



# Hebrews - 13 chapters

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## Title:

The Epistle to the Hebrews – because it was written to people who presumably were Jewish (Hebrew) Christians. And this book addresses many things relevant to Jewish Christians, especially the relationship of the Old Testament to Christ, especially the sacrificial rituals.

## Author:

The Book of Hebrews is anonymous. There are many suggested possibilities for the identity of the author, but there is no way we can know for sure. From the book, we can conclude that the author was a Jewish Christ, who was very familiar with Jewish culture in the wider Greek and Roman World. He was an expert in the Old Testament and a great communicator of that knowledge and its application for understanding Jesus.

## Occasion and Purpose:

Some Jewish Christians were considering abandoning or downplaying Christianity and identifying only as Jewish, because of persecution. So, they were in danger of relapse, or falling away from God. Therefore, the author wrote to show the superiority of Christ over all the Old Testament realities, in order to prevent the readers from returning to Judaism Christ. The author denied that Judaism without Christ had any validity any longer. He boasted of the sufficiency and supremacy of Christ, and encouraged them to persevere with Christ.

## Themes:

1. **Superiority of Christ** – Jesus is the superior prophet, giving better revelation than in the Old Testament. He is the superior priest than even the High Priest of Israel, initiating a better covenant, by offering a better sacrifice, and making better intercession for His people. And He is the superior King, giving better, eternal rest. Jesus is better in every way to every Old Testament institution.
2. **Sacrifice AND Intercession** – Hebrews emphasizes Jesus' intercession more than any other book. Jesus, once and for all, offered Himself on behalf of our sins, as a sacrifice, which accomplished our atonement before God. And now, Jesus continually is interceding on our behalf, to apply that atonement and its benefits to His people.
3. **Continuity AND Discontinuity** – Jesus is completely in line with the Old Testament. He is the climax and fulfillment of the OT – the goal of all that had gone before. And yet, what Jesus did and does is completely superior to the Old Testament realities. Now that Jesus has come, they are obsolete. The New Covenant has arrived, so the Old Covenant is fading.
4. **Faith** – This book encourages faith and faithful perseverance. Because we are convinced of His faithfulness, and the sufficiency of His eternal sacrifice, we are empowered to persevere until the fullness of His promised reward is attained.
5. **Confidence/Assurance** – We are assured and can live with confidence. We can confidently approach God, because He has provided a sure way. And we can live with full assurance of faith and boldness. This is not self-assurance, but confidence in God and His promises.
6. **Warnings** – This book strongly warns the readers that abandoning Christ is abandoning God. God has no plan B, so that abandoning Christ and the New Testament is to go back to nothing. So, we must persevere to the end, even in the midst of suffering.

## Summary:

Jesus is Superior to all the Old Testament realities. He is greater than angels, greater than Moses, and His rest is superior to the rest given by Joshua. He is the greater High Priest of the New Covenant, after the pattern of Melchizedek. Because He has been installed as priest by God's oath and offered a Better, one-time sacrifice, which is sufficient for all time. Therefore, the Old Covenant is now obsolete. And so, His people should never seek to go back to the way it was before. Rather, they should persevere in faith and hope, knowing that God is faithful to His promises.

## Organization:

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| <b>1:1-3 God's Final Word</b>            |  |
| <b>1:4-4:13 Christ is Superior</b>       |  |
|  | 1:4-3:1 Superior to Angels<br>3:2-4:2 Superior to Moses<br>4:3-13 Superior to Joshua   |
| <b>4:14-10:18 Christ is High Priest</b>  |  |
|  | 4:14-5:10 He can sympathize<br>5:11-6:12 Application: Be diligent to Mature<br>6:13-20a God's Certain Promise<br>6:20b-7:28 Order of Melchizedek<br>8:1-13 High Priest of the New Covenant<br>9:1-10:18 Priest of a Better Sacrifice |
| <b>10:19-13:25 Faithful Perseverance</b> |  |
|  | 10:19-39 Application: Have Confidence in Christ<br>11:1-40 Examples of Faith<br>12:1-13 Gracious Discipline<br>12:14-29 Tremble Before God<br>13:1-21 Concluding Exhortations  |
| <b>13:22-25 Conclusion</b>               |  |

## Key Verses:

1:1-3, 3:1, 12-14, 4:8-11, 14-16, 5:5-6, 6:13-18, 7:11-25, 8:1-2, 6-13, 9:11-14, 23-28, 10:1-4, 11-14, 19-25, 10:35-11:6, 11:39-12:3, 12:7-11, 13:13-16