

The Book of Hebrews

Chapter 1

1. One of the great themes of the book of Hebrews is that "Jesus is better".
Read verses 1-2. God desires to speak and can speak in a variety of ways.
However, in these last days (since the time of Jesus) what is the new way that He speaks to us?
2. In verse 2 and 3, we learn seven things about Jesus that put Him on equal footing with God the Father. See if you can list all seven of these and consider how great Jesus is in light of these verses.
3. In the remainder of the chapter, the author of Hebrews makes that case that Jesus is far greater than the angels:
 - a. In verse 5 how does God address Jesus in a way that angels are never addressed?
 - b. In verse 6 what does God command the angels of God to do? According to mean about Jesus?
 - c. When God speaks to Jesus in verse 8 (quoting Psalm 45:6-7), what does Exodus 34:14 who is the only one who can receive worship? What does this He call Jesus?
 - d. Consider verse 9. Because Jesus, as a man, loved righteousness and hated sin, what was the natural result in Jesus' heart? Make living a holy life a priority that you may experience the same blessing.
 - e. Read verses 10-12. What do these verses tell us about Jesus and His relationship with creation?
 - f. In verse 13 what special position is Jesus invited to that no angel is invited to?
4. Take time to worship Jesus in light of all of these wonderful truths concerning Him!

Chapter 2

1. Notice verse 1. There is danger of us drifting away from Jesus. What must we do to avoid this?
2. Read verses 2-4. Here the author is pointing out the superiority of God speaking to us through His Son and through the working of His Spirit versus speaking to us through any other way. If God's judgment was severe on those who ignored these other revelations, how do you think God will handle those who ultimately refuse the witness of His Spirit regarding His Son?
3. In verses 5-8 the author quotes Psalm 8:4-6, where a promise is given concerning the Messiah, Jesus, that He will rule all creation. Yet the end of verse 8 says that we don't yet see the fulfillment of that promise. Truly this world is broken and in need of the One True King to make things right. What things do you most look forward to seeing Jesus fix when He returns?
4. In verse 9 who do we read that Jesus died for?
5. In verse 10 the word "perfect" is a word that means "fully ripened", "complete", or "finished". The idea is that Jesus was not imperfect, but as a man, He had

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to walk out fully the calling that God had for His life. If God the Father used suffering in His life fulfill Jesus' ministry, then how much more so us?

6. In verse 11-13 we read some wonderful verses about how Jesus is not ashamed to call us His family! Paul exhorted Timothy to not be ashamed of Jesus; it is easy for us to feel this way when we are made fun of or persecuted for our faith in Jesus. Yet when Jesus was persecuted for us, He was not ashamed of us. Take time to thank Jesus for His love for you, and for His bravery in enduring all He did for you.
7. In verses 14 and 15, what do we see that Jesus' death accomplished?
8. Look at verses 17-18. Jesus became human, went through difficulty and suffering, and tasted death for us. What was the result of that according to these verses?

Chapter 3

1. What are we told to do in verse 1?
2. As Jesus was demonstrated to be greater than the angels in the first two chapters, here He is presented as greater than Moses. In verses 1-6, what illustration is used to paint Jesus excellence over Moses?
3. Look at verse 7 and 8. When is the best time to listen to and respond to Jesus?
4. In verse 8, 10, and 12 the children of Israel's hearts are described as hardened, astray, evil and unbelieving. Notice verse 11 and the result of allowing our hearts to be like this.
5. Verse 12 is an especially strong warning to us. Are there times when you feel tempted to walk away from Jesus? What tends to cause these times? Guard your heart and consider the truth of the book of Hebrews: Jesus is better!
6. The chapter ends with the sobering example of the judgment of the children of Israel in the desert. We too will remain in a spiritual desert and fail to enter into the fullness of what God has for us if we do not walk in childlike faith and trust in Jesus. Enter in to His rest.

Chapter 4

1. In chapter three we find a promise of God: if we trust Him we will enter into His rest. Here in verse 1 there is a warning. What is it?
2. In verses 2-8, we see of two times in the past where a rest was offered by God: in the time of Joshua, and in the time of Creation. In each case, the rest could not be entered into because of what?
3. Read verses 9-11. What does it mean to enter into God's rest? Is it something that we play a part in?
4. In verse 12-13 we read that the Word of God can do surgery on our hearts, and that the eyes of God see clearly all the work that needs to be done. Are you regularly in the word, and do you cooperate with the work that God is trying to do?
5. Consider verse 14-15. How high is Jesus? How low did He make Himself?
6. We should come confidently and trustingly to God's throne. What should we come for? When should we come?

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Chapter 5

In chapter 1&2 we saw that Jesus is greater than angels. In chapter 3 we see that He is greater than Moses. Chapter 4 shows us that He provides a better rest than Sabbath day rest and Promised Land rest. In this chapter we see that He is a greater High Priest.

1. Notice verse 1. What is the prerequisite of a high priest in this verse? What is his job?
2. How does the high priest being a man affect his ability to minister to others? (verse 2)
3. Notice verse 4. As with the high priest, we can only be and do what God has called us to. What has He called you to?
4. Verse 5 and 6 quote two Old Testament psalms. Both of these psalms are considered "Messianic" psalms; psalms that clearly refer to the promised King/Priest that God would send to rescue His people. Read Psalm 2 and 110.
5. Verse 7 and 8 seem to refer to the prayers of Jesus during His suffering, and His obedience to His Father's plan in spite of the pain and difficulty. To see Jesus prayer from the cross, read Matt 27:20-50, especially verse 46, and compare this with Psalm 22. To see Jesus' prayers from the garden, read Matt 26:36-44.
6. The author scolds the Hebrews for the slowness of their growth in verses 11-14. We grow physically by eating food. How do we grow spiritually? Look up 1Peter 2:2 and Matt 4:4.

Chapter 6

In chapter 5 the author brought up the Old Testament character Melchizedek, and said that Jesus was a priest like him. But before the author gets back to this at the end of chapter 6, he goes on a sidetrack, and has some words to say to the Hebrews about not growing up as Christians.

1. In verse 1 and 2, basics of the faith are brought up, and also the idea that we build on these basics till we grow to maturity. What is the foundation of Christianity?
2. Verses 4-8 provide a stern warning against turning away from Jesus (remember that the theme of Hebrews is that Jesus is better, so why go back?). It is especially frightening when he says that if we do it is impossible to be renewed to repentance. When we consider our own lives and times we have failed the Lord or turned from Him, we can fall into despair reading these verses. For encouragement read Matt 19:26.
3. However in verses 9-10 we see that God is faithful to both see and reward our service to Him. How are you serving God's people? Are you storing up rewards from Him?
4. In verses 11-12 we are exhorted to not just serve, but to continue to do so till the end. In order to do this, who are we to imitate or follow the example of? Read Gal 6:9.

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5. God made wonderful promises to Abraham. What did he do before he saw these promises fulfilled in his life? (verse 15)
6. What do you learn about God's character in verse 18?

Chapter 7

The overall theme of Hebrews is that "Jesus is better". It seems that the Hebrew believers being addressed are thinking of returning to Judaism, and the author makes the case that Jesus is better than that old way of life. Here he is continuing an idea that started in chapter 5: that Jesus is a better High Priest. And so that you don't get lost, a priest was an essentially a person with two jobs: represent God to the people, and represent the people to God.

1. In verses 1-3 we read of Melchizedek. He is a type or a shadow of Jesus. In what ways in these verses do we see that Melchizedek is like Jesus?
2. Read verses 4-10. Israel had 12 sons. One of these sons, Levi, was given a privilege that no son from another tribe could ever have - the priesthood. All of the other sons would pay tithes to the Levites as they ministered spiritual things to the rest of the tribes. How in these verses do we see that the Melchizedekian priesthood was greater than the Levitical priesthood?
3. Note the logic of verse 11. What does it say about Jesus being better?
4. Read verses 13-17. Jesus is not of the Levitical priesthood because He did not come from the tribe of Levi, but from Judah. What do these verses show the superiority of Jesus's priesthood?
5. The Levitical priesthood was "under the law". Jesus' priesthood through Melchizedek predates the law. What is the inherent weakness of the law shown in verses 18-19? What is the strength of the new covenant at the end of verse 19?
6. Look at verse 24-25. How far does Jesus' salvation reach? What does He live to do for us now?
7. Read verses 26-28. One of the inherent weaknesses with the Levitical priesthood was the weakness and mortality of the men that made up the priesthood. How does Jesus exceed them?

Chapter 8

The continuing theme of Hebrews is that "Jesus is better." In this chapter the idea of Jesus as a better High Priest is continued. In particular:

1. In verses 1-2, we see another reason why Jesus' priesthood is better. What is it?
2. Look at verses 3-5. The Levitical priesthood according to these verses is a "shadow" of heavenly things. What is the difference between a shadow, and the thing which casts the shadow? What does this mean when you consider Jesus' priesthood vs. the old one?

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3. A covenant is a legal agreement wherein the parties involved promise to "hold up their end of the bargain". Read verses 7-9. What was the problem with the first covenant?
4. Read verses 10-12. The New Covenant exceeds the Old Covenant in that God is making all of the promises; the old covenant failed when people failed, but the new covenant is based on God's ability.
 - a. What does God promise to do for us in verse 10?
 - b. What is the result of this in verse 11?
 - c. Finally what does God promise to do in verse 12?

Chapter 9

Again, the larger theme of Hebrews is that "Jesus is better". In this chapter the author is continuing an idea begun in chapter 5 that Jesus is a better High Priest than the high priest from the old system.

1. In verses 1-5 the author brings up some of the details of the old priesthood, but says that he cannot go into detail. If you would like a little better understanding, read Exodus 25.
2. Read verses 6-8. The innermost part of the tabernacle was called the "Holy Place", the "Holy of Holies", or the "Holiest of All". God's presence was in this place over the Mercy seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant. How often could the High priest enter here? What did he need to do first? Could anyone else?
3. As we consider the old tabernacle and priesthood, note the first three words of verse 9. What does this tell us about them? Also see verse 23-24 later in the chapter.
4. In verse 11, what do we learn about the tabernacle that Jesus minister in?
5. Note verse 12. Who brings the greater sacrifice to God?
6. Note the word conscience in verse 9 and 14, and note verse 22. What does Jesus blood have the power to do that no other sacrifice can?
7. Read verses 24-28. How often does Jesus have to die for sin? Read John 19:30.

Chapter 10

God intentionally created the Old Covenant sacrificial system incomplete. It was to be a shadow of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus is better.

1. Verse 1. Can it grow and mature and perfect us?
2. Verse 4. Is it possible to remove sin by killing animals?
3. Verse 5-8. Is God interested in sacrifice for sacrifice's sake? Does He take pleasure in it?
4. Verse 7-9. Psalm 40:6-8 is quoted here. It is a messianic psalm, a psalm that foretells details about the coming King and Priest of God's people. Is it clear through these verses that God always intended to replace the OT sacrificial system when Jesus came?
5. Verse 10-14. How often must Jesus offer himself? Was His sacrifice complete? Is it complete for you?

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6. In verses 19-25, we are told that because of Jesus' perfect sacrifice; we can draw near to God with full confidence. What else are we told we should be doing?

Chapter 11

This chapter is sometimes called "the hall of faith", because it recounts the lives of characters in the Bible who trusted in God's Word. They are recorded here as examples for us to follow. Warren Wiersbe defined faith as "confident obedience to God's Word in spite of circumstances or consequence." Remember, faith just means trusting God in what He says.

1. In verse 1 faith is defined. When people observe us trusting in God and in the work of His Son, it is evidence to them that He is real. Do people find evidence of God by looking at your life?
2. Cain and Abel both offered different sacrifices to God. However, God was pleased with Abel's and not Cain's. According to verse 4, why? Read Genesis 4:1-13 for more info on Cain and Abel.
3. Enoch is mentioned in Genesis 5:18-24. His life is very different from the rest of the characters in the Genesis 5 genealogy: they all die, but He does not; he is simply taken by God. According to verse 5 of Hebrews why did God take Him? Look at verse 6. How can we please Him like Enoch did?
4. Look at verse 7. Noah was warned by God of the coming judgment of the flood, and spent 120 years building the ark. He responded to what God said, although there was no outward evidence. When God speaks to you about doing something, are you "moved with Godly fear"? Actions speak louder than words. Do you respect God enough to obey Him?
5. Verses 8-19 speak about the life of Abraham and Sarah (covering Genesis 11-25), and many of the ways that they trusted in God.
 - a. What does verse 8 tell us about the uncertainty that Abraham experienced when God called him? Have you ever felt that way in your walk with God?
 - b. According to verse 10 and 14-16 what was Abraham really looking and waiting for?
 - c. When God told Abraham to offer Isaac, according to verse 19, what did He believe God would do?
6. In verses 24-26, we see that Moses willingly laid aside the ease and luxury of being a prince of Egypt. Why did He do this? What three other things from Moses life are recorded as ways that he trusted in God?
7. Not everyone who trusts in God sees an earthly victory. Read verses 35-40. What do we learn from their lives about being faithful in difficult times?

Chapter 12

1. Our Christian life is pictured as a race which requires Endurance in verses 1-3. What things slow you down in your race? What things does the author encourage us to do in these verses to help us run our races?

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2. In verses 4-11 we read that if God is really our Father, we will experience discipline and correction from Him. In verses 10-11, what is the stated purpose of the correction and testing that God brings us through?
3. Read verses 12-15. In these verses we are given many practical instructions for our lives both as individuals and in relationship with others. According to verse 15, what two dangers are there for us to avoid having fruitful lives?
4. The rest of the chapter gives examples from the Old Testament that serve as stern warnings against ignoring the voice of God, who is ultimately the Judge of all. According to verses 28, how do we live a life pleasing to God?
5. Look at verse 29. How is this truth about God a good thing? How can it be a scary thing?

Chapter 13

1. Verses 1-4 address loving one another. Are there any commands in these verses that the Lord is addressing in your life right now?
2. Covetousness-wanting something you don't have in a way that makes it more important than God. Perhaps you believe you can't be happy without the thing that you're coveting, or that all your problems would be fixed if you just had that something. Read verses 5-6. What are the antidotes to coveting found within these verses?
3. God sets leaders up within the church, not simply to preach and teach, but also to serve as examples of how to walk with God. What things does verse 7 and 17-19 tell us to do concerning our leaders in the local church?
4. Read verse 8. Why is it such a good thing that Jesus never changes?
5. Look at verse 9. Religious ritual is not a good foundation for our hearts. How should we establish our hearts?
6. The theme of Hebrews is that Jesus is better. Here we see again that He offered a better sacrifice (Himself) than the Old Testament priests offered (livestock), and that He offered once for all. Look at verse 15-16. What kinds of sacrifices is God interested in now?
7. Read verses 20-22. The author both prays for the Hebrews (talks to God about them), and then exhorts the Hebrews (talks to them about God). Do you do both of these things for the people in your life? Note the things that are prayed for and incorporate these into your prayer life for others.
8. Note verse 25. What a great way to end this letter!