

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

A Study of Hebrews 1:1-14

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Introduction

- The authorship of Hebrews has been debated by Christian scholars since the post-apostolic era.
- Many early Christian leaders doubted if Hebrews should be included in the Bible; most Christians eventually came to accept this epistle as inspired and written by the apostle Paul.
- Ellen White also confirmed that Paul was the author of Hebrews (**GC 347, 411, 413, 420-421**).
- Timothy, a close ministry associate of Paul, was mentioned in the book (**Heb. 13:23**), similar to other epistles written by Paul (**2 Cor. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:2; 1:18; 6:20-21; 2 Tim. 2:1; Philemon 1:1**).
- Paul possibly wrote Hebrews in the **early 60s AD** (AD 64?), prior to the fall of Jerusalem (AD 70).
- Overall, the book of Hebrews seems to regularly emphasize a “**Jesus is better than . . .**” theme.

General Outline of the Book

1. **Hebrews 1:1-2:18 – Christ’s Supreme Position and Authority**
 - Christ’s Equality with God the Father (**1:1-3**)
 - Christ’s Superiority over Angelic Beings (**1:4-14**)
 - The Need to Accept the Salvation that Christ Offers (**2:1-4**)
 - Christ’s Incarnation is the Basis for His Priesthood (**2:5-18**)
2. **Hebrews 3:1-4:16 – Christ as the Ultimate Source of Spiritual Rest**
 - Christ is the Faithful Apostle and High Priest (**3:1-6**)
 - Ancient Israel Failed to Enter into God’s Rest (**3:7-19**)
 - The Sabbath Rest is Still in Effect for God’s Faithful (**4:1-11**)
 - Christians must Enter into God’s Rest by Faith in Christ (**4:12-16**).
3. **Hebrews 5:1-8:13 – The Exalted Status of Christ as High Priest**
 - Christ is God’s Appointed High Priest (**5:1-10**)
 - God Calls People to Accept Christ as High Priest (**5:11-6:20**)
 - Christ is the High Priest after the Order of Melchisedec (**7:1-28**)
 - Christ is the High Priest of the Heavenly Sanctuary/New Covenant (**8:1-13**)
4. **Hebrews 9:1-10:22 – Christ as the High Priest of the Heavenly Sanctuary**
 - The Earthly Sanctuary Services are Shadows of Divine Realities (**9:1-7**)
 - The Earthly Sanctuary Services All Point to Christ’s Ministry (**9:8-14**)
 - Christ is also the High Priestly Mediator of the New Covenant (**9:15-28**)
 - Christ’s Sacrifice is also Infinitely Superior to Animal Sacrifices (**10:1-22**)
5. **Hebrews 10:23-13:25 – An Appeal for Faithfulness and Godly Living**
 - God Calls for Faithfulness in Light of Christ’s Imminent Return (**10:23-39**)

- The Apostle Paul Reminds Us of the Faithfulness of Past Believers (**11:1-40**)
- Christ is Our Ultimate Example for Faithful Endurance/Perseverance (**12:1-29**)
- The Apostle Paul Provides Godly Counsel on Practical Christian Living (**13:1-25**)

Hebrews 1 – Reflections on Hebrews 1:1-4

- Prior to Christ’s incarnation, God communicated His will to believers through prophets.
- In the “last days,” however, God speaks to people through His eternal Son, Jesus Christ.
- Jesus is the heir and Creator of all things (**Acts 5:31; John 1:1-3, 10; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:15-17**).
- Christ is the most complete and perfect revelation of what God is like (**John 1:14; 1:18; 14:9**).
- Christ upholds the universe by His divine power, and after having purged our sins through His sacrifice on the Cross, He is seated at God’s right hand, which is a position of status and honor (**Acts 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22**).
- As God’s heir to all things, Christ has a more excellent name (authority/character) than holy angels, and thus is so much better than holy angelic beings.

Hebrews 1 – Reflections on Hebrews 1:5-9

- God does not refer to any of His holy angelic beings as His only-begotten Son; only Jesus Christ has this title and position (**John 1:14; 1:18; 3:16; Acts 13:33; 1 John 4:9; Rev. 1:5**).
- Since only Christ qualifies as the Son of God (before, during, and after His incarnation), He is thus completely worthy to receive worship and adoration from all the holy angels of God.
- While holy angels are created beings that serve as God’s ministering spirits, Christ is fully God, and His eternal kingdom is based on principles of righteousness (**Psa. 119:142, 172; Isa. 61:10**).
- Christ loves righteousness and hates iniquity; as the incarnate Son of God in humanity, He was and is anointed with the “oil of gladness” (the Holy Spirit) above every angelic being and human being (**Isa. 42:1, 6-7; 61:1-2; 1 Sam. 16:13; Zech. 4:1-14; Luke 1:80; 2:40; 4:14-19**).

Hebrews 1 – Reflections on Hebrews 1:10-14

- As our Creator, Christ has laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth.
- The heavens (earth’s atmosphere) and earth will eventually wax old and perish.
- However, Christ is eternal and will endure for eternity; Christ is ordained (chosen) to sit on God’s right hand, until His enemies are made like His footstool, meaning that Christ is responsible for putting an end to sin and rebellion in God’s universe (**Acts 2:34-35**).
- Again, angelic beings are ministering spirits to fallen human beings; they especially minister to faithful human beings who will become the heirs and recipients of Christ’s salvation.

Lessons/Summary of Hebrews 1:1-14

- As One who is fully God, Christ is equal with God the Father and is the Creator of all things.
- As a human being, Christ was the ultimate expression of what God the Father is truly like.
- As a human being, Christ was also anointed with the Holy Spirit more than any other being.
- After having purged our sins, Christ is now seated at God’s right hand, a position of honor.
- As God’s only-begotten Son and eternal heir of all things, Christ has a superior nature and position to holy angels, and is thus worthy of worship by holy angelic beings.
- God has also commissioned holy angelic beings to be His ministers to fallen humanity; these beings are special ministers to the faithful, who will be the heirs of salvation through Christ.