

HEBREWS
COMMENTARY

The book of Hebrews is considered by most to be an epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Hebrew Christians. It is assumed he wrote the letter around 63A.D. from Rome.

The purpose of the writing was to convince the Hebrew Christians that they should remain firm in the Lord and not return to the practices of the Jewish faith. The basis of such a challenge coming from the superiority of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the New Covenant over any individual and the Old Covenant.

Chapter 1:

vs. 1-3 In these introductory comments, Paul reminds the Hebrews that God had spoken to them through their forefathers in whom they would have taken great pride. He mentions the prophets that God used and mentions briefly how God spoke through angels, in person, and through visions and signs. Paul now states that God has now spoken through His own Son and speaks of how great Jesus is as He is the heir of all things.

The fact of Jesus helping is mentioned later in the chapter along with references to the same fact in I Cor. 8:6 & Colossians 1:15-17. This fact of Jesus' involvement in creation would demonstrate His Deity and having been sent by God.

vs. 4-14 In this section, Paul gives overwhelming evidence to his claim that Jesus is greater than angels. The heavenly beings were found in evidence in the Old Covenant times and delivered Gods messages. It is imperative for Paul to show that this Jesus had more authority to change the terms of the covenant, in essence to do away with the old and replace it with a new covenant.

s. 5
(Psalm 2:7)
(II Sam. 7:14)

s. 6
(Deut. 32:43)

s. 7
(Psalm 104:4)

s. 8,9
(Psalm 45:6,7)

s. 10-12
(Psalm 102:25-27)

s. 13
(Psalm 110:1)

Paul starts by showing that only Jesus was ever designated as God's own son. The angels did not have that special and privileged position. He then states in verse 6 that even the angels worshipped Jesus; whereas it is not recorded in Scripture where Jesus worshipped the angels.

Paul continues by showing that Jesus is exalted over these same by being designated as the one who will reign forever. Not only will He reign, but He will reign because He was instrumental in the creations very existence.

Paul concludes with the statement that the angels are to minister to the saints whereas Jesus is the LORD of the saints. In these verses he has proved his statement in verse 4 that Jesus became as much superior to the angels as His name that He inherited is greater than theirs.

**** NOTE HOW PAUL USED THEIR SCRIPTURES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT TO PROVE HIS POINT ****

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Chapter 2:

vs. 1-4 Paul tells them to be careful so that they do not drift away from their faith in Christ and back into the ways of the old covenant which has become void. To emphasize his point he shows how the message of the angels brought great punishment on those who failed to follow and obey. Since Jesus IS greater than these same angels than surely the punishment for disobeying His message would be greater also. There will be no escape if we refuse to accept God's great plan of redemption. Paul then mentions how the word of salvation had come to them through Jesus and then His followers. He further reminds them how God testified of His approval by the signs and wonders that He did through the apostles and by giving the Holy Spirit to the believers.

vs. 5-9 Paul continues in his warning as he reminds them that Jesus who brought His message to man is the one to whom the entire world will give answer. This has yet to take place in completeness. There are yet people today who fail to recognize the authority and power of Jesus. The day will come when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess (Philippians 2:9-11)

vs. 6-8
(Psalm 8:4-6)

Jesus was made a little lower than the angels when He became like us and eventually died at the hands of men. Yet, it was this same death that has caused Him to be crowned with honor. He has died so that those who believe in Him will not have to fear death or experience it in completeness (I Corinthians 15:54-57).

vs. 10-18

Everything exists for God and only through Him could everything exist. This same creation (man) has been brought to salvation by Jesus who was made perfect by His suffering and having endured it to the glory of God. It is Jesus who makes us holy. By acceptance of Him and the cleansing of our sins, we become a part of the family of God.

vs. 12
(Psalm 22:22)

vs. 13
(Isaiah 8:17,18)

Since we are flesh and blood, Jesus, our brother, also became like us. In the same form as we, He conquered mankind's greatest enemy, Satan. Those were slaves to Satan have been freed by the conqueror, Jesus Christ.

By so sacrificing His own life for our sins He fills the role as high priest. The high priest was chosen to sacrifice animals to God for the forgiveness of the peoples sins. Jesus offered the perfect sacrifice. As a PERFECT high priest, He can not only forgive our sins but help us to overcome because He has already done it.

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Chapter 3:

vs. 1-6

Paul reminds the Hebrew Christians that they should focus their thoughts on Jesus Christ whom they have accepted as their Lord. Paul has already discussed briefly that Jesus is our High Priest (See ch. 2). Apostle means, one sent with a message. Jesus fulfills that definition also (see ch. 2)

Once again, Paul compares Jesus to one of the greats in the Hebrew frame of reference. Moses, who led the people for the 40 years in the wilderness following their delivery from slavery in Egypt is shown to have been faithful in obeying God. Jesus is worthy of more honor, however, because not only was He faithful like Moses, but, He made Moses. Moses was a servant in God's house, obeying the commands. Jesus, however, was the son of God's house and has the authority to give commands. These two men of God (one being God) are a part of God's family with all believers who place their trust in God and the one He sent.

vs. 7-19

Speaking of our hope in Christ, which Jesus Himself brought to the world, Paul tells us to heed His voice. He reminds the Hebrews of their ancestors in the desert (Exodus-Deuteronomy) and how they tested and disobeyed God again and again. Because of their sin (in particular, refusing to enter the Promise Land when told --- Number 14) God decided that that generation would not enter the land of promise and they didn't (except the 2 who had placed their trust in God). He implores these Hebrew Christians not to make the same mistake. To prevent one another from turning away from God and disobeying we are to encourage one another. We will have a part in God's rest (heaven) if we will be faithful. Those who were not allowed into the Promised Land were those who failed to place their entire trust in the Lord and Paul implies that the same type of total trust is necessary for believers today.

vs. 7-11

(Psalm 95:7-11)

vs. 15

(Psalm 95:7,8)

STUDY GUIDE

Hebrews 1:

1. How has God spoken to mankind?
2. Who is the Son and to whom is He superior?
3. How does God describe His relationship to His Son?
4. What does God say about the angels?
5. What is said about the Son's Kingdom?
6. Why was the Son set up above His companions?
7. How is the Son's power over creation shown?
8. What will happen to the Son's enemies?
9. What is the purpose of the angels, according to chapter 1?

BONUS:

1. Why do you think so much time is taken to demonstrate the superiority of Jesus?
2. How should His superiority affect us?
3. Would a Kingdom like the one described be beneficial to people everywhere? Explain.
4. What does Jesus' role in creation mean to you?
5. How do you think that the angels minister today? How does that knowledge make you feel?

STUDY GUIDE

Hebrews 2:

1. What is the writer afraid that we might drift away from?
2. How was this made known and who testified that it was true?
3. How did this individual testify?
4. What did God make subject to His Son and is it now subject?
5. Why is Jesus crowned with glory and honor and what did He accomplish?
6. What did Jesus do that God made Him perfect through suffering?
7. Why is Jesus not ashamed to call us brothers?
8. What did Jesus seek to accomplish by His death?
9. Why did Jesus have to be made like His brothers in every way?

BONUS:

1. Explain, using chapter 2, that "Once saved, always saved" is NOT true.
2. What importance is the fact that everything will be put under the feet of Jesus? How does this affect your attitude towards Him?
3. What does it mean to you, that Jesus became like us in every way?
4. Explain the statement, "Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted He is able to help those who are being tempted." How does this make you feel?

STUDY GUIDE

Hebrews 3:

1. Who are we to center our thoughts on, and what are the roles that He fills?
2. Who is Jesus and His faithfulness compared to?
3. Who is the builder of everything?
4. What is the difference between Moses and Jesus' roles in God's house?
5. What did Moses testify to?
6. How can we be a part of God's house?
7. What should we not do when we hear God's voice?
8. Because the Israelites would not hear God's voice, what would they never enter?
9. What type of heart turns away from God?
10. Why should we encourage one another daily?
11. How can we know if we have come to share in Christ?

BONUS:

1. In writing to Israelites, why would the writer spend so much time showing Jesus to be greater than Moses?
2. What is the difference between a son and a servant in a house?
3. How do people harden their hearts today? How do Christians harden their hearts?
4. How can Christians encourage one another? (Cite specific examples and how they are encouraging)