

Purpose

To present the sufficiency and superiority of Christ

Author

Author unknown — whomever it was speaks of Timothy as “brother” (13:23)

To Whom Written

Hebrew Christians who were considering returning to Judaism

Date Written

Before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD (sacrifices and ceremonies are mentioned but no mention of the Temple)

Setting

These Jewish Christians were undergoing fierce persecution, socially and physically. The people needed to be reassured that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

Key Verse

“The Son reflects God’s own glory, and everything about Him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of His command...” *Hebrews 1:3*

Special Feature

Although *Hebrews* is called a “letter,” it has the form and the content of a sermon.

An Overview (13 Chapters)

- The Superiority of Christ (1:1-10:18)
- The Superiority of Faith (10:19-13:25)

Major Themes

- *Christ Is Superior:* Jesus is the ultimate authority. He is greater than any religion or any angel. He is superior to any Jewish leaders (such as Abraham, Moses, or Joshua) and superior to any priest. He is the complete revelation of God. We should not accept any alternative for Him.
- *High Priest:* In the Old Testament, the high priest represented the Jews before God. Jesus Christ links us with God. There is no other way to reach God. Because Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, He is the perfect substitute to die for our sin. He is our perfect representative with God.
- *Sacrifice:* Christ’s sacrifice was the fulfillment of all that the Old Testament sacrifices represented — God’s forgiveness for sin. Because Christ is the perfect sacrifice for our sin, our sins are completely forgiven — past, present, and future.
- *Maturity:* Though we are saved from sin when we believe in Christ, we are given the task of growing in our faith. Through our relationship with Christ, we can live blameless lives, be set aside for His special use, and develop maturity.
- *Faith:* Faith is confident trust in God’s promises. God’s greatest promise is that we can be saved through Jesus.
- *Endurance:* Faith enables Christians to face trials. Genuine faith includes the commitment to stay true to God when we are under fire.