

Hebrews 1

Introduction

Things that we probably already know about the book of *Hebrews*:

- Heb. 5-7* – Jesus as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek
- Heb. 10.25* – Importance of faithful attendance
- Heb. 11* – The "Hall of Fame" of God's faithful
- Heb. 13.2* – Entertaining angels without knowing it
- There are many theories concerning who wrote *Hebrews* – all manuscripts of *Hebrews* are anonymous
- Why would the Holy Spirit put a book in the New Testament without telling us who the author was?** To make us study more

The author – Theories:

1. Apostle Paul

Advantages: tends to "sound" like Paul's writing (at least to some people)

Disadvantages:

- Not his customary opening
 - In Paul's letters, he usually gives "theory" in the first half of the book, then practical advice in the second half, but that is not the outline of *Hebrews* at all
 - Galatians 1:11-12* – Paul received his revelations directly from Jesus Christ
 - But *Hebrews 2:3* – the author of *Hebrews* got his material from the apostles
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:17* – Paul always signed his name (no anonymous letters)
 - Thus we know from the Scriptures that Paul was **not** the author
- The King James Version lists Paul as the author in the title of the book, but that title is not a part of any Greek manuscript

2. Barnabas (Paul's assistant on the First Missionary Journey), but the writer of *Hebrews* is highly educated (a classical education) – that does not seem to be Barnabas

3. Apollos – **Read Acts 18:24-28** – There are many Old Testament quotes in *Hebrews*

- The Hebrew quotes are from the Septuagint (LXX), a translation of the Old Testament into Greek that was made in Alexandria, Egypt (where Apollos was from)
- A very polished style (*1 Corinthians 1:4*) – Paul had a "haphazard" style

4. Priscilla and Aquila – but there is no evidence that they wrote the book

To whom was the book addressed?

What could we gather from the title? Jewish converts

Read Hebrews 13:24 – from Italy

-Therefore it was written outside Italy to Jewish Christians in Italy

What was the only known location of Christians in Italy? Rome

What particular problems would Jewish Christians have? Going back to the Old Testament, drifting away from the church, etc.

Themes: What are some themes that you already know concerning the book of Hebrews?

- Christ is better than the Old Law – we must remain faithful to the gospel of Christ
- Christ is better than the angels, Moses, Joshua
- A better covenant
- Better priesthood
- Better sacrifice

Date:

- About 64 A.D. – **Read Hebrews 12:4**
- No-one killed yet
- Nero started persecuting Christians in Rome in 64-65 A.D.

Hebrews 1.1-4

- One sentence – beautiful and well-constructed.

V1 – Description of past revelation of God ("*the fathers*" meant Jewish ancestors)

- How did God speak to the fathers?** In the prophets
- "*Many portions*" – The 39 books of Old Testament
- "*Many ways*" - Signs, miracles, dreams, casting lots, etc.
- Summary of v 1?** God communicated with prophets in many ways in the Old Testament.

V2 – "*last days*" = the end of times, the final dispensation

- Read Acts 2:16-17** - "*last days*" = the new dispensation, the Christian Age
- How has God spoken to us the New Testament?** Jesus
- Jesus an heir?** **Read Matthew 28:18-20**
- World made through Christ - **Read John 1:1-3**
- What is the theme of v 2?**

V3 – **Representation of whom?** God - **Read John 14:8-9**

- "*Upholds all things*" = maintains laws of universe, etc.
- Took His throne after his ascension
- Themes of v 1-3?**
 - Jesus is the agent in creation
 - God's revelation is now through his son Jesus Christ
 - He controls the Universe
 - He is at the "right hand" of God the Father - significant = Vice-Regent (See the *Beacon Bible Commentary*, X, 29)

V4 – Jesus is better than the angels

- Do people worship angels today?** Maybe in some cases, but they definitely worship humans (Mary, Apostles, pope, etc.)
- There must have been some angel worship in the First Century
- Remember *Revelation*: John kept bowing down to an angel, but he was told to get up
- Point: Jesus is greater than the angels

-How do we know? Because of this verse

Hebrews 1.5-9

V 5 – Number one reason? No angel was God's son

-**"Today"**? The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem

-No father-son relationship with angels

V 6 – A reference to what? *Luke 2:13-14*

-The angels worshipped Jesus at birth

V 7 – Do the angels have importance? Yes

-**How?** They are ministers (servants) of God

V 8 – But of the Son? The "scepter" was given to Jesus (the Kingdom)

V 9 – Significance? Above your companions

Hebrews 1.10-14

V 10 – Reference back to v 2

V 11 – What will perish? Earth and heavens

-This refutes the Jehovah's Witness doctrine – **Read 2 Peter 3:3**

V 11-12 – Earth will be like cloth rolled up

-**Contrast?** Jesus will never come to an end

V 13 – How is Jesus above the angels? God the Father never said these things to an angel

V 14 – Guardian angels? Not in exactly those words, but the angels do serve the people of God

Read Matthew 18:10, Acts 12:15 (13-16)

Lessons learned from *Hebrews 1*? (Take suggestions from the class):

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