:3-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+8%3A3-6); [9:1-28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+9%3A1-28) |
| Jesus' new covenant is greater than the old covenant | [8:7-13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+8%3A7-13) |
| Jesus' sacrifice is greater than OT sacrifices | [10:1-14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+10%3A1-14) |
| Experiencing Jesus is greater than the experience on Mount Sinai | [12:18-24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A18-24) |
| Taken from The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition: Old Testament, by Kenneth L. Barker; John R. Kohlenberger III. Copyright © 1994 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission of Zondervan. | |

**NIV Study Bible.**

**Open it**

1. What causes bitterness?   
 **Holding onto bad feelings,**

2. What are some warnings that you have been grateful for? Why?   
 **When stupid things I had done in the past did not follow me long**  
  
**Explore it**

3. In what way should believers pursue holiness? Why? ([12:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A14))   
 **Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord**.

4. Why is holiness important? ([12:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A14))   
 **See the above answer**

5. What wrong attitude should we watch out for? ([12:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A15))   
 **Bitterness**

6. What did Esau do that is described as godless? ([12:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A16))   
 **He sold his birthright for a single meal**

7. What did Esau’s godless behavior cost him? ([12:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A17))   
 **The blessing from his father**

8. In what ways was the old covenant intimidating or frightening? ([12:18-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A18-21))   
  **For you have not come to *a mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, 19  and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. 20  For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED." 21  And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling."**

9. How did the author describe the new covenant? ([12:22-24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A22-24))   
  **But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23  to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, 24  and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.**

10. In what way were God’s thunderous pronouncements from Sinai only a foreshadowing of what is to come? ([12:26-27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A26-27))   
 **His voice shook the earth, not it will shake the heavens too**

11. How should God’s promises and glorious kingdom affect believers? ([12:28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A28))   
 **Since we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude**

12. How should we worship God? Why? ([12:28-29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A28-29))   
 **With reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire**  
**Get it**

13. Why is it difficult to get along with some people?   
 **Their attitude, words, actions, deeds show their true spirit**

14. How would you counsel a friend who was extremely bitter?   
 **I have to remove mine first**

15. What does it mean to live at peace with everyone?   
 **Not to be at odds with them or at war, agree to disagree on some things**

16. What is dangerous about bitterness?   
 **It will take you down a dark path**

17. What does it mean to worship God with reverence and awe?   
 **Remember who** **God is and treat him as our Lord and Master**  
  
**Apply it**

18. What practical steps can you take this week to avoid becoming bitter toward someone who has hurt you?   
 **Try and forgive them**

19. What actions do you need to take today so that you can truly say you have made every effort to live in peace with everyone?   
 **Work on treating those who have wronged you with words or actions better. This way we can resume our walk with God.**