



## SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

**Author:** Although some include the Book of Hebrews among the apostle Paul's writings, the certain identity of the author remains an enigma. Missing is Paul's customary salutation common to his other works. In addition, the suggestion that the writer of this epistle relied upon knowledge and information provided by others who were actual eyewitnesses of Christ Jesus (2:3) makes Pauline authorship doubtful. Some attribute Luke as its writer; others suggest Hebrews may have been written by Apollos, Barnabas, Silas, Philip, or Aquila and Priscilla. Regardless of the human hand that held the pen, the Holy Spirit of God is the divine author of all Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16); therefore, Hebrews speaks with the same canonical authority as the other sixty-five books of the Bible.

**Date of Writing:** The early church father Clement quoted from the Book of Hebrews in A.D. 95. However, internal evidence such as the fact that Timothy was alive at the time the epistle was written and the absence of any evidence showing the end of the Old Testament sacrificial system that occurred with Jerusalem's destruction in A.D. 70 indicates the book was written around A.D. 65.

**Purpose of Writing:** The late Dr. Walter Martin, founder of the Christian Research Institute and writer of the best-selling book *Kingdom of the Cults*, quipped in his usual tongue-in-cheek manner that the Book of Hebrews was written by a Hebrew to other Hebrews telling the Hebrews to stop acting like Hebrews. In truth, many of the early Jewish believers were slipping back into the rites and rituals of Judaism in order to escape the mounting persecution. This letter, then, is an exhortation for those persecuted believers to continue in the grace of Jesus Christ.

### Key Verses:

Hebrews 1:1-2: "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe."

Hebrews 2:3: "How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation..."

Hebrews 4:14-16: "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

Hebrews 12:1-2: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

**Brief Summary:** The Book of Hebrews addresses three separate groups: believers in Christ, unbelievers who had knowledge of and an intellectual acceptance of the facts of Christ, and unbelievers who were attracted to Christ, but who rejected Him ultimately. It's important to understand which group is being addressed in which passage. To fail to do so can cause us to draw conclusions inconsistent with the rest of Scripture.

The writer of Hebrews continually makes mention of the superiority of Christ in both His personage and in His ministering work. In the writings of the Old Testament, we understand the rituals and ceremonies of Judaism symbolically pointed to the coming of Messiah. In other words, the rites of Judaism were but shadows of things to come. Hebrews tells us that Christ Jesus is better than anything mere religion has to offer. All the pomp and circumstance of religion pales in comparison to the person, work, and ministry of Christ Jesus. It is the superiority of our Lord Jesus, then, that remains the theme of this eloquently written letter.

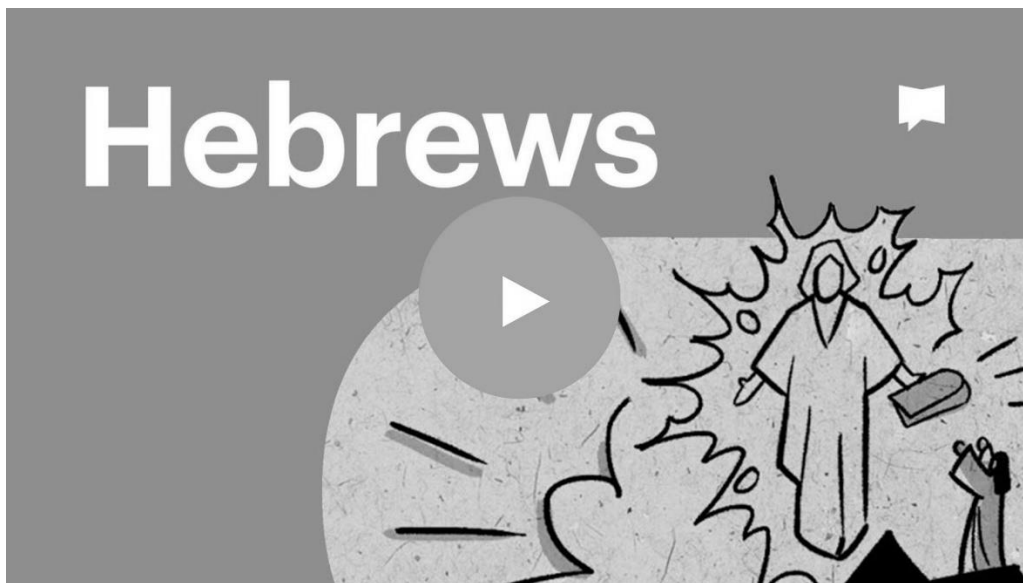
**Connections:** Perhaps nowhere in the New Testament does the Old Testament come into focus more than in the Book of Hebrews, which has as its foundation the Levitical priesthood. The writer to the Hebrews constantly compares the inadequacies of the Old Testament sacrificial system to the perfection and completion in Christ. Where the Old Covenant required continual sacrifices and a once-a-year atonement for sin offered by a human priest, the New Covenant provides a once-for-all sacrifice through Christ (Hebrews 10:10) and direct access to the throne of God for all who are in Him.

**Practical Application:** Rich in foundational Christian doctrine, the Epistle to the Hebrews also gives us encouraging examples of God's "faith heroes" who persevered in spite of great difficulties and adverse circumstances (Hebrews 11). These members of God's Hall of Faith provide overwhelming evidence as to the unconditional surety and absolute reliability of God. Likewise, we can maintain perfect confidence in God's rich promises, regardless of our circumstances, by meditating upon the rock-solid faithfulness of God's workings in the lives of His Old Testament saints.

The writer of Hebrews gives ample encouragement to believers, but there are five solemn warnings we must heed. There is the danger of neglect (Hebrews 2:1-4), the danger of unbelief (Hebrews 3:7-4:13), the danger of spiritual immaturity (Hebrews 5:11-6:20), the danger of failing to endure (Hebrews 10:26-39), and the inherent danger of refusing God (Hebrews 12:25-29). And so we find in this crowning masterpiece a great wealth of doctrine, a refreshing spring of encouragement, and a source of sound, practical warnings against slothfulness in our Christian walk. But there is still more, for in Hebrews we find a magnificently rendered portrait of our Lord Jesus Christ—the Author and Finisher of our great salvation (Hebrews 12:2).<sup>1</sup>

## Optional:

Watch an 8 minute overview of the Book of Hebrews: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/hebrews/>



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Book-of-Hebrews.html>

**AUTHOR: ?**

• PAUL?  
• BARBARAS?  
• APOLLOS?  
→ APOSTLES  
→ JEW!

**AUDIENCE: ?**

• SEE 10:32-34  
PERSECUTION & IMPRISONMENT

THROUGH KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE  
**OLD TESTAMENT**

ABRAHAM

THE NATION OF  
ISRAEL

MOSES & MT SINAI

THE  
TORAH &  
COVENANT

PRESTES & SACRIFICES

THE WILDERNESS  
THE PROMISED  
LAND

# THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE REVELATION OF GOD

THE  
"BRIEF" AND OF  
EXHORTATION  
13:22

**#2**  
MAIN GOAL

**#1**  
ELEVATE JESUS  
AS SUPERIOR-  
ANGELIC

**#2** CHALLENGE  
THE READER TO  
-REMAIN FAITHFUL  
TO JESUS DESPITE PERSECUTION

THE [Revelation] of  
GOD'S GLORY  
JESUS  
THE EXACT [IMPACT] of  
GOD'S NAME  
THE EXACT [IMPACT] of  
GOD'S NAME

**1:1-3**  
IN THE PAST GOD SPOKE TO OUR  
ANCESTORS IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS, BUT IN THESE  
LAST DAYS HE HAS SPOKEN TO US IN HIS SON

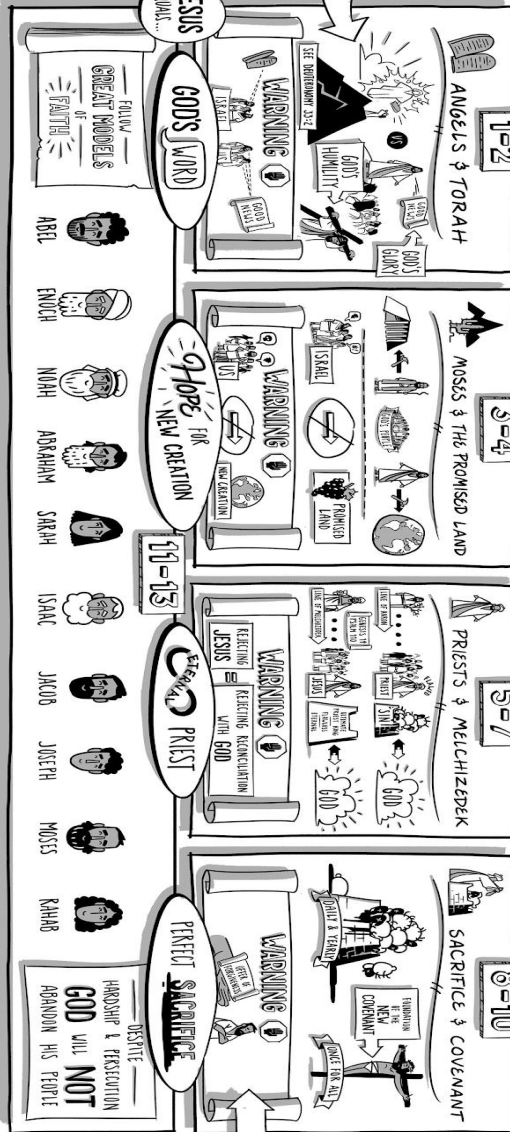
**#1**

LOOK UP OLD TESTAMENT  
QUOTATIONS  
(THERE ARE A LOT)

**#2**

THE POINT IS  
TO FEEL A BIT  
UNCOMFORTABLE,  
BUT NOT  
AFRAID

created by  
The Bible Project



## Open it

1. If you could live a day as anyone other than yourself, who would you pick and why?

## Daily Devotions

### Day 1

#### Today's Theme: Explore It

Read Hebrews 1:1–3

2. How did God communicate with His people in the past? How does the author say God has recently communicated with His people?
3. How does this author describe Jesus in this passage?
4. What does the author say Jesus has done/is doing?
5. Where is Jesus right now?

## Day 2

### Today's Theme: What is Theology?

#### Read Hebrews 1:1-3

These few verses tell us a lot about who Jesus is and what He has done. Throughout the book of Hebrews, there is going to be a lot more we will learn as well. The author of this book will explain more about some of the things mentioned in these verses and will dive deeper into explaining the significance of Jesus' life and ministry and what it means for us today. In other words, the book of Hebrews contains a lot of theology that we will learn and apply.

So what is theology? "Most simply put, theology is the study of God. It comes from the word *theos* which is Greek for 'God,' and -ology which is from the Greek word *logos* meaning 'word.' Most literally then the word theology means 'words about God' or 'the study of God.' If one were to use the term generically, it functions much like 'philosophy' or 'worldview.'"<sup>2</sup>

Our theology, or belief about God, is super important because it is going to influence how we interact with the entire world around us. Everyone has some belief in theology even if they don't believe God exists. Their belief about God is just that there isn't one!

There is a lot of bad theology out there, and all throughout the book of Hebrews, God is going to be teaching us good theology, or the truth about who He is and who Jesus is and what He has done. And it doesn't take long to get there! These first verses in Hebrews tell us a LOT about Jesus.

**6. What is your theology right now? In other words, what do you believe about God? What parts of your life show that you really believe your theology to be true?**

**7. How do these first few verses inform the way you view Jesus?**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://bible.org/article/what-theology>

## Day 3

### Today's Theme: Revelation

#### Read Hebrews 1:1–3

If theology is so important and influences so much of our lives we should really make sure that it's based on something legit. Theology shouldn't be based only on our feelings, experiences, or speculations. If we are going to know anything about God, we need Him to reveal it to us!

The author of Hebrews starts things out by saying that in the past, God spoke to His people through the prophets. He spoke to His people through many forms: dreams, visions, inspiring scripture to be written, a "still small voice," angels, and even by speaking through a donkey! But despite how great all that was, recently, God has spoken (or revealed) Himself to us through His Son—Jesus. We are told that Jesus is "the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature." What does that mean?

The Jews understood the radiance of the glory of God to be the physical embodiment of God's glory. Think of the sun and moon for example. The moon gives light at night by reflecting the light of the sun. But the sun radiates light because it is the source of light. Jesus didn't just reflect the glory of God; He was the glory of God!

In Jesus we get a full picture of who God is because Jesus is God. He is far greater than any of the other prophets because they could reveal only what was revealed to them, but Jesus could fully reveal God because He is the source—He is God! If we want to get to know God more, we need to get to know Jesus better!

**8. How does knowing that God reveals Himself to His people give us confidence that we can know Him? In what ways does God reveal Himself to us today?**

**9. What do these first verses of Hebrews tell us about Jesus? How should these things affect how we live our lives for Jesus today?**

## Day 4

### Today's Theme: Jesus—the G.O.A.T.

#### Read Hebrews 1:1–3

History is full of great people in every field of life: medicine, sports, thinking, politics, compassion, and more. The Jewish people had their “greats” too: Noah, Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and more! All throughout the book of Hebrews we will be told time and time again that Jesus is greater than them all. He truly is the greatest of all time! For as great as all the prophets, priests, and kings were, we will learn that Jesus was a greater fulfillment of them.

These opening verses tell us that Jesus is the GOAT by the fact that the whole world was created through Him, and He now keeps the world going simply by the word of His power. Jesus made purification for our sins once and for all by being the perfect Lamb, sacrificing His own life on the cross to bear the punishment for our sins. And He has been lifted up and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. It was believed that to deal with a father's son was to deal with the father himself. Jesus being seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven tells us that He is now seated as the greatest, most powerful ruler of all the universe.

**10. If Jesus really is the greatest of all time, why do we so often make other people and other things more important than Him in our own lives? What things are competing to be #1 in your life right now?**