

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, AND CONTEXT LETTER TO THE HEBREWS HEBREWS 1:1-3

BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES:

- Holy Bible
- HEBREWS Teaching Schedule
- Participant Questionnaire/Worksheet
- Map of Books of the Bible – Places Most Likely Written
- Outline of The Letter to the HEBREWS

TOPICS:

Author, Addressee(s)/Audience, Date Written, Setting, Occasion/Purpose for Writing, Message, and Themes: Superiority of Christ, High Priest, Sacrifice, Promise, Maturity, Faith, and Endurance

OPEN IT QUESTIONS

A. What situations might tempt a Christian to turn his or her back on Christ?

B. What have you done personally to encourage a fellow believer who has suffered church hurt or been wrongly influenced by non-believers to leave the Christian faith.

EXPLORE THE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF HEBREWS

1. Who wrote the letter to the Hebrews?

2. To whom was this letter written?

3. When was the Letter to the Hebrews written?

4. In what city were the recipients of the Letter to the Hebrews?

5. What type of relationship did the writer appear to have with the addressees of this letter?

6. For what reason(s) did the author write to the Hebrews?

7. What is the overall message in the Letter to the Hebrews?

8. What are the main themes in the book of Hebrews?

9. What is the importance of the Superiority of Christ?

10. What is the importance of knowing Jesus as High Priest today?

11. What is the significance of personal sacrifice for today?

12. What is the importance God's covenant promise for us today?

13. What is the importance of Christian maturity for today?

14. What is the importance of Christian faith for today?

15. What is the significance of endurance for today?

Life Application:

As you read and study the Book of Hebrews, catch the profound message of this important book. Judaism may not be calling you back, but many other gods and belief systems clamor for attention and push for allegiance [loyalty, adherence, commitment]. Regardless of their claims and promises, know that only Jesus is the truth, and only he brings life. Jesus is the **best**, the only way (John 14:6). Do not settle for anything less!

16. What other gods and belief systems clamor for attention and push for allegiance [loyalty, adherence, commitment] in your life today?

[Resources: Life Application Concise New Testament Commentary and Adult LessonMaker Application]

Facilitators

Rev. Rodney Kemp

Rev. Valerie Crump

Rev. Jacqueline Albert

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Minister Alicia Martin

Sunday School Instructors

Robbin Cooper, Sunday School
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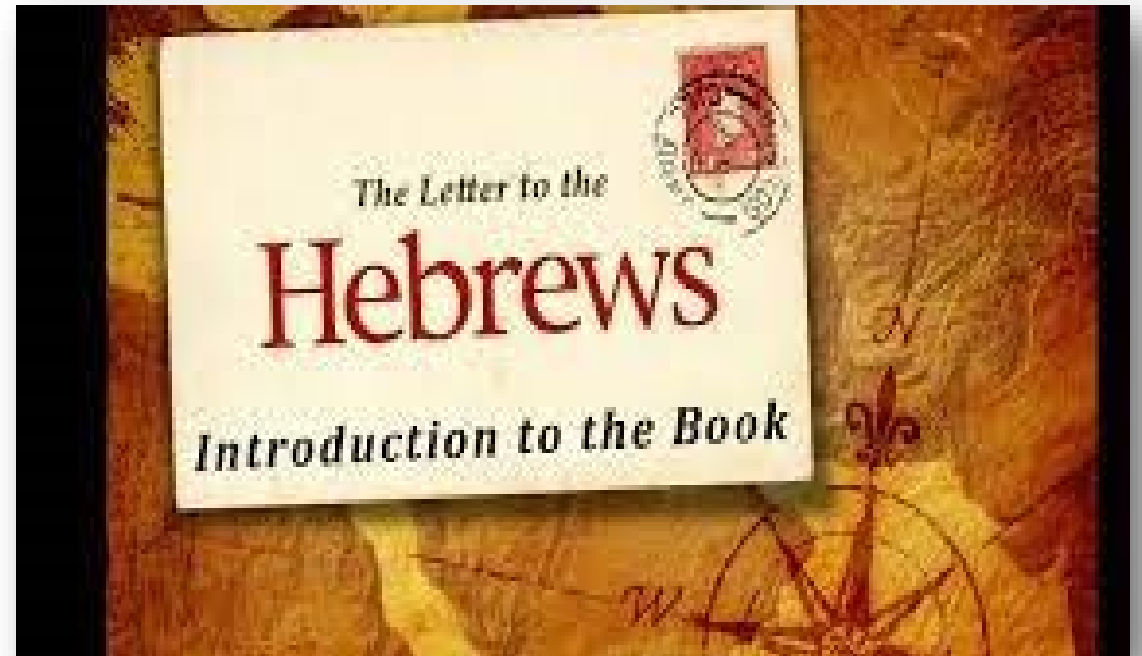
Vineta Mitchell, Instructor

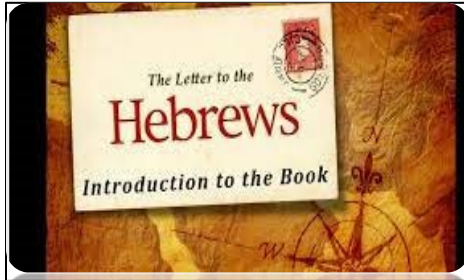
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New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of Southfield, Michigan

Welcome to Bible Study

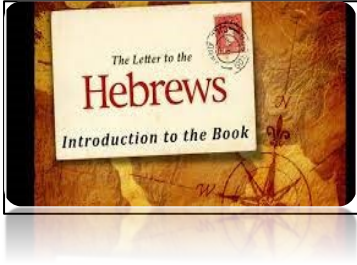




PRAYER



- Sick
- Bereaved
- Our Church
- Our Country
- The World



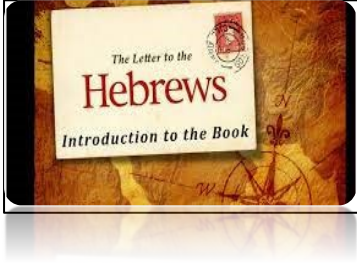
Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Bible Study Resources

([www.newhope-
mbc.org](http://www.newhope-
mbc.org))

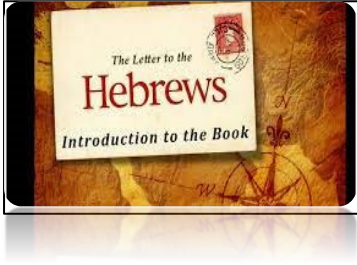
- Holy Bible
- Hebrews Teaching Schedule
- Participant Questionnaire/Worksheet
- Map of Books of the Bible – Where Written
- Outline of the Letter to the Hebrews



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

TOPICS



Hebrews

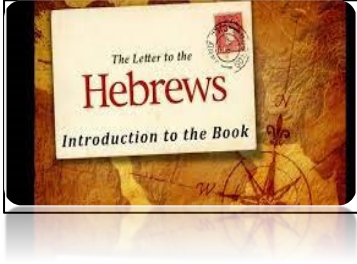
Introduction, Background, and Context

TOPICS

- ☐ Author
- ☐ Addressees/Audience
- ☐ Date Written
- ☐ Setting
- ☐ Occasion/Purpose
- ☐ Message

Themes

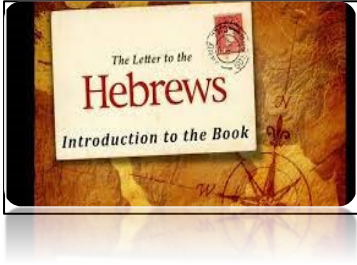
- ☐ Superiority of Christ
- ☐ High Priest
- ☐ Sacrifice
- ☐ Promise
- ☐ Maturity
- ☐ Faith
- ☐ Endurance



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Open It Questions

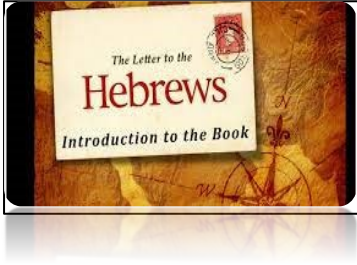


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Open It Questions

- A. What situations might tempt a Christian to turn his or her back on Christ?

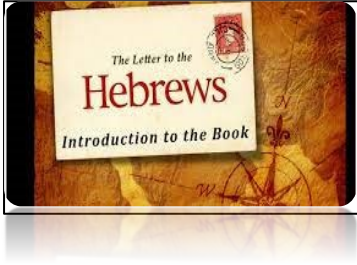


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Open It Questions

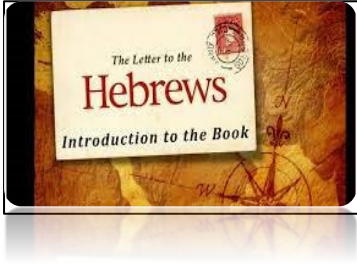
B. What have you done personally to encourage a fellow believer who has suffered church hurt or been wrongly influenced by non-believers to leave the Christian faith.



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Introduction

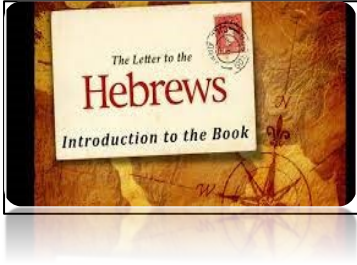


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Introduction

Why study the Book of Hebrews? E. Schuyler English, a Bible commentator, wrote, “To read it is to breathe the atmosphere of heaven itself. To study it is to partake of strong spiritual meat. To abide in its teachings is to be led from immaturity to maturity in the knowledge of Christian truth and of Christ Himself. It is to ‘go on unto perfection.’”

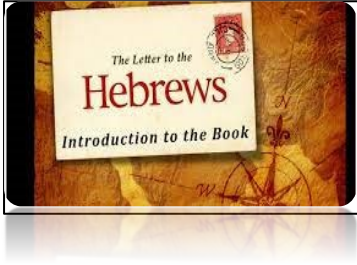


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Introduction

The Epistle to the Hebrews reigns unchallenged as the best New Testament commentary on the Old Testament and its relationship to Jesus Christ. It makes clear that the sacrifices and other priestly activities were but shadows pointing forward to Christ, the once-for-all sacrifice for sin, the true Priest, the one mediator between God and man. Indeed, Hebrews may be considered a grand portrait of Christ with the Old Testament as its background.

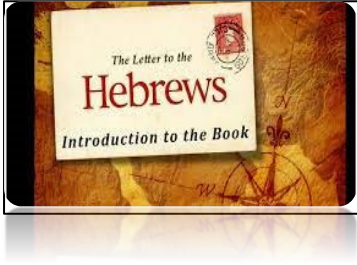


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Introduction

It is important to study the Book of Hebrews because it shows us that the Bible is not a collection of unrelated stories but is rather one unified story—the story of redemption through Jesus Christ. Simply put, the book of Hebrews helps us unlock the glorious tapestry of God’s progressive revelation. Hebrews helps us unfold the mystery of seeing Jesus Christ throughout the Old Testament.

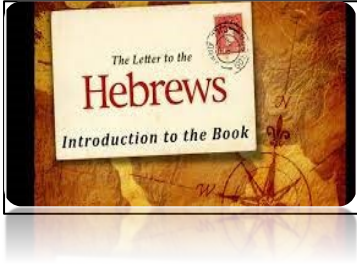


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Introduction

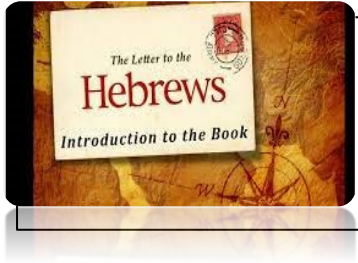
Hebrews is a masterful document written to Jews who were evaluating Jesus or who were struggling with the Christian faith. The message of Hebrews is that Jesus is better, Christianity is superior, and Christ is supreme and completely sufficient for salvation.



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

SCRIPTURE

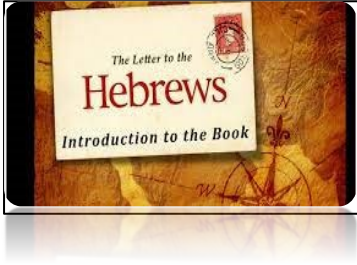


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

SCRIPTURE
Hebrews 1:1-3
NLT

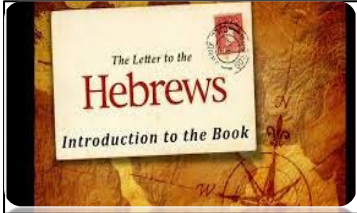
¹Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. ² And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. ³ The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Background, and Context

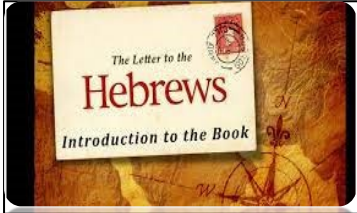


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

1. Who wrote the letter to the Hebrews?

The authorship of Hebrews has been in doubt since its publication. In fact, none of the early writers who refer to this book mention its author. And no one since early times has been able to identify the author.



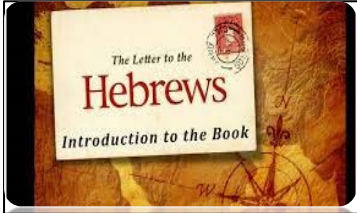
Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Profile of a possible author

From the content of the letter, we learn--

- ❑ The author was a teacher and a second-generation Christian ([2:3](#)).
- ❑ The writer had thought long and hard about a Christian interpretation of the Old Testament.

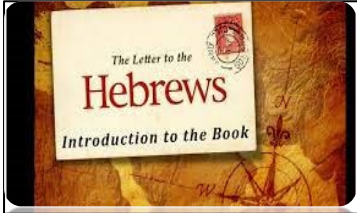


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Profile of a possible author

- ❑ He or she was probably a Greek-speaking Jew, familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures and with the religious ideas of the Jews.
- ❑ The author claims to share the inheritance of their sacred history, traditions, and institutions ([1:1](#)) and writes of them with intimate knowledge and enthusiasm.

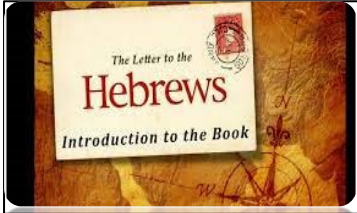


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Profile of a possible author

- ❑ The author seems to have known the Old Testament only in the Septuagint (ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament), which is followed even where it deviates from the Hebrew.
- ❑ The fact that Hebrews contains teachings that are “Pauline” along with the mention of Timothy in [13:23](#) seems to suggest that the author knew Paul or associated with those who were close to him.

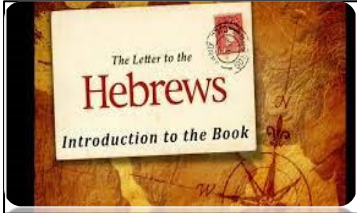


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Profile of a possible author

- ❑ The author used Greek with a purity of style and strong vocabulary, and the style is unlike any other New Testament document. However, the fundamental concepts of Hebrews correspond fully with the writings of Paul and John.
- ❑ Beyond this limited profile, the letter gives few authorship clues.

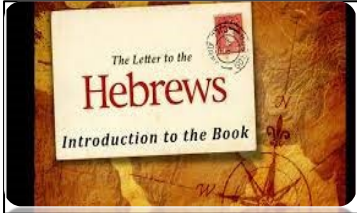


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Various individuals named over time

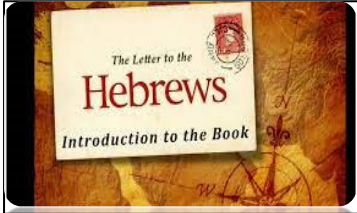
- ☐ Paul
- ☐ Barnabas
- ☐ Apollos
- ☐ Silas
- ☐ Philip the Evangelist
- ☐ Clement of Rome
- ☐ Epaphras
- ☐ Priscilla
- ☐ Priscilla and Aquila



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Having no known author is one reason that the early church was slow to include Hebrews as Holy Scripture. Finally, Hebrews' own intrinsic worth won its place in the canon. We can only agree with Origen, who stated in the third century: “But who wrote the epistle, God only knows the truth” (quoted by Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.14).



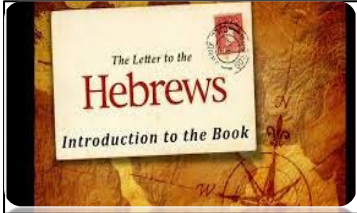
Background, and Context
Addressee/Audience

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

2. To whom was this letter written?

This letter was written to Hebrew Christians who may have been considering a return to Judaism.

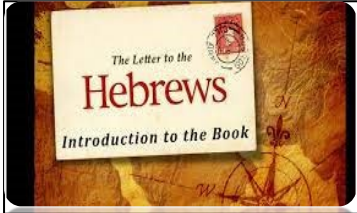


Background, and Context *Addressee/Audience*

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

The title “Hebrews” or “To the Hebrews” was not part of the original writing but appears in some of the earliest copies. Nevertheless, the title is appropriate considering the content, which is narrowly focused on the Old Testament Scriptures and Jewish religious practices.

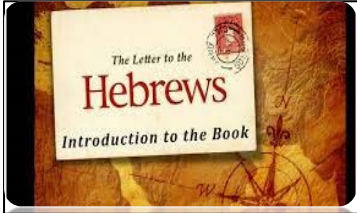


Background, and Context *Addressee/Audience*

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

The writer thoroughly discussed the worship in the Tabernacle, the priests and the sacrifices, the covenant, and Jewish heroes including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and others. References to “Abraham’s descendants” (2:16), the argument that Jesus is superior to Moses (3:1-19), and the emphasis on “rest” (4:1-11) would have appealed to Jews and would have had very little effect on Gentiles.

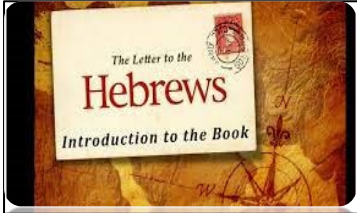


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

3. When was the Letter to the Hebrews written?

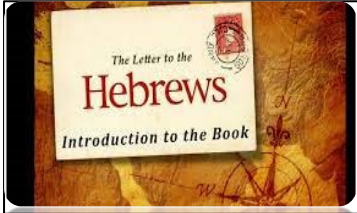
This letter was written in approximately
A.D. 60.



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Because Clement of Rome used Hebrews, the letter must have been written prior to A.D. 95. An argument from silence is the lack of any reference to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Certainly, in a book written to Jews, an event of such catastrophic proportions would have been mentioned, especially since it would have strengthened the argument for the superiority of Christ and the new covenant over the Levitical ritual. **Thus, Hebrews must have been written prior to A.D. 70.**

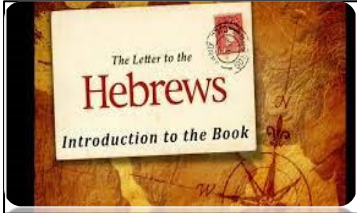


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

4. In what city were the recipients of the Letter to the Hebrews?

A probable destination is Rome. That is where Hebrews was first known and quoted. In a letter written to the Corinthian church on behalf of the Roman church, Clement of Rome revealed his knowledge of this epistle to the Hebrews. Certainly, the references to persecution fit Roman readers. Also, the greetings from believers in Italy ([13:24](#)) points to a Roman connection. Quite possibly the author, writing from another location, knew Italian believers in that city and was sending their greetings back to Rome.



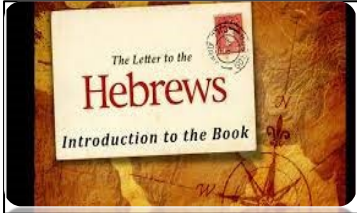
Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Map showing where books of the Bible were written
(Hebrews most likely written from Rome)



Background, and Context
Setting – City of Addressees



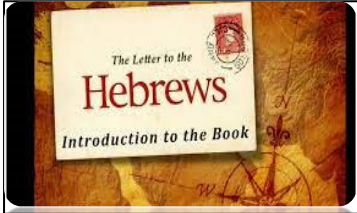
Background, and Context *Setting – The People*

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

5. What type of relationship did the writer appear to have with the addressees of this letter?

The writer makes it clear that this group of Jewish believers was going through severe persecution (Hebrews 10:32-34), probably on religious grounds, by non-Christian Jews. Therefore, they needed encouraging and exhortation [urging] to stay the course to keep the faith and not revert back to Judaism.



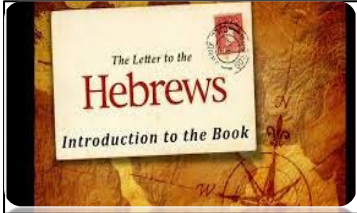
Background, and Context
Occasion/Purpose

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

6. For what reason(s) did the author write to the Hebrews?

The primary reason the author wrote to the Hebrews was to present the sufficiency and superiority of Christ to Hebrew Christians who may have been considering a return to Judaism.

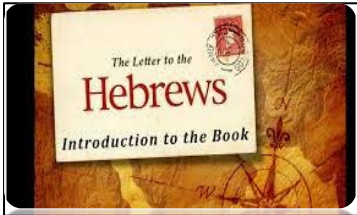


Background, and Context *Occasion/Purpose*

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

The purpose of the Epistle to the Hebrews, therefore, was to remind and convince readers of the sufficiency and superiority of Christ (9:14), to warn them of the danger of drifting away from Christ (2:3), and to exhort them to faithfulness (3:6).



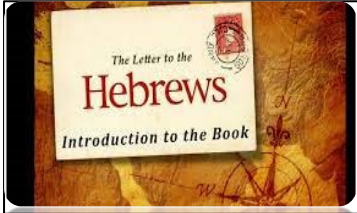
Background, and Context *Message*

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

7. What is the overall message in the Letter to the Hebrews?

The primary message of this book, (as presented from 1:4–10:18) is that Jesus is superior to angels (1:4–2:18), superior to the ancient Jewish leaders (3:1–4:13), and superior to the Jewish priests (4:14–7:28). Christ surpasses Judaism because he has a better covenant (8:1-13), a better sanctuary (9:1-10), and a more sufficient sacrifice for sins (9:11–10:18).

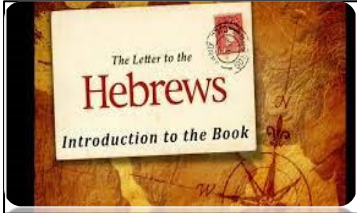


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

8. What are the main themes in the book of Hebrews?

The main themes in the book of Hebrews include the *Superiority of Christ, High Priest, Sacrifice, Promise, Maturity, Faith, and Endurance.*



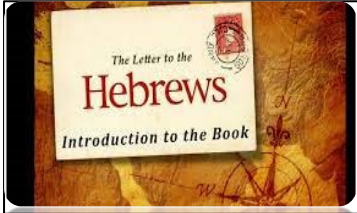
Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

9. What is the importance of the Superiority of Christ?

Superiority of Christ (1:1-14; 2:5–3:6; 4:14–5:10; 6:13–10:18).

Hebrews reveals Jesus' true identity as God in the flesh. Jesus is the ultimate authority. He is greater than any angel or religion. As the divine Son of God, Jesus is superior to any Jewish leader (such as Abraham, Moses, or Joshua). As the perfect man and mediator with God, he is superior to any priest. As one who endured suffering and temptation, but without sin, he knows us thoroughly. Jesus is the complete revelation of God. And he has been exalted to God's right hand (1:3), crowned with glory and honor (2:9).



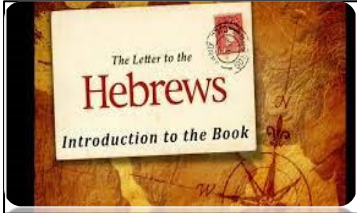
Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

10. What is the importance of knowing Jesus as High Priest today?

High Priest (3:1; 4:14–5:10; 6:19–8:6; 9:6–10:22; 13:11-13).

In the Old Testament, the high priest represented the Jews before God. He would make blood sacrifices to atone for the people's sins before God. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would enter the Most Holy Place in the Temple to make atonement for the sins of the whole nation. The high priest would approach God only once a year, but Christ is always at God's right hand, interceding for us.

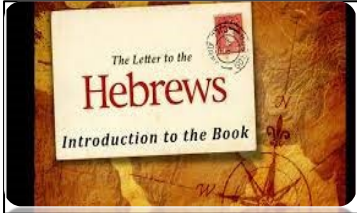


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

11. What is the significance of personal sacrifice for today?

Sacrifice (1:3; 2:9; 7:27; 9:12-14, 24-28; 10:5-22). Old Testament sacrifices had to be perfect: animals without any injuries or blemishes. These animals were killed on the altar, their blood spilled for the sins of the people. Jesus, the divine Son of God, and the perfect Son of Man, died on the cross, shedding his blood to secure the forgiveness for all people. Christ's sacrifice was the ultimate fulfillment of all that the Old Testament *sacrifices* represented.



Background, and Context

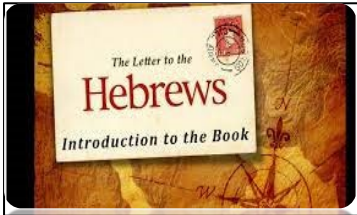
Main Themes

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

12. What is the importance God's covenant promise for us today?

God made a holy promise, a covenant, with Abraham. In this covenant, God promised to bless Abraham, to make of Abraham's descendants a great nation, and to bless all the world through him. God also promised to be with his people and to give them rest. Although the people often failed to live up to their side of the covenant, God always kept his: through Abraham came the nation of Israel, and eventually Christ. In addition, God brought his people to the Promised Land, and eventually he will bring them to their eternal rest.

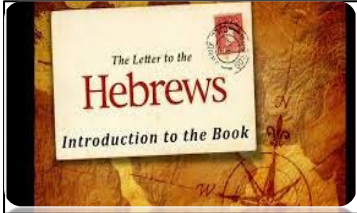


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

13. What is the importance of Christian maturity for today?

Maturity ([2:11-13](#); [5:11–6:3](#)). Although God’s people are saved from sin and given eternal life when they trust in Christ as Savior, they are given the task of going on and growing in faith. Too often, however, believers remain immature, feeding only on “milk” and not “meat” and arguing over the basics ([6:1](#)). Through a living relationship with Christ, however, believers can live blameless lives, be used powerfully by God, and mature in their faith.



Background, and Context

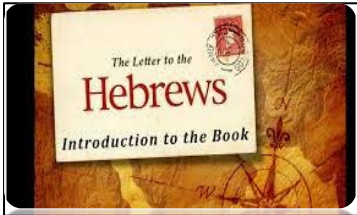
Main Themes

Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

14. What is the importance of Christian faith for today?

Faith (11:1-40; 13:1-21). The Bible, from beginning to end, is a book about faith. Many believed God and received multiplied blessings on earth. Others believed God and were persecuted, tortured, and martyred for their faith. God expects his people to come to him in faith and to live by faith, regardless of the circumstances or outcomes. Faith is confident trust in God and his promises. God's greatest promise is that people can be saved from sin and have eternal life through Christ.

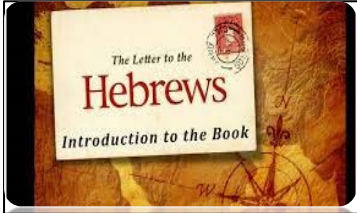


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

15. What is the significance of endurance for today?

Endurance (2:1-4; 3:1-19; 4:11-16; 6:4-12; 10:19-39; 12:1-29). It was not easy to be a Christian in the first century, especially a Jewish Christian. Believers who had come to faith in Christ out of Judaism were ostracized by their families and persecuted by the religious leaders. When the Romans began to persecute Christians, they seized their property, imprisoned, and tortured them. These believers felt tremendous pressure to denounce Christianity, to combine Christian teachings with Judaism, or to be secret believers. Hebrews, therefore, warns against apostasy and against slipping back into old habits and beliefs; the message of this book challenges believers to endure to the end.

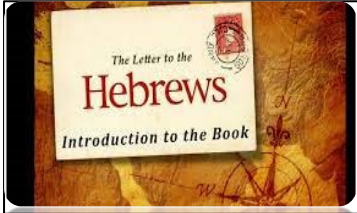


Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Background, and Context
Life Application

As you read and study the Book of Hebrews, catch the profound message of this important book. Judaism may not be calling you back, but many other gods and belief systems clamor for attention and push for allegiance [loyalty, adherence, commitment]. Regardless of their claims and promises, know that only Jesus is the truth, and only he brings life. Jesus is the **best**, the only way (John 14:6). Do not settle for anything less!



Hebrews

Introduction, Background, and Context

Background, and Context
Life Application

16. **What other gods and belief systems clamor for attention and push for allegiance [loyalty, adherence, commitment] in your life today?**

New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of Southfield, Michigan

NEXT WEEK'S BIBLE STUDY LESSON



Hebrews 1:4-14

“JESUS is ‘Greater Than’ > Angels!”



*Welcome to Noon Day Bible
Study!*

New Hope MBC of Southfield

Dotson Fellowship Hall



**Wednesday,
November 3,
2021**

**Registration
required:**

**Call the
Administrative
Office at
(248) 353-0675**

New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of Southfield, Michigan



30-Days of Thankful Prayer *November 1-30, 2021* *5:00am every morning*

The New Hope MBC Intercessory Prayer Ministry invites you to join us Prayer Warriors for 30 Days of Thankful Prayer. A 10-minute Prayer of Thanksgiving will go forth unto our Great God for All He has done. Join in by calling in on the Intercessory Prayer Line every morning

1-605-313-4802

Access Code 839510

New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of Southfield, Michigan



Mountain Moving Men Ministry sponsoring

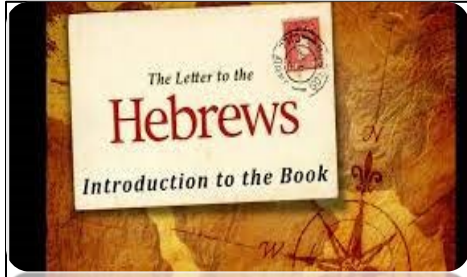
Brother to Brother Big Rake

Rake homes of 2-3 Southfield residents

Saturday, November, 13, 2021, 9am-2pm

We need at least 25 Good Men to participate. If you have further questions about this event or if you are interested in being a part of it, please call the church office, 248-353-0675.





PRAYER



BOOKS OF THE BIBLE – PLACES MOST LIKELY WRITTEN



Hebrews - Outline

I. THEME: Since Christ is supreme, God's people must look only to Him. ([1:1-13:25](#))

A. THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST: Christ is superior to all Old Testament characters and institutions. ([1:1-10:18](#))

1. Christ is superior to the prophets. ([1:1-4](#))
2. Christ is superior to the angels. ([1:5-2:18](#))
3. Christ is superior to Moses. ([3:1-6](#))
4. Therefore, avoid unbelief. ([3:7-19](#))
5. The consequences and cure for unbelief. ([4:1-16](#))
6. Christ has superior priestly qualifications. ([5:1-10](#))
7. Warning: don't fall away. ([5:11-6:12](#))
8. God is worthy of trust, for His promise is certain. ([6:13-20](#))
9. Christ's priestly order is superior to Aaron's. ([7:1-28](#))
10. Christ is the priest of a new and superior covenant. ([8:1-13](#))
11. Christ's sanctuary and sacrifice are superior. ([9:1-10:18](#))

B. PERSEVERING IN FAITH: Patiently endure ([10:19-13:25](#))

1. Persevere. ([10:19-39](#))
2. Maintain faith in Christ. ([11:1-40](#))
3. Accept God's discipline and remain committed to Him. ([12:1-29](#))
4. Exercise love. ([13:1-21](#))
5. Closing remarks. ([13:22-25](#))

LESSONmaker Outlines.