

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 1
November 12, 2017

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

JESUS IS GREATER

Jesus is greater, Artist unknown.

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message One

INTRODUCTION, AUTHORSHIP, AUDIENCE, AND OUTLINE

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HEBREWS INTRODUCTION

- I. AUDIENCE
- II. DATE WRITTEN
- III. AUTHORSHIP

HEBREWS CHAPTER 1

- I. CHRIST, THE SELECTED ONE (1:1–3): The Father has chosen his Son to minister in four all-important areas.
- II. CHRIST, THE SUPERIOR ONE (1:4–14): Christ is superior to the angels in three important ways.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 2

- I. THE WARNING FROM CHRIST (2:1–4): This warning has to do with God's salvation.
- II. THE WORK OF CHRIST (2:5–18)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3

- I. THE WORTHINESS OF THE SAVIOR (3:1–6): Jesus is compared and contrasted to Moses.
- II. THE WARNING BY THE SPIRIT (3:7–19): This warning has to do with the terrible sin of unbelief.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 4

- I. THE PROMISE OF GOD (4:1–11): This promise involves the rest that God has prepared for his people.
- II. THE POWER OF GOD (4:12–13)
- III. THE PRIEST OF GOD (4:14–16)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 5

- I. THE REQUIREMENTS IN REGARD TO THE PRIESTS (5:1–10): The author of Hebrews compares and contrasts the high priestly ministries of both Aaron and Christ.
- II. THE REBUKE IN REGARD TO THE PEOPLE (5:11–14)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6

- I. THE APPEAL FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (6:1–12)
- II. THE ANCHOR FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (6:13–20): This desired maturity is assured.
 - A. Because of the Father's promise (6:13–18)
 1. *God promised to bless Abraham, and he did* (6:13–15).
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 - B. Because of the Savior's priesthood (6:19–20)

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- I. A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (7:1–3)
- II. A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (7:4–28): The author lists the various characteristics of Jesus, who, according to the Father’s decree, is to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek (see Ps. 110:4).

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- I. ITS SANCTUARY IS SUPERIOR (8:1–2).
- II. ITS SACRIFICE IS SUPERIOR (8:3–4).
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- I. THE COMPARISON (10:1–18): Here the blood of earthly lambs is compared with the blood of the heavenly Lamb.
- II. THE CHALLENGE (10:19–39): This challenge is in the form of a fourfold exhortation.

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- I. THE EXPLANATION OF FAITH (11:1–3, 6)
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HEBREWS CHAPTER 12

- I. THE CONTEST (12:1–4)
- II. THE CHASTENING (12:5–13): Divine discipline is the theme of this passage.
- III. THE CHALLENGES (12:14–17)
- V. THE CAUTION (12:25–27): The author solemnly warns his readers about the terrible results of unbelief.
- VI. THE CONSUMING FIRE (12:28–29)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 13

- I. A WORD ABOUT LOVE (13:1–6)
- II. A WORD ABOUT LEADERS (13:7, 17–19, 22–25)
- III. A WORD ABOUT LEGALISM (13:9–11): What altar and sacrifice should the believer be associated with?
- IV. A WORD ABOUT LORDSHIP (13:8, 12–16, 20–21) ¹

¹ Willmington, H. L. (1999). *The Outline Bible* (Hebrews 1:1–13:14). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

INTRODUCTION

This book was written in approximately A.D. 64-66 to the early Church believers in Christ who were Jewish, lived near Jerusalem, who knew the author of this book (Hebrews 13:19,23). It appears from chapter two, verse three “*having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard,*” that they were second generation believers and not eyewitnesses to the ministry, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Since they were Jewish and probably orthodox the writer quotes frequently from the Old Testament of which a Gentile audience would have no experience. This is clearly brought out by the writer warning for them not to return back to the Mosaic Law. Similarly to what the apostle Paul condemned the Corinthian church for (I Corinthians 3:2-3) which was chiding them for not growing at all Spiritually, these Jews were doing the same thing. In fact the author of Hebrews says in Chapter 5:11-14, that they should be teachers by now and they are not. Finally this group was experiencing significant persecution and as a result they were irresolute in their faith. In other words many of them while wanting to be part of the Church and leave the Old Law had not made the final decision to believe the Gospel. Since they lived so close to Jerusalem the temptation to return to the Temple sacrificial system was strong and it was a major problem which was crippling their final firm acceptance of the Gospel (Hebrews 6:1-12, characterized as *falling away*). This factor of the intended audience is important to retain throughout the book as it will explain some problematic passages such as salvation.

The King James Version of the Bible from A.D.1611 titled the Book, “The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews.” This was only an evaluation and not a designation of authorship that was definitely known. Since Paul did not identify himself in this book as he did in thirteen other books its authorship needs to be identified by other factors.

The earliest recognition of Paul as the author comes from Clement of Alexander (cir. A.D. 200) quoted in Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History as being the author. Eusebius writes:

The epistle to the Hebrews he asserted was written by Paul to the Hebrews in the Hebrew tongue, but it was carefully translated by Luke and published among the Greeks since one finds the same character of style and of phraseology in the epistle as in the Acts: “But it is probably that the title, Paul the Apostle, was not prefixed to it. For as he wrote to the Hebrews, who had imbibed prejudices against him, and suspected him, he wisely guards against diverting them from perusal, by giving his name.”

A little after this he observed, “Now as the blessed presbyter used to say ‘since the Lord who was sent to the Hebrews, Paul by reason of his inferiority, as if sent to the Gentiles, did not subscribe himself as apostle of the Hebrews; both out of reverence for the Lord, and because he wrote of his abundance to the Hebrews, as a herald and apostle of the Gentiles.’”²

² Eusebius Pamphilus, Translated by C.F. Cruse, *Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History*, originally written Cir A.D. 324, present publisher, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA 01961-3473, Pg. 204.

Other early church fathers also affirmed that the author was the apostle Paul. Two of those are Augustine and Jerome. It was not until nearly fifteen hundred years later that the Pauline authorship began to be disputed. The long time after the event detracts from the credibility of their claims by refuting the support of the early Church fathers who were closest to the time of the writing. Paul was distinctively and essentially the “apostle of the Gentiles” (Romans 11:13), yet his ministry was by no means limited to to them, as the Lord’s words clearly show as recorded in the book of Acts.

Acts 9:15

¹⁵ But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel (KJV).

It is important to note that the Children of Israel are mentioned *last*, in concert with the fact that his Epistle to the Hebrews was written *after* most of his others to Gentile saints. Given the date assigned to its writing Paul was martyred in Rome one or two year after. The apostle Peter refers to this epistle, and designates Paul to be the penman of it, by telling the Hebrews, to whom he wrote, of Paul’s having written to them, 2 Peter 3:15. We read of no other epistle that he ever wrote to them but this.

The largest question objecting to the Pauline authorship is that, since Paul put his name to all his other epistles, why he would have omitted it here? There are essentially two sound reasons. *One*, that he, being the apostle of the Gentiles, who were odious to the Jews, would want to conceal his name, because their prejudices against him would keep them from ever reading it and realizing that Jesus is their Messiah. And, *two*, if he revealed himself in a book to Jewish believers and as a former Pharisee the unsaved Jews who viewed him as a traitor and might persecute him given the opportunity.

Other factors include a reference to his friend and colleague Timothy in the closing chapter, The author had an intimate knowledge of the temple practices, and had deep concern for the Jewish nation. Paul writing to the Romans even offered to give up his salvation for the Jews if it were possible (Romans 9:1-4). The author had been in bonds (10:34), Wrote from Italy (13:24), The writing style is Pauline and Peter seems to identify the writer as Paul (II Peter 3:15, 16 and I Peter 1:1)

HEBREWS CHAPTER ONE

CHRIST, THE SELECTED ONE

Hebrews 1:1-3

¹ GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ² hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and

upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (KJV).

Paul begins to describe the manner of communication to the world used by God the Father as presented in the Old Testament. It was through prophets that God gave revelation of Himself and what He expects of us, who in turn wrote them for us to receive. The apostle suggests, that it was a long time since God spoke to this people through the prophets. Prophecy had ceased ever since the revealing of God's Will through the prophet Malachi, for greater than three hundred years. The term *last days* as understood by the nation Israel as revealed in the Old Testament is a reference to the days of the Messiah (c.f. Genesis 49:1; Numbers 24:14; Isaiah 2:2). The New Testament usage is more specifically understood as the time period after World War I. Jesus explained this when using the Hebrew idiomatic phrase, "*When nation rises against nation*" in the entire world it would begin the events leading up to the establishing of the Messianic Kingdom on the earth (Matthew 24:7). He was referring to the time near the end of the age not the appearance of Himself as the Messiah in His first advent.

Amos 3:6-8

⁶Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it? ⁷Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets. ⁸The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy (ASV, 1901) ?

This is God speaking to humanity. He is the author of both the law spoken through the prophets and the Gospel brought by Himself in the glorious Shekinah of the body of Jesus. He spoke in former times through the prophets, He spoke in these last days by his Son. Neither of these messages were from men; both have the same divine origin. God now through the apostle Paul declares the surpassing majesty of the Lord Jesus. And who being the heir of all things was anointed to bring the revelation of God to humanity in the Last Days. Jesus Himself said through Matthew (15:24) that He had come only for the *house of Israel* affirming the targeted audience of this book as well as the reasons that they must listen to Him as they did *the prophets*. Here they are shown, the superiority of Christianity over the Mosaic Law. The Law given at Sinai was indeed divine because it was God who spoke it to the Chosen people. God gave the Nation Israel His Oracles and in the writings of Moses and the prophets they possessed the Scriptures which Jesus affirmed could not be broken, meaning what had been prophesied would happen (John 10:35). In them God revealed His Will. The Immanuel (God with us) was prophesied by God (Isaiah 9:6; 53:1-12 etc.), and the epistles also begin by telling us that the Gospel expounded by the prophets had been "*promised afore by God's prophets in the Holy Scriptures*" (Romans 1:1-3). Now the revelation of the divinity of Jesus is affirmed as the Creator who, *made the worlds*.

John 1:1-3; 10

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²The same was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made by him;

and without him was not any thing made that was made.¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not (KJV)..

Colossians 1:16-17

¹⁶ for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ and he is before all things, and by him all things consist (KJV).

The text goes on to describe *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.* The expression here, "brightness," characterizes Jesus Who is described in numerous passages as light which is connected with the revelation of God in Christ Jesus to the world. And so when we come to Jesus we think of the light of the awareness of Heaven streaming forth from Him upon human ignorance, misery, and despair. The apostle John says *Jesus is the light which, lighteth every man coming into the world* (John 1:9). Jesus affirmed His deity as shining light when He was transfigured with Moses and Elijah witnessed by Peter, James and John (Luke 9:29-32). Here the brightness of His Glory was manifested for the three witnesses to see. The apostle John saw this risen Jesus and the Majestic glory of His brightness while he was imprisoned on the isle of Patmos. He still had the form of a man but His glory shone through His body to reveal His deity.

Revelation 1:14-15

¹⁴ His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; ¹⁵ and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters (KJV).

Jesus upholds all things in this world. In addition to creating all things He controls all things such as the weather. As shown to His apostles on the Sea of Galilee when He calmed the wind they marvelled and asked themselves *What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him* (Mark 4:41)?

The text in Hebrews 1:1-3 ends with a reference to the salvation that Jesus provides us by taking our sins through His death and resurrection.

JESUS IS THE PERSON WHO BOUGHT OUR SALVATION

Jesus is the person who claimed to be God and willingly died on that Roman cross many years ago to enable us to receive our salvation.

WHAT OUR SALVATION GUARANTEES

1. We are His Child

John 1:12-13

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: ¹³ which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (KJV).

2. We are Not Condemned

John 3:17

¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. ¹⁸ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (KJV).

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (KJV).

3. We are New Creatures

II Corinthians 5:7

¹⁷ Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are past away; behold, all things are become new (KJV).

4. We are Accepted and Forgiven by God

Ephesians 6:6-7

⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: ⁷ in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (KJV).

5. We possess Eternal Life

John 10:28

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand (KJV).

6. We are Reconciled to God

Romans 5:10

¹⁰ *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (KJV).*

7. We are at Peace With God

Romans 5:1

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (KJV):

8. We Have Passed from Death to Life

I John 3:14

¹⁴ *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death (KJV).*

9. The Holy Spirit Dwells in Us

II Timothy 1:14

¹⁴ *That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us (KJV).*

10. We are Forgiven of All Our Sins

Colossians 2:13

Canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands (ESV).

11. We are Adopted into The Family of God

Galatians 4:5

⁵ *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (KJV).*

12. Our Names Are Written into The Book of Life

Philippians 4:3

³ *And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life (KJV).*

13. We Receive The Righteousness of Christ

Romans 3:22

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference (KJV).

14. We are Friends of God and No Longer His Enemies

I Corinthians 12:13

¹⁵ Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you (KJV).

15. We have an Inheritance in Heaven Waiting for Us

I Peter 1:4

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (KJV).

16. We are Sealed by the Holy Spirit Until the Day of Redemption

Ephesians 1:12-14

¹² That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ: ¹³ in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory (KJV).

17. We are Not Saved to Wrath

I Thessalonians 5:9-11

⁹ For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. ¹¹ Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do (KJV).

There is a way to flee from the wrath to come. How do you flee from the wrath to come? It's going to come over the entire world. The only way to flee is to be in Christ and to be with Him off the earth. That's the only way you are going to get out of it. The Lord Jesus also was quoted by Luke saying the same thing.

Luke 21:34-36

³⁴ And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. ³⁵ For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man (KJV).

The Tribulation is coming on the entire world. The only way to escape it is to be off the world and stand before the Son of Man, Jesus. In other words to be Raptured before the Tribulation. For the time being Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty waiting for the signal of God the Father to take us at the Rapture then later conduct the Great Tribulation to purge the world of its sins as he has purged us of ours

Next message: The Book of Hebrews Chapter One Cont.

E-mail: Pentwaterbiblechurch@scofieldinstitute.org Call: Toll Free 877-706-2479