

An aerial, sepia-toned illustration of the Temple of Jerusalem. The image shows the complex layout of the temple grounds, including the outer wall, the Court of the Gentiles, and the inner courts. The central focus is the Temple Mount, with the Temple itself at the top. The architecture is detailed with various courtyards, walkways, and the iconic Dome of the Rock. The overall tone is historical and reverent.

Hebrews 1-3

The Superiority of Christ

Background

- Author is unknown. Probably not Paul.
- Readership are probably Italian Jews who would read the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament).
- Quotations almost exclusively from the Septuagint.

Style

- Outstanding literary and rhetoric skill. The author was an incredible Greek scholar.
- In-depth understanding of Old Testament from the Septuagint translation.
- Often the quotations do not exactly match our Old Testament, which is from more ancient Hebrew text, more recently discovered.

Contents

- The theme of the book is the Superiority of Christ and Christianity over Judaism.
- Heb 1-2: He is superior to angels.
- Heb 3: He is superior to Moses.
- Be Vigilant!

God Spoke to us Directly

- Heb 1:1-2 *God, after He had spoken long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son ...*
- Previously, God spoke **through the prophets.**
- But now, God spoke to us **through the Son, that is to say, directly.**

He is superior

- Heb 1:3 ... *radiance of His glory, and the exact representation of His nature* ...
- Previously the Presence of God was occasionally seen, as when Solomon dedicated the temple.
- In Christ, the Person of God was directly seen among mankind.

The Radiance of His Glory

- The *radiance* refers to an outflowing of glory. For example, the sun has an outflowing of light, but the moon is only a reflection of light.
- Man *reflects* the glory of God. Man is the *image of His nature*.
- *Christ is the radiance of the glory of God.* Not a reflection, like humankind.
- *And the exact representation of His nature.* Not an image, like humankind.

He is superior to angels

- Heb 1:5 The Son of God is not an angel.
- Heb 1:6 The angels of God worship Him.
- Heb 1:14 In fact the angels of God were created to minister to men!

He is superior to angels

- Heb 2:2 The word spoken through angels was terrifying and powerful.
- Daniel 5: Belshazzar did not heed the handwriting on the wall, to his peril.
- Luke 1: Zacharias was struck dumb for doubting the word of the angel.

He is superior to angels

- Heb 2:3 ... *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?*
- How much more terrifying it would be to ignore the Word spoken by Him!
- So we must pay **much closer attention to what we have heard!**

His Purpose

- Mankind is now, for a little while, lower than angels.
- Heb 2:7 *You have made him (i.e. mankind) for a little while lower than angels.*
- But Christ was also, in His incarnation, lower than angels.
- Heb 2:9 *But we do see Him, who has been made for a little while **lower than angels** ...*
- Why was He, who created angels, **made lower than angels?**
- *Because He wanted to identify with us!*

His Purpose

- Heb 2:11 ... *for He is not ashamed to call them Brethren*
- Jesus called His disciples Brethren **for the first time** in John 20:17
- After His resurrection!
- After sin was fully paid for!
- It was then, **for the first time after the fall**, that those who were saved had the new birth!
- **Those who were saved had become His Brethren!**
- He was made lower than angels to make men His Brethren.

His Purpose

- He became flesh and blood, because we are flesh and blood.
- Heb 2:14 *Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same ..*
- He took on a body that could accept our sin, take the curse in our place, and could then die.

His Purpose

- So also our old self was crucified.
- Rom 6:6 ... *Our old self was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with ...*
- At salvation, **our old nature was crucified with Him!** But it is not yet dead.
- At physical death, **our old nature will finally die, our body of sin finally be done away with!**

His Purpose

- At salvation, **we obtained a new nature and became His brethren!**
- But the old nature is still alive.
- At physical death, **our old nature will finally die!**
- **And our new nature will go to be with God!**
- Heb 2:16 He does not deliver fallen angels ... only fallen men. There is no redemption for fallen angels.

His Purpose

- Heb 2:17 So He was made like His brethren, namely like us, to be our High Priest.
- So that He makes propitiation (reparation, settlement) for our sins, as our High Priest.
- Heb 2:18 He was tempted and suffered like us.
- So He is able to aid us who are tempted and suffer.

His Purpose

- Like us, He was made flesh and blood.
- Like us, He was tempted.
- Like us, He suffered.
- Like us, He died.
- And like Him, we will rise again!

He is Superior to Moses

- To the Jews, the most revered Hebrew of all time was Moses.
- It was Moses through whom God performed impossible miracles.
- It was Moses who delivered to them God's Law.
- Heb 3 shows Jesus is superior to Moses.

He is Superior to Moses

- Jesus was sent by God, as was Moses.
- Jesus was faithful in His office, as was Moses.
- Heb 3:3 But Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses, as He is the *builder* of God's house, but Moses was part of God's house!
- The Creator is greater than the created!

He is Superior to Moses

- Recall Heb 3:2 *that Jesus was faithful as Moses was faithful?*
- Heb 3:5 *Moses was faithful **as a servant.***
- Heb 3:6 *Jesus was faithful **as a Son.***
- Not the same faithfulness!

He is Superior to Moses

- Heb 3:6 *we are God's House!*
- Heb 3:8-11 Septuagint quote from Ps 95:7c-11.
- **It is a warning!** We are not to be like the Jews, who disregarded Moses, and wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, and died.

He is Superior to Moses

- The Jews disobeyed Moses, and paid for it by 40 years of wandering.
- Yet, many of them, who repented and trusted God, were assured of an eternity with Him.
- But if we disobey Jesus, and we will pay with an eternity of hell!

Be Vigilant!

- Heb 3:12 *Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.*
- Sin starts with an **evil heart**.
- **Unbelief** is a manifestation of **evil**. An evil heart is an unbelieving heart and vice versa.

Be Vigilant!

- Heb 3:12 Sin starts with an **evil, unbelieving heart.**
- Heb 3:12 Sin ends up with *falling away from the living God.*
- Sin starts in the heart.
- And ends with action.

Be Vigilant!

- Spiritual sin precedes physical sin.
- **Sin starts in the heart:** Rom 1:21 *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God.*
- **Sin ends with action:** Rom 1:24 *Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts!*

Be Vigilant!

- **Sin starts in the heart:** Psalm 36:1
Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes.
- **Sin ends with action:** Psalm 36:4
He plans wickedness upon his bed; he sets himself on a path that is not good; he does not despise evil.

Be Vigilant!

- Guard your heart! Be not unbelieving, which is evil, but believe!
- Heb 3:13 *Encourage one another to believe!*
- Let us be diligent that all of us will hold fast to Christ until He takes us home!
- Be diligent! Do not let unbelief or sin creep into your heart ...
- And into our fellowship!

Be Vigilant!

- Sin manifests itself as an evil action.
- But sin started long before that in an **evil and unbelieving heart!**
- Heb 3:15, left unchecked, **an evil and unbelieving heart becomes hardened.**
- As time passes, **repentance is more difficult!**
- And sin is **more easy!**

Be Vigilant!

- Heb 3:19 So the greatest sin is **unbelief!**
- It is unbelief that leads to falling away.
- It is unbelief that leads to evil action.
- It is unbelief that makes us unable to **enter His rest!**
- It is unbelief that makes us unfit for **Heaven!**

Be Vigilant!

- Heb 10:31 *It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God!*
- Unbelief lands us in **Hades!**
- Rev 21:14 And that is just a precursor to landing up in the **Lake of Fire!**
- And that is **Hell!**

Encouragement!

- Heb 6:9 *Beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, **things that accompany Salvation**, though we are speaking this way.*
- Heb 6:10 *For God is not unjust so as to forget your work ...*
- You are here! You are seeking to learn His Word, to be obedient to Him, to minister to His people!
- **Do not fear, just be vigilant!**

Summary

- Christianity is superior to Judaism.
- Heb 1-2: Jesus is superior to angels.
- Heb 3: Jesus is superior to Moses.
- Believe in Jesus! Be vigilant lest any of us have an evil and unbelieving heart!