

Letter to the Hebrews - Study 1

Bible Study Outline

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This study is part of a full college-level course on the Letter to the Hebrews taught by Dr. Ian Bond. The complete Student Outline and the lectures in MP3 format, are available for purchase and download from Teach the Nations, Inc.

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Hebrews Chapter 1

I. INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS

- A. The letter to the Hebrews was written to wavering Jewish believers, encouraging them to stand fast in their faith.
1. God is shaking things so that you may learn to live by faith and not by sight.
 2. He wants you to build your life on the permanence of the eternal and not on the instability of the temporal.
- B. Hebrews is divided into two major sections:
1. The Son of God the Mediator of a Better Covenant
 - a. Deals with doctrinal issues (Heb. 1:1—10:18).
 2. Of a Life in the Power of the Great Salvation
 - a. Focuses on practical living (Heb. 10:19—13:25).
- C. Hebrews contains several warnings to Jewish Christians not to revert back to Judaism and that system of worship (Heb. 10:39).
1. These believers were weak in their faith; when they should have been teaching others, they themselves still required teaching.
 2. The writer urges them to grow and not remain as “babes” in Christ (Heb. 5:12–14).
- D. A major theme in the book, often expressed by the words “better” and “great,” is the superiority and preeminence of Christ (Heb. 1:4; 2:3; 4:14; 7:19, 22; 8:6; 9:11, 23; 10:32, 34, 35; 11:16, 34, 40; 12:1; 13:20).
1. Seven passages of comparison:

	Inferior:	Superior:	
a.	Angel	Jesus	1:4-14
b.	Moses	Jesus	3:1-6
c.	Levitical Priesthood	Priesthood of Melchizedek	Ch. 7
d.	Old Covenant	New Covenant	8:6-13
e.	Tabernacle of Moses	Heavenly Tabernacle	Ch. 9
f.	Levitical Sacrifices	Sacrifice of Jesus	10:1-18
g.	Mount Sinai	Mount Zion	12:18-24

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II. THE GLORY OF THE SON IN HIS PERSON AND WORK (HEB. 1:1-3)

- A. Jesus Christ: God's ultimate Word to mankind (1:1-2a)
 - 1. In the Old Testament, God revealed himself through his messengers (1:1).
 - 2. In the New Testament, God revealed himself through his Messiah (1:2a)

- B. Sevenfold revelation of Christ as God's Son (1:2b-3)
 - 1. His ETERNAL BEING:
 - a. HEIR of all things.
 - b. SPACE and TIME (*aion*) were made through Him.
 - i. *Aion*, referring to an age or time; the world itself as an object of creation and existence.
 - ii. Anticipates Einstein's "Theory of Relativity."
 - c. The RADIANCE of God's glory.
 - i. *Apaugasma*, effulgence, light, or splendor emitted or issuing from a luminous body.
 - d. EXACT REPRESENTATION of God's person.
 - i. *Charakter*, denotes something engraved, cut in, or stamped, a character, letter, mark, sign.
 - a) This impression with its particular features was considered as the exact representation of the object whose image it bore.
 - ii. *Hupostasis*, to place or set under.
 - a) That which underlies the apparent, hence, reality, essence, substance; that which is the basis of something (comp. Heb. 11:1).
 - e. SUSTAINING ALL THINGS by the Word of His power.
 - 2. His REDEMPTIVE WORK:
 - a. PURIFIED our sins.
 - b. SAT DOWN at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

III. FIRST COMPARISON: THE SON OF GOD MORE THAN THE ANGELS (HEB. 1:4-14)

- A. The Name of Jesus (1:4)
 - 1. Lit. "*He has inherited a more excellent name.*"
 - 2. Comp. Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9-11

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- B. Seven Old Testament passages revealing the uniqueness and supremacy of the Eternal Son (1:5-13)
1. 1:5; Psa. 2:7 – Reveals FATHER-SON relationship.
 2. 1:5; 2 Sam. 7:14a – Again reveals FATHER-SON relationship.
 3. 1:6; Deut. 32:43 – Reveals DIVINITY of Messiah (to be worshipped) and His EXALTATION ABOVE ANGELS.
 - a. The writer cites from the SEPTUAGINT (LXX), not the Hebrew *Torah*.
 - i. An early translation of the Hebrew O.T. into Greek.
 - ii. Translated in Alexandria during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphius (284-247 BCE).
 4. 1:7; Psa. 104:4 – In contrast, angels are SERVANTS.
 5. 1:8-9; Psa. 45:6-7 – Reveals DIVINITY of Messiah.
 6. 1:10-12; Psa. 102:25-27 – Reveals the ETERNAL, UNCHANGING nature of Messiah as Creator of heaven and earth.
 7. 1:13; Psa. 110:1 – Reveals the exaltation of Messiah - as David's Lord - to God's right hand (a position never offered to angels).
 - a. This is the Old Testament verse most often quoted in the New Testament: Matt. 22:41-46; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42-43; Acts 2:34-35.
- C. The Ministry of Angels (1:14; expansion on 1:7)
1. There are more direct references to angels in the New Testament than in the Old Testament.
 2. A careful study will reveal that the New Testament activity of angels usually revolves around the ministry of Jesus and the establishment of His church on Earth.
 3. They “minister” (Greek *diakonia*), referring to their “serviceable labor, assistance.”
 - a. They are ministering spirits, or heavenly assistants, who are continually active today in building the body of Christ - advancing the ministry of Jesus and the building of His church.