

Introduction to the Book of Hebrews

Sermon 1 in the Hebrews Series

I. The Audience, Date and Setting of the Book

A. Written to Jews

Hence the name “To the Hebrews”

B. The Date of the Book

There is internal evidence that shows it was written before 70AD.

8:13 – The Temple was still standing.

10:1 – Animal sacrifices were still going taking place.

13:24 – It appears to have been written from Italy.

13:24 – Timothy is mentioned by Name – see also **13:3**

12:3-4 – Persecution was coming which would get much worse
The Book was probably written between 63-67 AD.

C. Three Possible Recipients (or hearers) of this Exhortation

1. A convert from Judaism to Christianity
2. A Levitical Priest who converted to Christ
3. A Jewish individual who met with the Believers, but had not yet come personally to Christ.

II. The Author of the Book

There is no end of controversy here – and still no definitive answer

Educated guesses: The Apostle Paul – The Apostle Paul with help from Luke
Barnabas, Apollos, Clement, Pricilla (Pricilla and Aquila), Anonymous

III. The Theme of the Book

A. the Theme itself -- Philip Edgcumbe Hughes outlines the book well:

1. Christ is Superior to the Prophets 1:1-3
2. Christ is Superior to Angels 1:4-2:18
3. Christ is Superior to Moses 3:1-4:13
4. Christ is Superior to Aaron 4:14-10:18
5. Christ is Superior as the New and Living Way 10:19-10:39
6. The Triumph of Faith 11:1-40
7. Christ is the Founder and Perfecter of Our Faith 12:1-29
8. Final Exhortations 13:1-25

B. The Warning Passages

There are 5 exhortations or warnings dispersed throughout the book.

2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:20; 10:26-39; 12:15-29

The book flows well if you read it omitting the warning passages.

Each warning also ends with an encouragement to those who are true believers.