

NT Lesson Hebrews

Author – Unknown, possibly Paul but the problem is the difference in writing style, diction, word choice, and material in this letter vs. Paul's other letters. Other possibilities include Barnabus, Apollos, Priscilla & Aquila.

Date – Before destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70

Recipient – Jewish Christians familiar with the Old Testament who were being tempted to revert to Judaism or to Judaize the gospel.

Themes –

The Son of God/Jesus is superior.

The message of salvation is to be taken seriously.

The absolute supremacy of Jesus Christ as revealer and mediator of God's grace. It connects the Old Testament to Jesus as the fulfillment. The things in the OT point to Jesus. Jesus is our temple and the presence of God with us. He is our High Priest who intercedes on our behalf, and he is our Lamb who was slain for our sin. Jesus is superior to / greater than the angels, OT prophets, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and the priests, and worthy of all worship and devotion.

To persevere in the faith and enter into true rest found in Jesus

Jesus is our High Priest – one who brings us to God

Applications – There can be no turning back to or continuation of the old Jewish System (OT practices –altar, priest, sacrifices- obsolete b/c they are fulfilled) which has been superseded by the unique priesthood of Christ. God's people must now look only to him, whose atoning death, resurrection and ascension have opened the way into the true, heavenly sanctuary of God's presence. Resisting temptations to give up the struggle, believers must persevere in the spiritual contest to which they have committed themselves. Otherwise they may meet with judgement as did the rebellious generation of Israelites in the desert.

Our response to Jesus Christ determines our destiny.

Spiritual Immaturity - We have spiritual problems because we didn't have spiritual nourishment. (ex. Cavities)

Key Verses:

1:18 For because he himself has suffered^(AR) when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

4:12 For^(J) the word of God is living and^(K) active, ^(L) sharper than any^(M) two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and^(N) discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

4:14 Since then we have^(O) a great high priest^(R) who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,^(S) let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest^(T) who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been^(U) tempted as we are,^(V) yet without sin. ¹⁶^(W) Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

10:24 And^(AF) let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵^(AG) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and^(AH) all the more as you see^(AI) the Day drawing near.

11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of^(A) things not seen.

Outline:

- I. The superiority of Jesus
 - A. Jesus higher than the angels
- II. Warning against neglecting the message of God/salvation
 - B. Jesus is the founder of salvation
- III. Jesus is greater than Moses
- IV. Belief in Christ in order to enter God's rest
- V. Jesus is our great High Priest
- VI. Warning against apostasy
- VII. Encouragement to spiritual maturity
- VIII. God's promises are sure
- IX. Jesus compared to Melchizedek
- X. Jesus is the High Priest of a better covenant
 - A. Redemption through the blood of Christ
 - B. Jesus' sacrifice was for once and for all
 - C. Because of Jesus, we have the full assurance of faith
 - D. The Hall of Faith
 - E. Jesus if the founder & perfecter of our faith
- XI. Encouragement to not grow weary
 - A. Sacrifices pleasing to God
 - B. Final remarks

Discussion Questions

When you are discouraged in difficult situations, what could someone do to encourage you?

(Pray for me, talk to me, quote Scripture/God's promises, share how God has helped them, remind myself of how God has helped me in the past.)

Read Heb. 1:1-3

How could these aspects of Jesus encourage a discouraged believer?

Jesus is at the right hand of God interceding for us. He is all powerful and our sins are forgiven b/c He has paid it once and for all.

How does the world entice you to drift away from Jesus?

Are there areas in our lives we may have drifted away?

(Fast & busy, get caught up in busyness and don't spend time w/ Jesus, too much computer, TV, etc.)

Do we do just enough to get by? Neglect prayer time, reading the Bible, etc.

Absorbed in our own personal interests.

"Playing the church game" = practicing a religion instead of knowing Jesus Christ.

Are there people who are clinging to the past/ traditions? (hanging on to OT practices)

Do we turn to Jesus as our High Priest when we are faced w/ pressure, temptations, etc.?

Do we recognize the loving hand of God on us in the middle of hard times and disappointments as strengthening us and giving us an opportunity to glorify God as we walk with Him?

*Why do people remain spiritually ignorant?

What specific things could you do to grow in knowledge & understanding of Christian teaching?