

From the Garden to Glory

Hebrews

Author: Uncertain, opinions favor Paul the Apostle

Written to: Jewish Believers

Timeline: c. 63 - 65 A.D.

Theme: The Superiority of Christ

Purpose of writing: To address the danger of turning away from Jesus Christ to go back under the Law as means of salvation.

Introduction:

Many Jewish believers were slipping back to the traditions of Judaism. They were being tempted to go back under the Law to establish their own righteousness for salvation.

The writer very logically and simply takes them back to the beginning and the basics of faith in Christ. He exhorts them to think with their mind and to look at Scripture to see that **Jesus is better than anything else...**

Jesus is better than the prophets
Jesus is better than the angels
Jesus is better than Moses and Aaron
Jesus is a better High Priest
Jesus provides a better covenant
And on and on the writer of Hebrews goes...

As we begin our study of the book of Hebrews consider the following questions and write your responses:

1. Hebrews was written to Jewish converts to Christianity. Knowing what you do about the Jewish traditions, what might have beckoned these new converts back to the old religious customs of Judaism?

2. A key word in the book of Hebrews is *better*. The writer of Hebrews wanted his readers to know that Jesus was better than anything they had experienced in Judaism. What is one specific thing that you loved or relied upon before becoming a Christian that you have found Christ to be profoundly better than?

3. The authorship of the book of Hebrews is unclear. Although many commentators point to Paul, it is not certain. The Lord surely could have made the authorship clear if He had wanted to do so. Why do you think He did not? (Isaiah 55:8-9 might help you.) How might this encourage you during times of uncertainty in your own walk with the Lord?

Christ Superior to Prophets and Angels

Read Hebrews 1:1-2:18

1. The author of Hebrews listed several ways that the Son of God was superior to the prophets in 1:2b-3. What were they? Which of these is the most important to you today? Why?

2. What does 1:4 say about Jesus? How is this validated by 1:5? As you read 1:4-13, make a note of everything you learn about God's Son.

3. The word *therefore* in 2:1 referred to those things which were revealed about the Son of God in chapter one. The readers were instructed to *give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away*. *Earnest heed* and *drift away* were nautical terms. The former referred to tying a ship securely to the dock; the latter to a ship that had been allowed to drift out of the safety of the harbor. Consider your own life. How do you give earnest heed to the biblical teaching that you have heard? How do you keep from drifting from the safety of God's truth?

Christ Superior to Moses

Read Hebrews 3:1-4:16

1. Read 3:1 from The Amplified Bible.

So then, brethren, consecrated *and* set apart for God, who share in the heavenly calling, [thoughtfully and attentively] consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest Whom we confessed [as ours when we embraced the Christian faith].

Look up the word *consider* in a dictionary. Take some time today to *consider* Jesus and write what He reveals to you about Himself.

Note: Apostle means *one who has been sent, an ambassador*. This is the only place Jesus is called an apostle. An ambassador represents all the power and authority of his country and speaks for his nation. Priest means "bridge builder". God has built the bridge to man. A High Priest represented man to God.

2. Look at 3:2-6. Fill in the chart below contrasting Jesus with Moses. Write a summary sentence explaining why Jesus is superior to Moses.

Christ Jesus	Moses

3. Examine 4:14-16 prayerfully. How do these verses minister to you today? In practical terms, what does it mean to *come boldly to the throne of grace*?

Christ Superior to Aaron

Read Hebrews 5:1-8:6

1. The position of High Priest was the highest religious office in Judaism. Summarize what you learn about the qualifications for this office from 5:1-10. In what way(s) was Jesus superior to Aaron as a High Priest?

2. Consider the lyrics from the famous hymn by Edward Mote and read 6:17-20. Write a response concerning the hope that you have in your High Priest.

The Solid Rock

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name.

Refrain:

*On Christ the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.

Refrain

His oath, His covenant, His blood support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way He then is all my hope and stay.

Refrain

When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.

Refrain

3. Look at 7:20-8:6 and note what you learn from these verses about the priesthood of the High Priest Jesus Christ.

Christ Superior to Covenants

Read Hebrews 8:6-9:28

1. In Hebrews 8:6 the author transitioned the reader from the superiority of Christ as High Priest to the superiority of the *new covenant* which He ushered in with His priesthood. Look up the word *covenant* and write the definition. What do you learn about Jesus and this new covenant from the following verses?

- Luke 22:19-20

- Hebrews 7:22

- Hebrews 8:6-10

- Hebrews 8:13

2. The author of Hebrews paraphrased Jeremiah 31:31-34 in 8:10-12. Explain what each of the Lord's promises means, and then write your response to this provision in your own life.

- I will put My laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.

- I will be their God and they shall be My people.

- All shall know Me from the least of them to the greatest.

- I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.

3. Read chapter nine and contrast the inferior sanctuary of the old covenant with the superior heavenly sanctuary.

The Old Covenant Sanctuary Hebrews 9:1-10	The Heavenly Sanctuary Hebrews 9:11-28

Christ's Superior Atonement

Read Hebrews 10:1-39

1. What do you learn from verses 1-4 and 11 about the law and the inadequacy of the sacrifices?

2. Look at verses 5-9 and 12-15. What do you learn about Christ's sacrifice?

3. Read verses 19-25. In light of Christ's sacrifice, the author of Hebrews instructed his readers that they should respond in three ways. Note these instructions from verses 24-25 and list one practical way that you do each of these.

- And let us _____,
- not _____,
- but _____.

Christ's Superior Faith

Read Hebrews 11:1-40

1. Below is Warren Wiersbe's commentary on verses 1-3. Read the verses and the commentary, and then describe *faith* in your own words.

This is not a definition of faith but a description of what faith does and how it works. True Bible faith is not blind optimism or manufactured "hope-so" feeling. Neither is it an intellectual assent to doctrine. It is certainly not belief in spite of evidence! That would be superstition. *True Bible faith is confident obedience to God's Word in spite of circumstances and consequences.*

2. Read verse 6 carefully and prayerfully. Write it out phrase by phrase, explaining each phrase in your own words.

3. Read verses 4-40 and select a person (or persons) who best exemplifies faith to you. What do you learn about faith from this person? What can you do this week to emulate this person's faith?

Christ's Superior Privileges

Read Hebrews 12:1-13:25

1. Read 12:1-3. The author of Hebrews spoke of the Christian life as a *race that is set before us*. As you answer the following questions, describe his instructions and explain in a practical way how *you* can follow each of them.

- What are we to lay aside? Why are we to do so?

- How are we to run?

- Unto Whom are we to look as we run? How is He described?

- Why are we to consider Him?

2. Look up the word *chastening* in a dictionary and write the definition. What do you learn about the Lord's chastening in 12:5-11?

3. Read 13:5-6. How do these words minister to you today?

Summary

As you conclude your study of the book of Hebrews consider the following questions and write your answer:

1. What is the most significant thing that you have learned from your study about the Lord, His character, or His attributes? How does this

encourage you? Take a few moments to thank and praise the Lord for the things that you learned about Him.

- 2.** What is the most important lesson or new insight that you have learned from your study of this book? How can you apply this lesson in your life this week?