



# Hebrews

“In the past God spoke to our ancestors 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 also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.”

Hebrews 1:1-4 NIV

## Author

Although long considered a letter, many scholars today agree the book commonly called “The Letter to the Hebrews” is actually a combination of a letter and a sermon. Many careful readers will immediately recognize Hebrews is written with the tone of a sermon that was read aloud as a letter in early churches.

Hebrews has been cloaked in mystery from the earliest times and the author has been anonymous throughout church history and still is today. While there is a long tradition that the letter was written by the Apostle Paul, many scholars argue against the claim that Paul is the author. Other possible authors have been proposed, including Barnabas, Luke, Priscilla, and Apollos. While there are a few clues within the text, it seems the judgment expressed by Origen (AD 254) remains correct: “Who actually wrote the epistle, only God knows.”

## Intended Audience

Discerning the intended original audience is equally challenging. A careful reading of the letter indicates the recipients were a specific local group, well known to the author (see 5:11-12; 12:4, 7; and 13:3 for examples). The author assumes the readers have a thorough working knowledge of the priesthood, sacrificial system, and other elements of Old Testament Judaism. This has led many to conclude the intended recipients were either Jewish Christians or proselytes (Gentiles who had converted to Judaism) who were now followers of Jesus. There is little to go on regarding the location of the recipients, other than a brief mention of Italy in 13:24.

## Date

Similarly, there is very little internal or external evidence to determine the date the book was written. Many believe it was likely written before the temple was destroyed in AD 70. The argument for this dating is that in the discussion of Jesus being superior to the temple worship system, it does not mention the temple's destruction, which would have strengthened its argument.

## Key Themes

Hebrews has two major themes intertwined throughout the text. One is doctrinal (theological and leading to right thinking), the other is pastoral (practical and leading to right living). The first is exalting Jesus Christ as superior over any angel, priest, or institution. The second theme flows from the first: Hold fast to your salvation and encourage others to persevere in Christ.

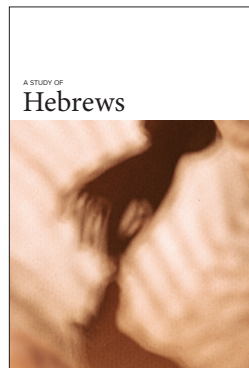
## The Superiority of Christ

Jesus' superiority is demonstrated by the author's repeated use of the Greek word *kreitōn* (κρείττων), translated "better" or "superior." The writer consistently illustrates that believers have entered into a new and better covenant through the work of Jesus Christ. These arguments serve to demonstrate that the gospel is superior to the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. They demonstrate the Levitical priesthood was transitory in nature, while the reign of Christ is final and eternal.

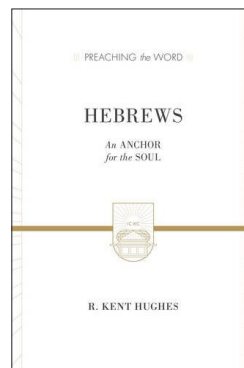
## Perseverance

Persevering in following Jesus despite trials and persecution is the natural outworking of believing Jesus is superior to anything else. The writer calls for this steadfastness in a series of five warning passages (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:20; 10:19-39; 12:25-29). These warning passages exhort believers not to leave the faith. The audience is encouraged to hold fast to Jesus through the repeated arguments for the superiority of Christ.

## Recommended Resources



*A Study of Hebrews*  
by Fellowship Staff



*Hebrews*  
*An Anchor for the Soul*  
*(Preaching the Word)*  
by R. Kent Hughes

## Hebrews Teaching Schedule

<b>May</b>	15 & 16	Hebrews 1:1-4	Intro/Supremacy of Christ
	22 & 23	Hebrews 2:10-18	Jesus destroyed death and devil
	29 & 30	Hebrews 4:11-16	Draw near to God and find rest
<b>June</b>	5 & 6	Hebrews 5:1-10, 7:1-22	Melchizedek
	12 & 13	Hebrews 8:1-13	The New Covenant
	19 & 20	Hebrews 9:24-28	Christ offered for sins/Second Coming
	26 & 27	Hebrews 10:19-25	Full assurance
<b>July</b>	3 & 4	Hebrews 11:1-40	History of faith
	10 & 11	Hebrews 12:1-2	Jesus at the right hand of God
	17 & 18	Hebrews 12:3-11	Do not grow weary
	24 & 25	Hebrews 13:1-21	Equipped with everything good to do His will

## Reading plan for the book of Hebrews during the study: May to July 2021

### Week of May 16

May 17 Hebrews 1:1-4  
May 18 Colossians 1:15-23  
May 19 John 1:1-18  
May 20 Psalm 2  
May 21 Hebrews 1:5-14

### Week of May 23

May 24 Hebrews 2:1-9  
May 25 Hebrews 2:10-18  
May 26 Psalm 95  
May 27 Hebrews 3:1-19  
May 28 Hebrews 4:1-4:10

### Week of May 30

May 31 Hebrews 4:11-16  
June 1 Psalm 139:1-18  
June 2 Luke 4:1-11  
June 3 Colossians 3:1-4  
June 4 Hebrews 5:1-10

### Week of June 6

June 7 Hebrews 5:11-6:1-12  
June 8 Hebrews 6:13-20  
June 9 Psalm 110  
June 10 Hebrews 7:1-22  
June 11 Hebrews 7:23-28

### Week of June 13

June 14 Hebrews 8:1-13  
June 15 Jeremiah 31:23-37  
June 16 Ezekiel 37  
June 17 Leviticus 16:5-22  
June 18 Hebrews 9:1-10

### Week of June 20

June 21 Hebrews 9:11-28  
June 22 Romans 8:1-11  
June 23 Hebrews 10:1-18  
June 24 Romans 6:1-14  
June 25 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

### Week of June 27

June 28 Hebrews 10:19-25  
June 29 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11  
June 30 Hebrews 10:26-31  
July 1 Matthew 7:13-29  
July 2 Hebrews 10:32-39

### Week of July 4

July 5 Hebrews 11:1-40  
July 6 Genesis 22:1-19  
July 7 Exodus 14:5-31  
July 8 Joshua 2  
July 9 1 Samuel 17

### Week of July 11

July 12 Hebrews 12:1-2  
July 13 Daniel 7:13-14  
July 14 Isaiah 52:13-53  
July 15 Acts 2:22-39  
July 16 Philippians 2:6-11

### Week of July 18

July 19 Hebrews 12:3-11  
July 20 2 Corinthians 7:8-13  
July 21 Hebrews 12:12-17  
July 22 Hebrews 12:18-29  
July 23 1 Peter 2:4-10

### Week of July 25

July 26 Hebrews 13:1-14  
July 27 Hebrews 13:15-25  
July 28 Romans 12:1-2  
July 29 Galatians 5:15-6:6  
July 30 John 15

## FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH NWA

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