

Pastor-Teacher | Chris Regas | 2.9.2025

Stay Fixated on Hebrews!

Lesson One • Introduction to the Book of Hebrews

Reading the Book of Hebrews: "Toto, I have a feeling we're not Kansas anymore!"

The Challenge of Hebrews

- The **OLD** Testament Background.
- The <u>WARNING</u> Passages.
- The **THEOLOGICAL** Tensions.
- The **CONTEXT** of the Letter.

The many unknowns of this book are a downside but, ultimately, they are an **UPSIDE** for us!

Introduction to the Book of Hebrews

1. What Kind of Letter Is It?

Begins like a <u>SERMON</u> and ends like a <u>LETTER</u>. (1:1-14; 13:18-25)

"But I urge you, brethren, bear with **this word of exhortation**, for I have written to you briefly." Hebrews 13:22

"After the reading of the Law and the Prophets the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, "Brethren, if you have any **word of exhortation** for the people, say it.' Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, 'Men of Israel, and you who fear God, **listen**:" Acts 13:15-16

Purpose of a Sermon-Letter

Meant to be heard first as a sermon while being read as a letter!

Pattern of the Sermon-Letter

Explanation (interpretation) followed by exhortation (application) on repeat!

2. Who Wrote This Sermon-Letter?

We DON'T KNOW!

Many speculations: Paul, Luke, Apollos, Barnabas, Silas, Philip, Stephen, Jude, Timothy, Clement of Rome, Priscilla, even Mary the mother of Jesus.

Some of these are a good guess while others are **WILD** speculations.

What do we know?

Male, likely Jewish, Greek-cultured, well-educated, synagogue-familiar, eloquent speaker, quotes the Greek Old Testament (LXX), second generation believer, leader with a pastor-teacher's heart!

Plus, not one of their local leaders and yet considered one of them! (13:17-19)

APOLLOS is a great guess (Acts 18:24-28) and was Martin Luther's first choice!

Not knowing keeps the focus on the <u>DIVINE</u> Author which is what this "pastor-teacher" does even when he knows who the human author is! (1:5-7, 13; 2:6, 12-13; 3:7)

SERIES: Hupakouw: Hearing to Obey: Master the spiritual skill of listening to God speak through sermons.

3. To Whom Was This Sermon-Letter Delivered?

We DON'T KNOW!

- What do we know?
 - 1. Largely **JEWISH** Christians who heard the gospel from others who heard it from Jesus. (2:3)
 - 2. Saved LONG enough should be disciplers but had also endured difficult persecution. (5:11-12; 10:32-35)
 - 3. About to face more persecution, perhaps even **DEATH**. (12:3-4)
 - 4. Beginning to FALL AWAY from Christ and forsake worshipping together to avoid suffering. (3:12; 10:23-25)
 - 5. Risked being like the <u>WILDERNESS</u> generation that heard God's voice but refused to enter God's rest. (3:12-15; 4:12-3)
 - 6. But the pastor-teacher believes **BETTER** things and ends with a **BLESSING** regarding God's ability to work in and through them. (6:9; 13:20-21)
- Not knowing reminds us that we are <u>ALL</u> weary pilgrims who must trust and obey the Son through our present wilderness until we enter God's future rest!

4. Where Was This Sermon-Letter Delivered?

We DON'T KNOW!

What do we know?

Perhaps to Jewish Christians in <u>ROME</u> (13:24). But this could also mean the writer was in Rome writing to Jewish Christians in Palestine!

Not knowing keeps the Bible in the **FOREGROUND** and forces us to **COMPARE** Scripture with Scripture which is done throughout this "sermon-letter"!

5. When Was This Sermon-Letter Delivered?

We DON'T KNOW!

What do we know?

Likely *after* AD 62 or 65 since Timothy has been released from prison (13:23), yet this is never mentioned in Acts or Paul's letters. But *before* the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, since sacrifices are apparently still being offered (10:2).

So, between AD 65-70? Or before Nero's persecution AD 60-65?

Not knowing keeps the focus on "TODAY" which is exactly where the pastor-teacher wants us to stay fixated! (1:5; 3:7, 13, 15; 4:7; 5:5; 13:8)!

3-FOLD FOCUS in HEBREWS and 3 HELPS for READING HEBREWS...TODAY!

SEE CHART: Book of Hebrews

HEBREWS: Stay Fixated on Christ's Greater Glory to Hold Fast and Move Forward to God's Future Rest

Book of Hebrews

Begins like a Sermon but Ends Like a Letter!
Background to This "Sermon-Letter" Is Not Revealed!
Like Melchizedek, it is without father, mother, or genealogy. So, the focus is on TODAY God is speaking, Christ is mediating, and the Spirit is convicting.
Be quick to hear, quick to obey from the heart by faith in hope with love!

to Hold Fast & Move Forward Until We Enter God's Rest! Stay Fixated on Christ's Greater Glory

"fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (12:2) "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;" (3:1) "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession." (4:14) "Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience." (4:11)

By WHOM? WE DON'T KNOW! Speculations: Paul, Luke, Apollos, Barnabas, Silas, Peter, Philip, Jude, Priscilla, etc. Some likely, others not. We do know: Male, Jewish, Greek-culture (LXX), synagogue-familiar, well-educated, eloquent speaker, not an apostle(?), pastor-teacher's heart. Apollos is a great guess (Acts 18:24-28)! Favored by Martin Luther. Not knowing keeps the focus on the Divine Author which this "pastor-teacher" does even when he knows the human author (e.g., 2:6)!	God's "Since 1	NEGLECTING Danger of Drifting 2:1-4 Progression increas	Full Divine Nature (1:1-14) God's Flawless Radiance God's Flawless Radiance God's Flawless Radiance God's Flawless Radiance How Warning! (2:1-4) SON of MAN Full Human Nature (2:5-18) Our Family Representative: The Better Last Adam Our Firstborn Representative: The Better High Priest The Better High Priest The Better High Priest	1:1 – 2:18 GREATER than Prophets & Angels Messengers of the Law	STAY on Our Co
To WHOM? WE DON'T KNOW! Begins like a sermon, ends like a letter! So, no greeting from author to recipients with their location. We do know: Largely Jewish Christians who heard the We do know: Largely Jewish Christians who heard the Gospel from others who heard it from Jesus (2:3). Saved long enough should be discipiers yet had endured persecution (10:32-35) and were facing more, perhaps death (12:4). Were beginning to fall away from Christ and forsake worshipping together to avoid suffering. Risked being like the wilderness generation that heard God's voice but refused to enter God's rest. Not knowing reminds us that we are all weary pilgrims who must trust and obey the Son through our present wilderness until we all enter God's future rest!	"Since we have a great high priest" 4:14	A P O S T A T I Z I N G: The Danger of Denying Faith NEGLECTING A P O S T A T I Z I N G: The Danger of Denying Faith NEGLECTING A STAGNATING A STAGNATING Danger of Delaying Danger of Delaying Danger of Delaying 2:1-4 3:7-4:13 5:11-6:20 Progression increases with a "slow fade" as the punishment intensifies but the pattern's instructive for paston	GREATER than MOSES Look Up! (3:1-6) Look Up! (3:1-6) Consider Jesus, adiance of Our Confession: Hold Fast to the End! 2:1-4) GREATER than JOSHUA Listen Up! (3:7-4:13) WARNING! Today Don't Harden Sentative: Priest He is UKE 18: 246476 The confession: Fear Someone Won't Enter! The is UKE 18: 246476	3:1 – 4:13 GREATER than Moses & Joshua Mediators of the Law	STAY FIXATED on Our Calling in Christ! "You are My San!" (1:5) 4:13
WHERE? WE DON'T KNOW! Perhaps to Jewish Christians in Rome (13:24). But this could mean the writer was in Rome writing to Jewish Christians in Palestine! We do know: There was an expulsion of Jews, including Jewish Christians, from Rome by Claudius (AD 49). And later a more deadly persecution under Nero (AD 64). Not knowing keeps the Bible in the foreground and forces us to compare Scripture with Scripture which is done throughout this "sermon-letter"!	"We have such a high priest" 8:1	G: The Danger of De 3 STAGNATING Danger of Delaying 5:11-6:20 shment intensifies but the pattern's	GREATER than AARON Greater Priestly Qualifications than Aaron (4:14–5:10) WARNING! (5:11–6:20) GREATER than LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD Greater Priestly Order Like Melchizedek (7:1-28) Pictured in Melchizedek: Literarily Like the Son of God (1-3) Preeminence of Melchizedek: Over Abram & Levi (4-10) Perfection in Another Like Mel: A Son Made Perfect (11-28) Greater Priestly Ministry by Christ (8:1–10:18) Better Melinistry: Comes with the Better Mediatori (8:1-6) Better Sanctuary: Heavenly Not Made with Hands! (9:1-10) Better Perfection: Sanctified by Christ's Sacrifice! (10:1-18)	4:14 – 10:18 GREATER than Aaron, Abraham & Levi's Priesthood Ministry of the Law	HOLD FAST to Our Confession with Confidence! 4:14 "You are a Priest -Son made perfect forever!" (5:6: 7:28) 10:
WHEN? WE DON'T KNOW! Likely after AD 62 or 65 since Timothy is released from prison (13:23) and it's never mentioned in Acts or by Paul. But likely before AD 70 when the Temple was destroyed and sacrifices ceased. 50, between AD 65-070? Of before Nero's persecution AD 60-65? Not knowing keeps the focus on "170AA" (1:5; 3:7, 2. LISTEN 3. 15; 4:7; 5:5; 13:8)! 3. LEAN II		Denying Faith TING Tying Paritying Paritying Paritying	AARON han Aaron (4:14–5:10) 1–6:20) AL PRIESTHOOD chizedek (7:1-28) Like the Son of God (1-3) er Abram & Levi (4-10) Son Made Perfect (11-28) ist (8:1–10:18) ist (8:1–10:18) ist (8:1–10:18) All (9:11-28) All (9:11-28) All (9:1-28) All (9:1-28)	18 <i>than</i> vi's Priesthood ∍ <i>Law</i>	AST ith Confidence! threver!" (5.6: 7.28) 10:18
STAY FIXATED on Christ's Maje: He is the Heir who shares, so we HOLD FAST to Christ's Ministry in His exaltation as the 5on who MOVE FORWARD in Christlike enter God's future rest. Put your and worship in community at any LOOK UP the context of the OT q LISTEN TO the warnings to either LEAN IN to the better things that	"And since we hav	th in the T TORSAKING Danger of Departing 10:26-39 storal exhortation	LET US DRAW NEAR Confidently (19-22) HOLD FAST Continually (23) ASSEMBLE Consistently (24-25) Even More as the Day Draws Near! WARNING! (26-39)	10:19-39 LET US DRAW NEAR	10:19 W
3-FOLD FOCUS in HEBREWS 1. STAYFIXATED on Christ's Majesty! You are less likely to turn from Christ in adversity if you are fixated on Him in adoration. He is the Heir who shares, so we share in His calling to greater glory! 2. HOLD FAST to Christ's Ministry! Your confession of Christ's person and work is your confident hope because it's grounded in His exaltation as the Son who became Son, the King-Priest seated at 6od's right hand, having secured our salvation! 3. MOVE FORWARD in Christlike Maturity! Don't become dull of hearing, a spiritual sluggard who falls away and fails to enter 6od's future rest. Put your calling and confession into action with conviction! 6ather together to identify with Christ and worship in community at any cost! The unshakable kingdom is coming to put all His enemies under His feet! 3. HELPS for READING HEBREWS 1. LOOK UP the context of the 0T quotes. Read the entire chapter, sometimes the one before it and the one after it as well. 2. LISTEN TO the warnings to either repent with an obedient faith if lost or recommit with an obedient faith if saved.	nd since we have a great priest over the house of God	FORSAKING FORSATING FORSATING FORSATING SOMEFUSING Danger of Defying 10:26-39 12:14-24 / 25-29 ral exhortation of potential apostates whether saved or unsaved!	LIVE by FAITH by FAITH by FAITH by FAITH by FAITH by FAITH con by FAITH by FAITH con by FAITH by Fairiands (1-2) Con c	11:1-40 By FAITH that WORKS	MOVE FORWARD with Conviction in Community! "Jesus is the same, yesterday, today, and foreve!" (13.8)
BREWS Christ in adversity if you are It. and work is your confident at God's right hand, having at airing, a spiritual sluggard with conviction! Gather tog coming to put all His enemie IEBREWS netimes the one before it are stor recommit with an obec	the house of Go	S REFUSING Danger of Defying 12:14-24 / 25-29 whether saved or	LOOK UP to JESUS Striving to Finish Well (1-2) Suffering to the Death (3-11) Strengthening One Another (12-13) WARNING! (14-29)	12:1-29 In HOPE that ENDURES	WARD Community! y, and forever!" (13:8)
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