

Hebrews

The Superiority of Christ

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Theme: Superiority of Christ.

- ❖ **Author & Date: Unknown. A.D. 67-69**
- ❖ **Author's reason for writing:** The thrust of this letter was to focus Jewish Christians back on the superiority of Christ. Evidently, the readers are in danger of reverting to Judaism because of the suffering they are beginning to experience for their faith in Christ. This epistle was also written to exhort them to become mature in Christ and put away their spiritual immaturity. Thus, it places heavy stress on doctrine, concentrating on Christology and Soteriology (salvation).
- ❖ **Literary Style:** Epistle.
- ❖ **Background and Setting:** This epistle was written to believing Hebrews, in one of these areas Palestine, Egypt, Italy, Asia Minor and Greece area during a time where the persecution of believers was beginning to intensify greatly. It is possible that the recipients were not people who personally saw Christ but were told about Him and His Salvation (Hebrews 2:3,4). These were not new or untaught believers ["by this time you ought to be teachers... You need milk, not solid food," Hebrews 5:12]. The generation of Hebrews receiving this epistle had practiced the Jewish system of sacrifices at the temple in Jerusalem [Judaism]. This is why the writer of this epistle emphasized the superiority of Christianity over Judaism and the superiority of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice over the repeated and imperfect Levitical sacrifices observed in the temple.
- ❖ **Key People:** Old Testament people of faith. (Hebrews 11)

- ❖ **Historical/Cultural Context:** The book of Hebrews is deeply rooted in the Levitical priesthood established in the Old Testament. Understanding the Levitical priesthood is essential for the understanding of the book of Hebrews. In the Old Testament Israel's sin had continually interrupted God's fellowship with His chosen and covenant people, Israel. Therefore, God graciously established a system of sacrifices that symbolized the inner repentance of sinners and His divine forgiveness. However, the need for sacrifices never ended because the people and priests continued to sin. The need of all mankind was for a perfect priest and a perfect sacrifice that would once and for all actually remove sin. God's provision for that perfect priest and sacrifice in Christ is the central message of Hebrews. Throughout the book of Hebrews you will see the comparison between the incomplete provisions of the Old Covenant, given under Moses, and the infinitely better provisions of the New Covenant offered by the perfect High Priest, God's only son and the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
- ❖ **Summary:** The author starts off by stating the superiority of Christ which leads him into the work that Christ accomplished and then how we ought to walk according to those works.
- ❖ **Outline:** The superiority of Jesus Christ's Position (1:1-4:13). The superiority of Jesus Christ's Priesthood (4:14-7:28). The Superiority of Christ's Priestly Ministry (8:1-10:18). The Superiority of the believers Privileges ((10:19-12:29). The superiority of Christian behavior (13:1-21).
- ❖ **Tough Questions:**
 - What does Hebrews 4:14-16 teach about prayer?

Gospel Connection

Hebrews presents Christ as the perfect priest and sacrifice over the inadequate sacrifices of the Jews. (9:9,12-15). Christ is also superior as the High Priest, Prophet, and King to all those who came before Him (4:14-16; 12:1,2).

Life Passages

Hebrews:

- ❖ **Hebrews 1:1-2 – God spoke through Christ.**
 - What does this verse say about the validity of the New Testament? (Hebrews 2:1-4)
- ❖ **Hebrews 1:3-4 – Christ is Creator and Sustainer**
 - Is this verse enough to show that Christ is God? (Colossians 1:15-17)
- ❖ **Hebrews 2:17 – Christ made like man.**
 - Since Christ was made in “every respect” like man does this mean that he was tempted like us? (Hebrews 4:15)
- ❖ **Hebrews 3:12-13 – Exhorting one another**
 - What does “daily” and true fellowship prevent according to this passage (v.13) and in what ways can you be better at exhorting people or allow people to exhort you?
- ❖ **Hebrews 4:12 – Living Word**
 - In what ways do you see the Word of God piercing your soul and spirit?
- ❖ **Hebrews 4:15,16 – Christ without Sin and prayer.**
 - Since Christ has been tempted in every way as we have been how should we respond to temptation (time of need) according to this verse? (v.16)
- ❖ **Hebrews 5:12-13 – Grow up.**
 - How does this verse encourage us to continually be studying the Word and for what reason?
- ❖ **Hebrews 6:4-6 – Fallen Away**
 - Is this verse talking about losing your salvation? Compare it to these passages: John 10:27; Romans 8:35,38,39; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:4,5
- ❖ **Hebrews 7:25 – Jesus Prays for Us**
 - In what ways does this verse comfort you?
- ❖ **Hebrews 10:25 – Go to Church**

- Going to church is a must and must not be neglected. Are you neglecting to be in a home church?
- ❖ **Hebrews 10:34 – Joyfully accepting persecution.**
 - Are there practical ways in your life in which you can model this?
 - Since we have been promised a “better possession” how should we look at our possessions that we own here on earth?
- ❖ **Hebrews 11:1 – Faith is.**
 - What is faith according to this verse?
- ❖ **Hebrews 11:6 – Without Faith.**
 - What can we “not” do without faith?
 - By doing things in faith what do we receive?
- ❖ **Hebrews 12:1-2 – Run the Race.**
 - Who do we need to look to in order to run the race with endurance?
 - What are ways in which you can look to Jesus for endurance? (V. 2b)
- ❖ **Hebrews 12:8 – No Discipline Means**
 - According to this verse should we be expecting discipline from God?
 - If so, why does He do it? (Hebrews 12:10)
 - What does it mean if we do not receive discipline from God?
- ❖ **Hebrews 13:2 – Hospitality**
 - Are you hospitable? If not, why?
- ❖ **Hebrews 13:7 – Imitating mature Saints.**
 - Do you have someone or people in your life that you imitate or can imitate?
 - If not, what steps can you take to find that person and seek that person out for discipleship?
 - In order to imitate this person is it important to have a good close relationship with this person?