

The Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews

by Jeremy James



The Martyrdom of the Apostle Paul

As a new believer in 2008, I was intrigued by the fact that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not generally attributed to the Apostle Paul. Since then I have come across many different opinions as to its authorship, several of which seemed specious or lacking a clear expository purpose. Some were hardly more than a footnote in a long-running debate.

A question that many have asked is whether we really *need* to know who the author was? Would it make any difference if we did?

While there are questions we may validly ask about many passages in God's Word, we can take comfort in the knowledge that we have been given what we need. The LORD knows the purpose of His Word and has given it to us in its perfection to fulfil that purpose. Extraneous questions may arise from human curiosity but additional information is not required.

Having said that, there is definitely one question we should ask about the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews: Are we *certain* that the Bible does not point to Paul as the author?

If we approach the matter from this perspective, we are fully justified in "comparing Scripture with Scripture" and seeing what emerges.

A second question

Furthermore, given the many attempts made over the past two centuries to distort or corrupt God's Word, we are also justified in asking another question: What benefit, if any, does the Adversary gain by concealing the identity of Paul as the author?

Let's address this question first.

If Paul was the author, then the Epistle to the Hebrews was written after 60 AD and is therefore based on a full account of the revelation given to him regarding the Church. In addition, it has one overarching theme, namely, the centrality and primacy of faith in Christianity. In stating the case as he does, Paul is continuing a battle he had fought for over three decades, showing how Christ took Judaism beyond the Law and brought mankind into a new covenant with God. This new covenant embraced both the Jews and the Gentiles and treated them on equal terms with respect to their salvation.



The Apostle Paul by El Greco

Rather than focus on the Law, which would only provoke his exclusively Jewish audience, Paul went back to the time before the Law and identified the one thing on which salvation depended. This was faith.

If Paul's epistles can be said to have a common theme, it is the core spiritual truth that the just shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4). It has been noted that three of his epistles can be read as an in-depth examination of this core spiritual truth (assuming Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews). The Epistle to the Romans defined "the just" and the Epistle to the Galatians showed that, once the believer embraced Christ by faith, he could never go back to the Law. He "shall live" by faith alone. Finally, the Epistle to the Hebrews was a detailed exploration of "faith" itself.

We can see from this why Paul would have been chosen by the Holy Spirit to pen this epistle. It both answered a central question in Christianity AND set it in the context of all that Paul had previously said on the subject. Knowing that Paul was the author – if this was the case – believers would be able to see more clearly and more easily what he was trying to convey in his epistle.

No mention of its author's identity

Many commentators have noted that Paul would have had more success in persuading the Jews to accept his position if he was not perceived as the author, at least not until they had weighed his words carefully. This would explain why he does not allude to his identity in the epistle. He does supply enough circumstantial evidence, however, to enable his readers to deduce that the letter originated with him.

These telling points of detail associate him closely with the author of the other Pauline epistles. For example, we know from the letter to the Hebrews that the author was imprisoned in Italy, that Timothy was a valued companion, and that he had the authority to pronounce ordinances which believers were expected to obey. These embraced such subjects as marital fidelity, charity, church organization, the avoidance of false teachings, and the danger of covetousness, all of which featured prominently in his other epistles. He even upbraids his readers for failing to mature beyond the “milk” stage (Hebrews 5:12), just as he did to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 3:2). The reference to *running the race* in Hebrews 12:1 is a clearly a nod to a similar reference in 1 Corinthians 9:24.



The Apostles Peter and Paul

What the Enemy wants to gain

We need to go back to the Exodus to see what the Enemy is up to. He wants to keep the Jews as far as he can from *The Song of Moses*. This profound passage of Scripture does not appear to attract much attention today but it is, and always has been, remarkably significant. It was literally a letter from God to every Jew who ever lived, setting out a description of their inner disposition, their destiny as a disobedient people, and the painful consequences for the Jews, both as a nation and as individuals, if they fail to become truly reconciled with God. The “letter” was so important, from the LORD’s perspective, that He asked that every Jew learn it by heart.

Here is the LORD's request:

“Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel... And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed... Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.” (Deuteronomy 31:19-22)

He is plainly saying, *Learn this song! Memorize it! Take it to heart! You will need it in the years ahead.* (For reference purposes, we give the song in its entirety in **Appendix A.**)

There is not the slightest hint anywhere in the Word of God that they did as they were told. As soon as Joshua and his leadership team died, the children of Israel reverted to their old pagan ways. The song was soon forgotten and there is no evidence that it was ever again learned and memorized by any of the tribes, not even the Levites.



The Apostle Paul Writing His Epistles, 1620

Their core spiritual problem

It is not our purpose in this paper to review in detail the wonderful *Song of Moses* but to highlight its importance to the Jewish people. Of special note is the inclusion in the song of a reference to their core spiritual problem, the factor which led to where they are today:

**“And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith [*emun*, H529].”
(Deuteronomy 32:20)**

It's as if God had diagnosed the root cause of their spiritual condition, both at the time that Deuteronomy was written and continuously thereafter, all the way to the present day, when **“I will see what their end shall be.”**

The children of Israel are **“children in whom is no faith.”**

We tend to think of their perverse disobedience as the root cause of their troubles, but the LORD is pointing to a deeper reason. They simply lacked the faith they needed to be obedient.

Jesus pointed to this as the reason they rejected him at his first coming:

**“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.”
(John 5:46)**

The word *emun* [H529] denotes faith in its most basic sense, shorn of any broader association such as fidelity or faithfulness (as conveyed by the word *emuna* [H530]).

Interestingly the word *emun* only appears twice in the Bible. The KJV translators rendered it as “truth” and not “faith” on the second occasion:

**“Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the
truth [*emun*, H529] may enter in.” (Isaiah 26:2)**

A lack of faith has ALWAYS been the fundamental cause of Israel’s disobedience, of her failure to recognize Jesus as her Messiah at his first coming OR at any time thereafter. We still await the day when Israel finally comes to faith. This is the day to which the LORD is referring when He says **“I will see what their end shall be.”**



Moses at the burning bush - monastery in Sinai

Paul’s purpose in writing this Epistle

In his Epistle to the Hebrews Paul is doing all he can to get the Jewish converts to Christianity to see that “faith” was the crucial or deciding factor in salvation under the Old Testament and that it has continued to be the crucial or deciding factor under the New.

The author of the Epistle to the Romans was greatly troubled by the prospect that the children of Israel might never come to faith. Through God's revelation he could see that they would get there in the end, though only after enduring considerable chastisement at the hands of a righteous God. Through his Epistle to the Hebrews he was stating the entire matter as clearly and succinctly as human communication would allow. It was as if he sat down with the most learned rabbis of his time and presented an argument which he had constructed in his mind with great love and care over many years.

As it happened, the "Hebrew" audience he was addressing in the epistle was a specific (local) church that apparently consisted almost entirely of converted Jews. In a broader sense, the epistle was also a letter to all Jews everywhere, whether converts or not, stretching all the way from 60 AD to the End Time.

We can see from this that the Adversary would be well pleased if Paul was not accorded authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He knew that the force of the case that Paul was making would be greatly reduced if his Jewish readers were unable to see that its author was also the prophet whom God had chosen to reveal to mankind the true nature of the Church. The Jews need a sign and what better sign could they have than a letter written by such a person?

Answering our first question

We have made some progress, but not enough to answer our first question: Are we *certain* that the Bible does not point to Paul as the author?

Circumstantial evidence can be very valuable but we need something more to settle the matter, a definitive passage in God's Word which points directly to Paul as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

While I have examined the views of many commentators on this matter, the only argument I found convincing was by H A Ironside. We attach in **Appendices B and D** the case he made for Paul as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a case which rests exclusively on Scripture and makes no use of conjecture or opinion.

His argument may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Peter, the Apostle to the Jews, stated (2 Peter 3:15) that Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, had written a letter of importance to the Jews.
- (b) Peter went on to say (2 Peter 3:16) that Paul raised certain issues in his letter which were not easy to understand and urged them to believe what he had written because it was part of Scripture.
- (c) Paul wrote only one letter to the Jews (Hebrews), so that must be the letter to which Peter is referring in 3:15. This means he was authenticating Paul as the author.

When we see how plainly it can be stated and how easy it is to understand, we sincerely wonder how anyone ever questioned Paul's authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

For most of history nearly all Christians assumed that Paul was indeed the author, probably on foot of the circumstantial evidence in chapter 13 and the comments by Peter.

We include in **Appendix C** a brazen example of a modern attempt to keep this confusion alive. It would appear that the coming of the 'End Time Church' – the false religion of the Antichrist and the False Prophet – will rely in part on a denial that Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

CONCLUSION

Christians with a strong foundation in God's Word have no difficulty with the omission of Paul's name from the Epistle to the Hebrews. Most would say it makes no difference. But they are wrong. As we have seen the Word of God shows that Paul was indeed the author, and if Scripture authenticates this then we should ask why.

For most born-again believers it is not an issue for them personally, but it is definitely an issue when they are witnessing to Jews.

In his second letter Peter, the Apostle to the Jews, directs all Jews to read Paul's writings, confirming that they are the Word of God. His directive should inform our understanding.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is the last detailed communication that God addressed specifically to Israel. It stands apart as a monumental statement of His position. In a sense it offers the Jews an update or corollary to *The Song of Moses*. It tells them where they stand, where He stands, and what they must do to become reconciled with Him. It does so with great clarity and with due regard to the journey they had already undertaken from the time of their foundation. And it is written by the converted Jew whom they most despised, the prophet chosen by God to reveal the deep mystery of the Church and open the door to the Gentiles.

For Jewish readers it can only be fully understood by reference to everything else that Paul had written about Israel and the fate of the Jewish people. Therefore the Jewish people today need to know that Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

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Ireland
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APPENDIX A

The Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-43)

- [1] Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
- [2] My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:
- [3] Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
- [4] He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.
- [5] They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.
- [6] Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?
- [7] Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.
- [8] When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.
- [9] For the LORD's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.
- [10] He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.
- [11] As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:
- [12] So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.
- [13] He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;
- [14] Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.

- [15] But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.
- [16] They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.
- [17] They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.
- [18] Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.
- [19] And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.
- [20] And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.
- [21] They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.
- [22] For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.
- [23] I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.
- [24] They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.
- [25] The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.
- [26] I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:
- [27] Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the LORD hath not done all this.
- [28] For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them.
- [29] O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!

- [30] How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?
- [31] For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.
- [32] For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:
- [33] Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.
- [34] Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?
- [35] To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.
- [36] For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.
- [37] And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted,
- [38] Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection.
- [39] See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.
- [40] For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.
- [41] If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.
- [42] I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.
- [43] Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.
- [44] And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.
- [45] And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel...

APPENDIX B

H A Ironside commentary on verses 15-18 of 2 Peter 2

“And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen”—vers. 15-18.

So then God's patience and long-suffering with mankind throughout all the centuries of human history are ever with a view to the salvation of any who will turn to Him, confessing their sin and believing the message of His grace.

Peter adds, "Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you." This is very clearly an authentication of the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. There can be no other writing to which he refers in this verse. As we have seen, Peter himself was addressing converted Jews or Hebrews. He tells us that the Apostle Paul had written a letter to the same people. There is no other of Paul's letters addressed to converted Jews but the Epistle to the Hebrews. And in that Epistle to the Hebrews Paul corroborates the testimony of Peter in regard to these eschatological truths which he has just been unfolding. In Hebrews 12: 25-29 we get this corroborative testimony: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." Here we have set forth exactly the same truths that the Apostle Peter has been stressing. There should be no question, therefore, but that Peter was declaring that Paul was the author of this particular Epistle.

[End of extract]

APPENDIX C

Extract from the StudyLight archives

Extract from the StudyLight archives purporting to present all of H A Ironside's commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. However, it greatly misleads the reader by ignoring what Ironside actually said in that commentary about the authorship of Hebrews and substitutes a section by one Arend Remmers – see below – which argues that the author is unknown.

We set out in **Appendix D** the text by Ironside which StudyLight saw fit to leave out!

[Text below by Arend Remmers]

Author

The author of the epistle does not mention his name. Many a supposition has been made as to who the author might have been: Paul, Luke, Barnabas (so says Tertullian), Apollos (so says Martin Luther), Silas or even Aquila and Priscilla have been suggested.

Most of the modern scientists refuse to accept Paul as the author because contents, structure and language of the epistle are not typical for him. And yet the old Alexandrian tradition ascribes this epistle to the apostle Paul. The fact that the author knew Timothy well (Hebrews 13:23) and that Peter who also wrote to Jewish Christians mentions an epistle of Paul to them (2 Peter 3:15) speak for the Alexandrian tradition. However the addressees of the epistle were Jewish Christians in Palestine whereas Peter wrote to the scattered strangers (1 Peter 1:1) who lived outside Palestine. If Paul was the author one reason for not mentioning his name might be that he was an apostle to the nations whereas Peter was an apostle to the Jews (Galatians 2:7-8).

As a matter of fact the author of the epistle remains unknown. The Holy Spirit who inspired this epistle deliberately wanted to introduce the Lord Jesus only as apostle and high priest of our profession (Hebrews 3:1). The church father Origenes (around 185 to 254 AC) appropriately wrote: Only God knows in truth who the author is.

<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/isn/hebrews.html>

APPENDIX D

Extract from the commentary by H A Ironside on the Epistle to the Hebrews

[Start of extract]

AUTHORSHIP

Who wrote Hebrews? Is it for us to be certain in regard to its human author, and is it of any importance that we should know, since the letter comes to us anonymously? If God meant us to know the author's name would He not have told us? These are questions properly raised, and I desire to try to answer them in all fairness.

I write for those who believe in the inspiration of this Epistle, as of all Scripture, and by that term I mean all that was accepted as Scripture in our Lord's day, that is, the entire Old Testament; and also the books regarded as canonical by the Christians of the first century. Hebrews belongs to this latter collection. This is evidently an integral part of the Word of God. Cut from our Bibles, it would leave a great gap that nothing else could fill. In its own place, it fills that gap admirably and forms in a most marvellous way the connecting link between the economy of the Old and the New Testaments.

It is accredited to Paul the apostle in our English Bibles, as also in many manuscripts, yet from the latter part of the second century there have not been wanting those who have denied its Pauline authorship. It has been variously ascribed to Apollos, Barnabas, and even to Priscilla, the wife of Aquila! It is strange, if Apollos were the author, that the Alexandrian church never seems to have heard of it, and yet Apollos was of Alexandria. Were he the author, how natural that this church should have had a holy pride in the recognition of his work, and never have permitted his name to be forgotten as the chosen instrument. So far as Barnabas is concerned, there is not a scintilla of evidence that he was its author. If it should be proved that Barnabas were the author of the properly spurious epistle ascribed to him, the difference in style between it and the Epistle to the Hebrews is too marked to admit of the thought that both could have been written by the same person. As to Priscilla's authorship, in spite of "certain dainty feminine touches" which a lady expositor thinks she has seen in it, the supposition may be rejected as utterly absurd, and without any foundation in fact.

But does it really make any difference as to who the human author was? I think it does, at least in our understanding of its scope and timeliness. As I have before pointed out, this letter is the last of a series of three epistles forming together a divinely inspired commentary on one Old Testament text, namely Habakkuk 2:4, "The just shall live by faith." Romans expounds the first two words and shows who alone are "the just" before God. Galatians continues the wondrous story and explains how the just "shall live." Having begun in the Spirit they are not to be made perfect by the flesh, but they live by the same faith that justifies. Now Hebrews completes the story, expounding the last two words, showing that it is "by faith" God's pilgrim people walk through this world to His praise and glory. Is it likely that He who is a God of order chose Paul to write Romans and Galatians, but selected some unknown writer to give us Hebrews? Is it not very much more probable that the same servant wrote all three epistles?

Now our second question: May we be certain as to its human authorship, or is it merely a matter of intellectual speculation at best? I believe God has given us definite information on this point : First, we have the well-known statement of the apostle Peter, which would seem conclusive as to the Pauline authorship. "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3: 15, 16). It should be noted that the apostle Peter writes to the Jewish believers scattered abroad, as his first epistle makes evident. Therefore, of course, he writes to Hebrews. His second epistle was written to the same people. "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you ; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance" (2 Pet. 3: 1). He declares that "our beloved brother Paul" had written an epistle unto them. Now if he is not referring to this letter to the Hebrews, then there is no such letter preserved, as all Paul's other epistles, written to companies of saints, were addressed to churches of the Gentiles. Then again in this Hebrew letter to which Peter refers, Paul has written "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction." How true is this of the Epistle to the Hebrews!

How many thousands of unstable souls have been thrown into greatest agony of mind and perturbation of spirit because of misunderstandings and utterly false interpretations of parts of chapters six and ten? It would seem that Peter could not have indicated more definitely than he has done that he referred to this letter.

Further, in the Epistle to the Thessalonians we read, "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every letter; so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (2 Thess 3: 17, 18). Here the apostle Paul tells us of the secret mark, if we may so say, placed at the end of every one of his letters, thus guarding saints from deception by forgery. Remember the warning in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, "That ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor *by letter as from us*, as that the day of Christ is at hand." What is this secret mark? It is a message that characterizes his entire ministry, a salutation that emphasizes the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us notice how this secret mark is found at the close of all his genuine letters:

Romans 16:24: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (Observe vers. 25-27 are in the nature of a postscript. The epistle properly ends with verse 24).

1 Corinthians 16: 23, 24: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."

2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen."

Galatians 6:18: "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."

Ephesians 6:24: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Philippians 4:23: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Colossians 4:18: "The salutation by the hand of me, Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen."

1 Thessalonians 5:28: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

2 Thessalonians 3:18: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

1 Timothy 6:21: "Grace be with thee. Amen."

2 Timothy 4:22: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen."

Titus 3:15: "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."

Philemon 25: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."

Now look at Hebrews 13:25: "Grace be with you all. Amen."

Can there be any question but that here we have Paul's authentication of this letter as written by himself? The proof becomes stronger when we turn to the general epistles, and notice how different are all the endings. Never once is the word *grace* used except in 2 Peter 3: 18. There it is "grow in grace," which is, of course, experience, and not the grace that saves. The book of Revelation which is of an altogether different character does use the grace salutation which is quite in keeping with the closing of the New Testament, and we need to remember that it is not an epistle, but a great prophetic treatise.

But why then is the Epistle to the Hebrews given anonymously? For this, I think there is a very clear answer. Paul is here writing to his own brethren after the flesh. They were greatly prejudiced against him and his ministry, though he yearned after them with all the fervor of a devoted brotherly love. Yet many of them repudiated his apostleship and feared his attitude toward their ancient ritual. He had tried to overcome this opposition. Upon the occasion of his last visit to Jerusalem, he went so far, in accordance with the suggestion of James, as to pay for the sacrificial offerings of certain brethren about to be released from Nazarite vows. But God would not permit this, for it would have been a virtual denial of the sufficiency of the one offering of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, and so the divinely permitted insurrection against Paul saved him from this apparent inconsistency. Probably during the time of his release, after his first imprisonment and before his second arrest (*cf* Heb. 13:23), he was chosen of God to write this letter calling upon believers in the Lord Jesus to separate completely from Judaism, as the entire system was about to be definitely rejected with the destruction of the Jewish temple so soon to take place. Paul therefore acts in accordance with the principle laid down elsewhere, "Unto the Jews I became a Jew that I might gain the Jews" (1 Cor. 9: 20). And so he hides his identity for the time being and does not insist upon his own apostolic authority, but rather makes his appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures, in the light, of course, of the new revelation.

[End of extract]

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We are rapidly moving into an era where material of this kind may be obtained only via email. Ireland is on the brink of introducing a draconian censorship law which will shut down sites like this and could result in penalties such as confiscation of property, financial fines and imprisonment for up to five years.

Readers who wish to be included on a future mailing list are welcome to contact me at the following address:-

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