

HEBREWS

STUDENT COPY

Providence Baptist Church

1773 Hawthorne Avenue

College Park, Georgia 30337

Phone # 404-209-1423

Charles Nesbitt, Jr. Pastor

About the Course

Hebrews helps us understand the overall story of the Bible — Old Testament to New Testament, the entire scope of redemptive history, how it all led to Christ, and how Christ fulfilled it all.

Christ's work is the crescendo of God's work on earth. That is sort of the heartbeat of this book. If you are always pondering the question of how the Old Testament and the New Testament relate, you're going to love studying Hebrews.

Hebrews magnifies Christ like few other books. Every book in the Bible magnifies Christ, but some books do it in such a way that there is a certain amount of clarity, beauty, and wonder you get about Jesus in that book. Hebrews is one of those books. When you read it, you are quickly aware that the author loves Jesus Christ. He thinks he is amazing, magnificent, extraordinary and the crescendo of all that God does to redeem us.

Getting Acquainted

The anonymous book of Hebrews is a unique contribution to the canon of Scripture. Like many other New Testament letters, Hebrews begins without an introduction, though it closes with blessings and greetings ([Heb. 13:23–24](#)). The author sheds light on the form of Hebrews by referring to his writing as a “word of exhortation” ([Heb. 13:22](#)). Hebrews is written in a pastoral voice with many practical exhortations, leading many to consider it a single sermon or sermon-like discourse, addressed to converts from Judaism under pressure to revert to Jewish faith.

Hebrews is also considered one of the most beautifully written and stylistically polished books of the New Testament, a literary masterpiece. The author is a master of rhetorical debate and persuasion. He also demonstrates his profound theological prowess with his use of imagery, metaphor, allusion, Old Testament analogy, and typology. Throughout his exposition and exhortation, the author weaves a beautiful tapestry of biblical theology with the aim of exalting the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

The central motif of Hebrews is “Jesus Christ is better” (the words “better,” “more,” and “greater” appear a combined 25 times). In many ways, the glory of God as revealed in Jesus Christ is the gravitational center of Hebrews. [Hebrews 1–12](#) outlines a powerful theological argument for the superiority of Christ above all created things and all Old Testament counterparts, with a special focus on encouraging the reader to persevere in the faith that has Christ at its center. Through encouraging words, firm warnings, and contrasting examples, the author often calls the reader to respond to Christ in worship.

Placing It in the Larger Story

Hebrews contains 35 direct quotations from the Old Testament, along with many allusions and references. With the Old Testament background in mind, the author argues that God’s glory and redemptive plan are finally and most clearly revealed in Jesus Christ. The superiority of Jesus is demonstrated in that he is greater than any angel, priest, or old covenant institution. Christ is the complete atoning sacrifice and final priest. In him we see the fulfillment of all the Old Testament hopes and promises, ushering in the long-awaited new covenant age.

Key Verse

“He [Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high . . .” ([Heb. 1:3](#)).

Date and Historical Background

Hebrews was written in the first century, probably before AD 70. The author of Hebrews does not name himself. There has been much conjecture as to his identity; as the early Christian theologian Origen (d. c. AD 245) said, “only God knows” who he is. But we can be sure that the author was familiar with his audience, for he longed to be reunited with them ([Heb. 13:19](#)) and is able to give them news of Timothy, Paul’s second-in-command ([Heb. 13:23](#)).

The traditional title “To the Hebrews” reflects the ancient notion that the original audience was primarily made up of Jewish Christians. One can safely assume that the audience was familiar with, and well understood, the many quotations and allusions to the Old Testament. Certainly, the author was addressing professing Christians with this letter; several times the author urges them to maintain their confession and faith (Heb. 3:6, 14; 4:14; 10:23).

Table of Contents

Week 1:	Introduction
Week 2:	The Supremacy of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1: 1-14)
Week 3:	Jesus Is Superior to Angelic Beings (Heb. 1:5–2:18)
Week 4:	Fix our eyes on Jesus (Heb. 2:1-4)
Week 5:	Jesus is Superior to Moses (Heb. 3:1-4:13)
Week 6:	Jesus is the Superior High Priest (Heb. 4:14-5:10) Part I To be continued in Week 9 and 10
Week 7:	A Warning against Apostasy (Heb. 5:11–6:20) Part I
Week 8:	A Warning against Apostasy (Heb. 5:11–6:20) Part II
Week 9:	Jesus Is the Superior High Priest, (Heb. 7:1–8:13) Part II
Week 10:	Jesus Is the Superior High Priest, (Heb. 7:1–8:13) Part III
Week 11:	Jesus Is the Superior Sacrifice (Heb. 9:1–10:18) Part I
Week 12:	Jesus Is the Superior Sacrifice (Heb. 9:1–10:18) Part II
Week 13:	The Call to Faith (Heb. 10:19–11:40) Part I
Week 14:	The Call to Faith (Heb. 10:19–11:40) Part II
Week 15:	The Call to Endurance (Heb. 12:1–29) Part I
Week 16:	The Call to Endurance (Heb. 12:1–29) Part II
Week 17:	Final Exhortations (Heb. 13:1–25)
Week 18:	Summary and Conclusion

Week 1: Introduction

Read through the passage for this study, [Hebrews 1:1-4](#). Be prepared to answer the following questions.

I. God's Prior Way of Speaking (Read v.1)

A. When?

B. To whom?

C. How?

D. Who are some of the major OT prophets?

II. God's New and Final Way of Speaking (Read v.2-3)

A. When?

B. To Whom?

C. How?

D. What are the Implications:

III. Is there any Old Testament imagery in Hebrews that is particularly confusing to you? Are there any specific questions that you hope to have answered through this study?

Week 2: The Supremacy of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1: 1-14)

The Place of the Passage

The opening verses of Hebrews present Jesus as the final and definitive revelation of God to humanity. The author begins by establishing that “Long ago, at many times and in many ways” God spoke to his people ([Heb. 1:1](#)). But now, in these last days, God has conclusively spoken through Jesus—his beloved Son, the Creator, Sustainer, and Savior of the world ([Heb. 1:2–3](#)), and an exact image of the Father ([Heb. 1:3](#)). The greatness of Jesus is finally depicted by his exaltation at the right hand of God above all earthly and heavenly beings ([Heb. 1:4](#)).

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 1:1–4](#) draws our hearts to worship in light of the radiant majesty and unrivaled power of Jesus Christ.

1. Research and define the following word that relates to this week’s lesson.

Angel:

2. In the introductory verses of Hebrews, the author sweeps over the span of God’s progressive revelation and lands on Jesus Christ as the climax of his communication. Considering some of the miraculous ways God spoke to the patriarchs and prophets in the Old Testament, what is the author attempting to demonstrate by contrasting how God previously spoke, and how God, through his Son, has now definitively spoken to his people ([Heb. 1:1–2](#))?
3. Many scholars believe that the titles “Son” and “heir” applied to Jesus in [Hebrews 1:2](#) are allusions to [Psalm 2:7–8](#), a royal coronation Psalm recalling God’s pledge to David’s heir in [2 Samuel 7:12–16](#). In ancient Israel, it was the firstborn son who had the

right of inheritance. By virtue of his royal sonship, Jesus is the heir of the universe, including the world to come ([Heb. 2:5–9](#))—which is a position of blessing and glory. What is the author highlighting in Jesus’ unique relationship and responsibility concerning the universe?

4. In [Hebrews 1:2–3](#), the author asserts that all of God’s creation belongs to Jesus because it was through his agency that all things came into existence and through his power that the universe is upheld. The preexistence, authority, power, and full deity of Jesus are evident in his role in creating and upholding the universe ([Heb. 1:10](#); see [John 1:3](#); [1 Cor. 8:6](#); [Col. 1:16](#)). What do these truths communicate to us about the purpose of creation and Jesus’ dominion over his handiwork?

5. In [Hebrews 1:3](#), Jesus is described as the “radiance of the glory of God.” In biblical literature, “glory” often refers to the luminous manifestation of God’s person (see [Ex. 16:7](#); [33:18](#); [Isa. 40:5](#); [60:1, 19](#)). Concerning the significance of the word “radiance,” many have noted that the moon reflects light whereas the sun radiates light because it is its source. What does this tell us about Jesus as the radiance of God and our role as reflectors of God’s glory?

6. [Hebrews 1:3](#) proclaims that Jesus is “the exact imprint of God’s nature.” To the initial readers, this language would have been reminiscent of an impression placed as an image, as on a coin. Simply put, Jesus is the true image of God ([2 Cor. 4:4](#); [Col. 1:15](#)). How do these words help us understand what Jesus taught in [John 14:8–11](#)?

7. After making purification for sins, Jesus sat down at “the right hand of God.” Many scholars believe this is an overt allusion to [Psalm 110:1](#). This Psalm is quoted directly

in [Hebrews 1:13](#) and alluded to in [Hebrews 8:1; 10:12; 12:2](#). What is being communicated when the author writes that Christ “sat down at the right hand of God?”

8. Jesus is declared superior not only to the prophets, but also to the angels, because of his more excellent inherited name ([Heb. 1:4](#)). The author seems to be echoing [2 Samuel 7](#) concerning the honor conferred on Jesus as the Davidic heir. What is the significance of distinguishing Jesus from the angels in the position of the royal heir?

9. Why the Concern over Angels?

Week 3: Jesus Is Superior to Angelic Beings (Heb. 1:5–2:18)

The Place of the Passage

By a chain of Old Testament passages, Jesus is shown to be superior to the angels as the unique Son of God ([Heb. 1:5–14](#)). Because of his status as the Son of God, Jesus enjoys a unique relationship with the Father in position, nature, and authority. Jesus is also presented as the unique Son of Man, which establishes him as the true sacrifice for sin and introduces him as the sympathetic High Priest ([Heb. 2:1–18](#)). This passage contains the first of five warnings in the book of Hebrews; here, we are warned to trust in the salvation provided through Jesus Christ.

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 1:5–2:18](#) exalts Jesus above the angels as the unique Son of God who made propitiation for the sins of humanity and now serves as the Mediator and High Priest between God and humanity.

1. Why is Jesus Superior to the Angels? Read Verses 4-12.
2. In [Hebrews 1:13](#), the writer applies [Psalm 110:1](#) to Jesus, showing him as exalted to the right hand of God, a position of privilege and power (see [Heb. 1:3](#)). This particular psalm refers to the king's enthronement and victory over all his enemies. What does Jesus' posture of being seated communicate about God's purposes in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ?

9. What happened to human beings?

10. How Can Human Beings be Restored?

Week 4: Fix our eye on Jesus (Heb. 2:1-4)

PAY ATTENTION!

Read Hebrews 2:1-4 and be prepared to answer the following questions.

1. Read Hebrews 2:1-4. Why Pay Attention?
2. What are some things that cause people to drift away from God?
3. Does this mean a person can really lose their salvation? Explain in detail.
4. Read v. 2-3a. Why Pay Attention?
5. What are some examples of God judging disobedient Israelites in the OT?
6. Read v. 3b-4. Why Pay Attention?

7. Do you know people who have drifted away from the faith? Do you sense the tendency of your own heart to drift? Do you have a tendency to think that only the OT God is just and holy? How does this passage correct that misconception? What are some steps you might need to take to keep yourself from drifting away and missing the message of salvation in Jesus?

Week 5: Jesus Is Superior to Moses (Heb. 3:1–4:13)

The Place of the Passage

In [Hebrews 3:1–6](#), Jesus is shown to be superior to Moses, one of God’s most faithful servants. Jesus is worthy of supreme glory in that he is the faithful High Priest and Son of God. The author exhorts the Christians to respond with faithfulness and perseverance to God’s redemptive work ([Heb. 3:7–4:13](#)). In this section, readers receive their second warning, namely, to persevere in the faith, unlike the people of the exodus generation, who hardened their hearts ([Heb. 3:7–18](#)).

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 3:1–4:13](#) shows Jesus Christ as the Apostle and perfect Son sent to serve as the faithful High Priest.

1. Research the definition of the following two words that relate to this lesson.
 - Sabbath
 - Works
2. Read Hebrews 3:1-4. Moses was a faithful servant in the house of God in spite of the Israelites’ faithlessness ([Num. 12:7](#)). But Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses because of his perfect faithfulness as the Son who not only presides over, but also built, the house of God ([1 Chron. 17:14–17](#); [Heb. 3:1–6](#)). For the original audience—which was familiar with the Old Testament—what was the significance of the author’s comparing Jesus to Moses? What can we learn from Moses’ faithfulness as a member of the house of God?

3. After exploring the contrast between Moses' and Jesus' faithfulness, the author now turns to the responses of their followers by citing [Psalm 95:7–11](#). The author warns against the unbelief of a sinful hardened heart causing one to fall away ([Heb. 3:7–12](#)). How do these strong words help keep us from living in rebellion? How does this passage enlighten us on the difference between genuine faith and false faith?

4. In [Hebrews 3:15](#), the author returns to [Psalm 95:7–8](#) and reminds the readers of the exodus generation's failures ([Heb. 3:16–19](#); see [Ex. 17:1–7](#); [Num. 14:20–38](#)). How does the exodus generation's unbelief and failure to enter God's rest point to both the warning of falling away and the hope we have in Jesus Christ?

5. God's deliverance of the Israelites and their hope of entering the Promised Land foreshadowed the work of Jesus. For the church, the promised rest of God has been inaugurated in the resurrection of Christ and is awaiting consummation in his second coming; but the author fears that some will not enter that rest ([Heb. 4:1](#)). According to [Hebrews 4:1–3](#) how does faith relate to entering the promised rest of God?

6. In [Hebrews 4:4](#), the author speaks of entering God's rest in relation to the seventh day of creation ([Gen. 2:2](#)), and notes that the Israelites ultimately failed to enter the rest of God ([Heb. 4:5–9](#)). Taken together, God's Sabbath rest that began in [Genesis 2](#) is still open and can be entered. What does it mean to enter and rest from one's works as God did from his ([Heb. 4:10](#))?

7. After calling the readers to strive to enter God's rest in perseverance, the author reminds them that faithless disobedience will not go unnoticed ([Heb. 4:11–13](#)). Knowing that God's Word acts as an agent revealing one's innermost thoughts and intentions, how can we use his Word to fight disobedience and unbelief?

Week 6: Jesus Is the Superior High Priest, (Heb. 4:14–5:10) Part I

The Place of the Passage

The author now builds on the themes first introduced in [Hebrews 2:17–3:12](#). He proclaims Jesus as the holy and sympathetic High Priest appointed by God the Father. Moreover, Christ is to suffer for the sake of others so that they may receive the gift of eternal salvation ([Heb. 4:14–5:10](#)). Faithfulness is the proper response to all that Christ has done for us.

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 4:14–5:10](#) exalts Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, as the appointed sympathetic High Priest in the order of Melchizedek.

1. The author announced Jesus' role as High Priest in [Hebrews 2:17](#); here in [Hebrews 4:14–16](#), Jesus' High Priestly role is explained further. Jesus has "passed through the heavens" and is now seated at the right hand of God ([Heb. 1:13; 4:14](#)). Our great High Priest is not only the divine Son—God himself—he is also fully human and able to sympathize with us ([Heb. 4:15](#)). In what unique ways is Jesus able to sympathize with us, inasmuch as he is intimately familiar with both heaven and earth?
2. According to this passage, the high priest must be called by God to his office, and must be able to sympathize with those whom he represents. Knowing that Jesus is our great High Priest, how does this enable us to hold firmly to our faith?
3. The author exhorts the reader to draw near to the throne of grace with confidence in order to find mercy and help in times of need ([Heb. 4:16](#)). Though we still struggle with indwelling sin, through Christ God's holy throne becomes a throne of grace. How does this give us incentive for both prayer and praise? Why are Christians able to speak honestly before God without fear of condemnation?
4. High priests receive their call and charge from God Almighty. According to [Hebrews 5:1–2](#), what is the essential purpose of the high priest? In what ways do Jesus' life

and work fulfill the high priestly criteria ([Heb. 5:1-2, 5](#))? In what way is Jesus different from and greater than former high priests ([Heb. 5:3](#))?

5. In [Hebrews 5:5-6](#), the writer recalls [Psalm 2:7](#) again and [Psalm 110](#) to speak of Christ as the Son and eternal High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. Why is Jesus compared to Melchizedek ([Gen. 14:18-20](#))?

6. During his life on earth, Jesus offered up intense, heartfelt, reverent, and submissive prayers to God the Father, with loud cries and tears ([Heb. 5:7](#); see, e.g., [Luke 22:39-46](#)). Jesus' perfect obedience formed the basis for his prayers being answered ([Heb. 5:8](#)). How can we learn from, and more important, lean on Christ's perfect prayer life in times of struggle?

7. [Hebrews 5:8-9](#) explains that Jesus learned obedience through what he suffered, and was thus made perfect. Essentially, Jesus was "made perfect" in the sense that he became qualified through his perfect obedience to be the source of salvation to all believers ([Heb. 5:9](#)). How can the experience and perfection of Jesus give us hope when we lack the obedience that God desires?

Week 7: A Warning against Apostasy (Heb. 5:11–6:20) Part 1

The Place of the Passage

Interrupting the exposition of Jesus' role as High Priest ([Heb. 4:14–5:10; 7:1–8:13](#)), the author suddenly challenges readers to move beyond the basics of the faith toward spiritual maturity ([Heb. 5:11–6:3](#)). He concludes by exhorting them and showing confidence in their ability to persevere, using Abraham as an example of “faithful faith” ([Heb. 6:9–20](#)). The third of five warning passages appears in [Hebrews 6:4–8](#), warning the readers of the danger of falling away.

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 5:11–6:20](#) glorifies God by pointing to Jesus Christ as the forerunner, anchor, and High Priest of our faith.

1. Research and define the word “Apostate.”
2. In [Hebrews 5:11–12](#), the author scolds the readers for their immaturity in the faith, for, he says, they have become “dull of hearing” ([Heb. 5:11](#)) and do not have a solid grasp on the fundamental truths of God ([Heb. 5:12](#)). What are some possible reasons for their mental laziness and unwillingness to work out the deeper implications of the gospel in their lives?
3. At this point in their faith, the original audience should have matured enough to instruct others in “the basic principles of the oracles of God,” which he also refers to as the “word of righteousness” ([Heb. 5:12–13](#)). What is the author referring to by “basic principles” and fundamental “oracles” of God (see [Heb. 6:1–2](#); [Acts 7:38](#); [Rom. 3:2](#))?

4. In comparison to those who are infants in the faith, the mature believer is characterized as well-learned and well-practiced in the faith ([Heb. 5:14](#)). Why are both doctrine and practice important for maturing a believer?

5. The author indicates that he is committed to moving the readers from immaturity to maturity in their faith ([Heb. 6:3](#)). In [Hebrews 6:1-2](#), we see three pairs of basic principles: what are they?

6. Why are these principles important for helping someone move toward maturity in the faith?

7. In [Hebrews 6:4-7](#), the writer notes that some of the original audience have participated in the Christian church and have shared in her blessings, but either are at risk of falling or have already fallen away from the faith (it is not clear which he means). Moreover, he says that it is impossible to restore such people again to repentance, because they are willfully rejecting Christ. Describe what the author means when charging those who have “fallen away” with showing contempt for Christ and making him contemptible in the eyes of others ([Heb. 6:6-7](#)).

Week 8: A Warning against Apostasy (Heb. 5:11–6:20) Part II

1. Is it possible to be enlightened by God’s Word concerning salvation, to appear to display Spirit-wrought repentance of sin, and even to demonstrate signs of conversion, and still fail to persevere in the faith ([Heb. 6:4–6](#))? Why is it impossible to restore such people to repentance ([Heb. 6:6–7](#))?
2. The author uses the agricultural illustration in [Hebrews 6:7](#) so that the readers may heed his call to perseverance and patience ([Heb. 6:11–12](#)). How does faith in salvation and a life of serving others ([Heb. 6:10–11](#)) kindle perseverance and hope in the promises of God? What are the better things that accompany salvation ([Heb. 6:9](#))?
3. In [Hebrews 6:13–15](#), the writer offers Abraham as an example of one who, through patience and faith, inherited the promises of God ([Gen. 22:16–17](#)). In what ways does this passage encourage believers to imitate Abraham’s patience in inheriting the promise of God?
4. In ancient times, oaths required an appeal to a higher authority. In this passage, it is said that God swore his promise with an oath to confirm his trustworthiness ([Heb. 6:16–18](#)). In what ways does this generate hope and confidence in the reader for holding fast to God’s word?

5. While the author warns readers of falling away from the faith, he also anchors their assurance of salvation in Jesus Christ ([Heb. 6:19–20](#)). What is the importance of the Old Testament references in this passage in solidifying Jesus as the manifestation of hope for the people of God ([Matt. 27:51](#); [Heb. 9:3](#); [10:20](#))?

6. Have you known folks in your life who apostatized? What impact did that (or does that) have on you?

7. When you look at the fruit in your life, where are you encouraged that God is at work? Discouraged?

8. How does this passage help you see that perseverance and striving are necessary parts of the Christian life? What are some practical ways you can be “earnest” in the year to come?

Week 9: Jesus Is the Superior High Priest, Part II (Heb. 7:1–8:13)

Picking back up from week 6

The Place of the Passage

One of the central theological arguments of Hebrews is that Jesus Christ is the superior High Priest, in the order of Melchizedek ([Heb. 5:1–10](#)). In [Hebrews 7:1–28](#), the author picks up this argument again and delineates the nature of Jesus' priesthood in order to establish that it is superior to the Levitical priesthood. Jesus ministers in the greater heavenly tabernacle and has enacted better promises in the new covenant ([Heb. 8:1–13](#)).

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 7:1–8:13](#) exhibits Jesus as the eternal Son and High Priest in the order of Melchizedek who ministers in heaven, allowing believers to draw near to God under the new covenant.

1. Who Was Melchizedek?
2. In what ways was Melchizedek a Type of Christ?
3. No OT priest could be priest and King at same time! Why does this matter?
4. Why Bring Up Melchizedek?

5. In [Hebrews 7:11–14](#), the author shows that the Mosaic law and Levitical priesthood ([Ps. 110:4](#)) were insufficient for bringing people to perfection ([Heb. 7:18–19; 9:9; 10:1](#)). How does the change in law and Jesus' role as High Priest in the line of Judah show that the Mosaic covenant is no longer in effect?

6. In the resurrection, Jesus seals his conquering of death and establishes his eternal priesthood ([Heb. 5:6; 7:23–24](#)). Because of Jesus' eternal priesthood, the former Levitical priesthood is set aside ([Heb. 7:18](#)). What hope can believers draw from Jesus' finished work in relation to his heavenly priesthood ([Heb. 5:19](#))?

Week 10: Jesus Is the Superior High Priest, (Heb. 7:1–8:13) Part III

1. In [Hebrews 7:20–28](#) the author seals his argument for Jesus’ superiority and divides it into three sections of thought:
 - Jesus’ priesthood is guaranteed by the oath of God and is effective both for the present and for the future ([Heb. 7:20–22](#)).
 - Jesus is able to save his people completely, and his people are able to draw near to God through him ([Heb. 7:23–25](#)).
 - Jesus is the fitting High Priest, who offered himself for us and has been made perfect forever ([Heb. 7:26–28](#)).

Walk through each section of thought and compare life under the old covenant and life under the new covenant, working out the implications as they pertain to salvation and everyday life.

2. In [Hebrews 8:1–6](#), the writer rehearses the main point of the letter thus far—namely that believers have a superior High Priest who has offered the sacrifice of himself, is seated at the right hand of God, ministers in the heavenly sanctuary, and thus mediates a better covenant. As we have already seen, Jesus is intimately familiar with both heaven and earth ([Heb. 4:14](#)) and has completed his redemptive work. How does this truth strengthen a Christian’s confidence in prayer life? How do these truths sustain faith in doubting or in difficult times?
3. The larger purpose of the Mosaic covenant was not to bring about perfection ([Heb. 8:7](#)) but to inform people of God’s holy law, reveal their sin, and establish a pattern of priesthood and sacrifice. Why then does God find fault with his people for not being able to uphold the first covenant, thus requiring a second covenant ([Heb. 8:8–13](#))?

4. In [Hebrews 8:8–12](#), the author quotes [Jeremiah 31:31–34](#) in its entirety. According to this Old Testament passage, what is the significant role of the Messiah in establishing the new covenant? According to Jeremiah, what are the implications of the work of this new covenant Messiah?

5. What is the Definition of “Covenant”? Gather as much information about covenants including their background in the OT.

6. What was wrong with the Old Covenant? (v. 7, 9)

7. What is new about the New Covenant? (v.10-12)

8. Does this mean the OT is irrelevant?

Week 11: Jesus Is the Superior Sacrifice (Heb. 9:1–10:18) Part I

The Place of the Passage

In [Hebrews 9:1–10](#), the author describes the Old Testament tabernacle and worship patterns in order to lay the foundation for his discussion on the new covenant in [Hebrews 10](#). The sacrifice of the greater High Priest Jesus is superior to the priestly worship of the Mosaic tabernacle ([Heb. 9:11–28](#)). While the Mosaic priests continually offered sacrifices, Jesus offered himself as the perfect sacrifice once for all ([Heb. 10:1–18](#)).

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 9:1–10:18](#) proclaims Jesus as the new covenant High Priest whose perfect sacrifice of himself in the heavenly tabernacle brings forgiveness, salvation, a pure conscience, and direct access to God.

1. Hebrews speaks about blood sacrifices, almost gory concept that is foreign to our modern Western minds. How do you respond to the idea of blood sacrifices? Why?
2. In [Hebrews 9:1–5](#), the author explains the Mosaic legislation governing worship and the proper way to approach a holy God. The earthly tabernacle had two sections—the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place—in which the provisions for worship were made through rituals and symbols pointing to God’s past dealings with Israel and his continual presence with them ([Exodus 25; 26:1–37; Exodus 30; 37](#)). How were these symbolic rituals and temporary provisions good news for the Israelites under the Mosaic covenant ([Lev. 10:3; 16:20–25](#))?

3. The worship pattern involving the priests within the tabernacle is described in [Hebrews 9:6–7](#). The priests went regularly into the Holy Place (the first section) to perform their duties and offer daily offerings ([Ex. 25:30; 30:7–8; Lev. 24:4; Num. 28:7](#)), while the high priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year to offer a sacrifice on the Day of Atonement for all the sins of all the people ([Leviticus 16](#)). The Mosaic sacrificial system brought neither sanctification nor the fullness of God’s peace to the worshiper ([Heb. 9:8–10](#)). How does the old covenant ritual heighten our sense of gratitude for Christ’s work in establishing the new covenant?

4. Christ entered the heavenly tabernacle once for all by the means of his own blood, securing eternal redemption for all of God’s people ([Heb. 9:12](#); see [Ex. 20:24; 29:1–14; Lev. 16:6–19](#)). According to [Hebrews 9:13](#), the blood of goats and bulls cannot cleanse defiled sinners in their innermost being ([Num. 19:1–22](#)). Why does the blood of Christ accomplish what the blood of animals cannot ([Heb. 9:14](#))?

5. Recalling the Mosaic covenant initiation ceremony ([Ex. 24:3–8](#)), the author shows that Christ initiates and mediates the new covenant for his people by offering himself as a sacrifice for their sin ([Heb. 9:15; Rom. 8:30; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Tim. 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Pet. 1:10](#)). In light of [Exodus 40](#), how does the author connect the atoning blood sacrifice ([Lev. 17:11](#)) and the purpose of the blood of Christ ([Heb. 9:16–22](#))?

6. Jesus entered the heavenly sanctuary, after which the earthly sanctuary was patterned ([Heb. 9:11–14](#)), and presented himself as an offering to God on the behalf of believers once for all ([Heb. 9:23–26a](#)). This sacrifice had been needed since the fall of man, and it inaugurates the end of the ages, in which believers will await Christ’s second coming ([Heb. 9:26b–28](#)). How do reflection on Jesus’ sacrifice and anticipation of his second coming motivate believers to love and obey him?

7. The repetition of the sacrifices under the Mosaic covenant not only convinced people of their sin, but it also reminded them of their continual need for cleansing ([Heb. 10:1-4](#)). In quoting [Psalm 40:6-8](#), the author of Hebrews points to God's true desire, what the sacrifices foreshadowed but could not seal for his people ([Heb. 10:5-9](#)). How do the life and work of Christ relate to the cry of David in this Psalm ([Heb. 10:10](#))?

Week 12: Jesus Is the Superior Sacrifice (Heb. 9:1–10:18) Part II

1. Unlike the priests who made daily sacrifices, Christ offered himself as a sacrifice once for all, perfecting all who are being sanctified ([Heb. 10:11–14](#)). Christ's sacrifice not only affects the future sanctification of his people, it also affects the future of his enemies. How do the future implications of Christ's sacrifice motivate our holiness and our desire to proclaim the good news to others?
2. By quoting from [Jeremiah 31](#) in [Hebrews 10:16–17](#) (compare [Heb. 8:8–12](#)), the author is reminding the reader that true believers will have God's laws internalized, and that God will remember their sins no more. Within the context of his argument in [Hebrews 10:1–18](#), explain what the author means when he says that no other offering is needed for sin ([Heb. 10:18](#)). To what forgiveness and offering is he referring?
3. How does a passage like this help you see that Christ is present even in the Old Testament?
4. What features of the OT tabernacle stood out to you and why?

Week 13: The Call to Faith (Heb. 10:19–11:40)

Part I

The Place of the Passage

Knowing the truth of Christ’s person and work, readers are exhorted to draw near to God. In this passage, the readers receive their fourth warning, namely, against shrinking back from faith ([Heb. 10:19–39](#)). In [Hebrews 11:1–40](#), faith is described as consisting of persevering hope in the promises of God, and is illustrated by the lives and actions of many Old Testament “heroes.” It is this type of persevering faith that results in salvation on the last day. Accordingly, judgment awaits those who willfully reject the faith.

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 10:19–11:40](#) shows the sufficiency of Jesus’ work in making a way to God and calls the reader to imitate the persevering faith of the Old Testament saints as they await final consummation in Christ.

1. Who are your heroes in the faith and why?
2. In 10:19-25, the writer of Hebrews lists some marks that will be evident in the lives of those who respond positively to the gospel. What are they?
3. Each time the phrase “by faith” is used in chapter 11, it is followed by a description of the actions taken by the individuals who acted in that faith. Go back through the chapter and circle the verbs that describe how these “Heroes of Faith” lived out the “substance of things hoped for”. Then read through the chapter again and underline the phrases that explain why they did these things. What do you learn about faith from this exercise? How is your view of God expanded by these observations?

4. For further insight into how faith and works are related, read James 2:14-26. What additional insights does this passage from James shed on the subject of faith? How does this tie in with what Hebrews 11 portrays?

5. Read Habakkuk 2:3-4. What does this passage mean and how does it relate to Hebrews 11? (verses to consider: Romans 1:17; Eph. 2:8; Col. 2:6)

6. Read Deuteronomy 4:29. In what ways does God reward those who seek Him by faith? (verses to consider: Gen. 15:1; 1 Chr. 28:9; Ps. 58:11; Isa 40:10).

7. Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. How is this passage a good description of faith?

8. If you could be one of the characters in Hebrews 11 for one day, which character would you pick, and why?

9. In what ways have you made this world your home? What two specific actions could you start doing or stop doing to live more like a “stranger and pilgrim” in the world?

Week 14: The Call to Faith (Heb. 10:19–11:40)

Part II

Student Presentations

In [Hebrews 11:4–40](#), we learn that faith consists of persistent hope in God’s promises, and that such persevering faith leads to salvation on the last day ([Heb. 10:39](#)). Throughout [Hebrews 11](#), the author lists Old Testament saints who serve as models of persevering faith in life and deed. **In what way does the author intend to motivate faith and perseverance from each story mentioned in [Hebrews 11](#)? Be sure to explain the context in your report.** (Many of these reference the section titled, “History of Salvation in the Old Testament,” in the ESV Study Bible, pages 2635–2661.)

- Abel ([Heb. 11:4](#); [Genesis 4](#))
- Enoch ([Heb. 11:5](#); [Gen. 5:18–24](#))
- Noah ([Heb. 11:7](#); [Gen. 5:29–10:32](#))
- Abraham ([Heb. 11:8–19](#); [Genesis 12–25](#))
- Sarah ([Heb. 11:11](#); [Genesis 12–23](#); [Isa. 51:2](#))
- Isaac ([Heb. 11:17–20](#); [Genesis 17–35](#))
- Jacob ([Heb. 11:21](#); [Genesis 25–50](#))
- Joseph ([Heb. 11:21–22](#); [Genesis 37–50](#))
- Moses ([Heb. 11:23–28](#); [Ex. 2:10](#) and throughout the Pentateuch)
- Rahab ([Heb. 11:31](#); [Joshua 2](#); [6:17–25](#))
- Gideon ([Heb. 11:32](#); [Judges 6–8](#))
- Barak ([Heb. 11:32](#); [Judges 4–5](#))
- Samson ([Heb. 11:32](#); [Judges 13–16](#))
- Jephthah ([Heb. 11:32](#); [Judges 11–12](#); [1 Sam. 12:11](#))
- David ([Heb. 11:32](#); [Ruth 4](#); [1–2 Samuel](#))
- Samuel ([Heb. 11:32](#); [1 Samuel](#); [1 Chron. 6](#); [9](#); [11](#); [26](#); [2 Chron. 35:18](#))

Week 15: The Call to Endurance (Heb. 12:1-29)

Part I

The Place of the Passage

Given the past examples of persevering faith ([Hebrews 11](#)), including Jesus' own endurance of the cross ([Heb. 12:1-2](#)), Christians are to endure in the faith, knowing that God's discipline is for their good ([Heb. 12:3-11](#)). In this fifth and final warning, the readers are cautioned against rejecting God's grace and placing themselves under his judgment ([Heb. 12:12-17, 25](#)). God's kingdom cannot be shaken, and one must respond in faithful worship ([Heb. 12:18-29](#)).

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 12:1-29](#) reminds the readers that Jesus is the founder and perfecter of the faith, and that it is in response to Christ's endurance of the cross that they are to persevere in faith.

1. How were you disciplined when you were a young child? Did it have a positive or negative affect in your life?
2. Think of a difficult trial you have experienced and survived. What helped you endure?
3. Why is running a footrace a good metaphor for the Christian life? What other analogies can you recall that are used in the New Testament? (verses to consider: 1 Cor. 9:24-26; Gal. 5:7; Eph. 6:11-17; 2 Tim. 2:3-7; 4:6-8).

4. Look at the teaching about divine chastening in 12:4-11. What do you learn about its purposes, prevention, and perils?

5. What strong exhortations are given in 12:12-17? (verses to consider: Prov. 4:25-27; Rom. 12:18; 1 John 2:6).

6. Compare Mount Sinai with Mount Zion. Why are they contrasted in this passage? (verses to consider: Exod. 20:18-19; Ps. 132:13-14; 133:3).

7. Read Psalm 42. What other truths from Hebrews 12 are illustrated in this psalm?

8. Jesus endured the cross for the “joy that was set before Him” (v. 2). Read Psalm 16:9-11. What part does or should joy play in our lives as we seek to live for Christ and His glory? (verses to consider: Matt. 25:21; Phil. 2:17; 4:1).

Week 16: The Call to Endurance (Heb. 12:1-29)

Part II

Read through the complete passage for this study, [Hebrews 12:1-29](#).

1. After giving past examples of faith, the author reminds readers that it is Jesus' perfecting of their faith that leads to perfection in his people ([Heb. 12:2](#)). Because of the future reward set before him, Jesus endured the greatest suffering in history in consuming God's wrath against sin on the cross ([Matt. 27:27-50](#)). How does Jesus' perfect endurance not only solidify our future hope but also encourage our perseverance as we wait?
2. Using poetic language to inspire the readers to continue to the end ([Heb. 12:12-13](#)), the author encourages them to pursue peace with others and holiness in themselves in response to Christ's work. Why is the pursuit of peace so important within the Christian community ([Mark 9:50](#); [Rom. 12:18-21](#); [14:19](#); [2 Cor. 13:11](#))? What motivates Christ's church in maintaining peace and watching over one another ([Heb. 12:14-15](#))?
3. In [Hebrews 12:16-17](#), the priority of holiness and sexual purity is contrasted with the example of Esau, who because of his false priorities, is deemed unholy ([Gen. 25:33-34](#); [26:34-35](#); [28:6-8](#)). Even though Esau desired the blessing, even in tears, he showed no true repentance for his actions. In what ways is it possible to desire the blessings of repentance without truly being broken over sin?

4. The author uses Israel's experience at Mount Sinai ([Heb. 12:18-21](#)) as an example of the fear that loomed over God's people under the Mosaic covenant ([Ex. 19:12-25; 20:18-21; Deut. 18:16](#)). In [Deuteronomy 9:19](#), which is quoted in this passage, Moses expresses fear that God would destroy Israel in their idolatry. In what ways is the threat of idolatry still as dangerous today, even for the church?

5. While the Israelites trembled in fear at Mount Sinai, new covenant believers can access the new heavenly Zion before the living God with joy and confidence because of Christ's work ([Heb. 12:22-24](#)). What is the picture painted here of the new heavenly Zion/Jerusalem (see [Is. 62:6-12](#))? What aspects of this imagery provoke longing within you?

6. Read [Heb. 12:25-29](#). In light of the new covenant and Jesus' eternal reign in heaven, the readers are beckoned to respond in faith before Christ returns again to judge and it is too late ([Heb. 12:25-27](#)). As we have already seen, through Christ we are able to approach God in confidence, but how does this passage instruct us in the proper manner of worship ([Heb. 12:28-29](#))?

Week 17: Final Exhortations (Heb. 13:1–25)

The Place of the Passage

As the letter comes to a close, the author exhorts the community concerning specific points of application, covers them in a blessing, and issues final greetings ([Heb. 13:1–25](#)). The moral exhortations in this passage focus on hospitality, marriage, money, church leadership, and guarding against heresy. The church is called to leave behind love of this world and embrace the reproach of Christ. The author closes with confidence, knowing that God himself will equip the readers to do his will.

The Big Picture

[Hebrews 13:1–25](#) depicts Jesus Christ as the sacrifice slaughtered outside the camp so that we could be presented as sanctified and could worship in the presence of God.

Read through the complete passage for this study, [Hebrews 13:1–25](#)

1. Not only are relationships within the church marked by love ([Heb. 13:1](#)), but also the church is to be marked by hospitality to strangers ([Heb. 13:2](#); [Rom. 12:13](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#); [Titus 1:8](#)). In ancient times, travel was difficult and inns were not only dangerous but were also notorious for immorality. [Hebrews 13:2](#) recalls Abraham's hospitality toward his mysterious visitors in [Genesis 18–19](#). Based on that narrative, for what reasons should believers practice hospitality?
2. In [Hebrews 13:3](#), the writer tells believers to remember those who are in prison, and to treat them as if they were in prison along with them. Prisoners relied on those outside to sustain their lives. In many ways, this is a specific application of [Matthew 7:12](#) in calling the church to respond to the real needs of those around them. Beyond mere Christian charity and hospitality, what else should motivate us to care for those in need ([Matt. 25:35–36](#))?

3. Within the Christian community, marriage is to be held in honor. It is clear from [Hebrews 13:4](#) that God will judge anyone who is sexually immoral or adulterous. In light of the earlier warning passages, continual sexual sin without repentance is an indication that one is not a true believer. Since this warning is addressed to the church, to what type of judgment is the author referring ([Rom. 8:1](#); [Heb. 12:5-11](#))?

4. Christians are also to be marked by contentment with God's provision ([Heb. 13:5-6](#); [Deut. 31:6, 8](#); [Josh 1:15](#)). The love of money is a strong indicator that one is not content with God in many areas of life. How does [Psalm 118:6](#), which is quoted in [Hebrews 13:6](#), remind us of the security of God's provision?

5. Readers are encouraged to listen to their leaders, who are charged with shepherding them through preaching and teaching God's Word, and who are themselves under the authority of the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ ([Heb. 13:7-8, 17](#)). The author warns them of heresy; the central concern here appears to be teachings about foods ([Heb. 13:9-11](#)). What are the dangers of diverse and strange doctrines that depart from Jesus?

6. In [Hebrews 13:10-12](#), Jesus' sacrifice is contrasted with the sin offering on the Day of Atonement under the Mosaic covenant ([Lev. 16:27](#)). Unlike the priests in the Old Testament, who could not partake of the sacrifice ([Heb. 13:10](#)), believers are to partake in the sacrifice of Christ for spiritual nourishment. By Jesus' death "outside the camp" ([Heb. 13:11-12](#); see [John 19:17-20](#)), and by his blood within the Most Holy Place, believers are granted access to God. What are the benefits of these truths for the Christian life?

7. Through metaphor, the author encourages his readers to leave behind their love for this world and embrace the reproach of Christ ([Heb. 13:13](#)). How does the author's declaration of this world's temporary nature ([Heb. 13:14](#)) strengthen his words of encouragement ([Heb. 13:13](#))?

8. The proper response to Christ's work is worship. Therefore, the author calls us to offer a sacrifice of praise not only with our lips, but also with our actions toward others ([Heb. 13:15-16](#)). Why does the author mention that such things are pleasing to God?

9. At the end of his letter the author mentions several requests and desires ([Heb. 13:18-19](#)). As Christians, what are some practical ways that we too can pursue a "clear conscience" regarding our service, and a desire to "act honorably" toward all?

10. In his benediction, the author offers a doxological blessing to his readers ([Heb. 13:20-21](#)) and closes the letter with some final greetings ([Heb. 13:22-25](#)). How does his benediction summarize his letter? Which particular aspect of this benediction brings you the most hope, joy, or comfort?

Week 18: Summary and Conclusion

Student Presentations

As we draw this study of Hebrews to a close, we begin by looking at the big picture of Hebrews as a whole. There are warnings or alarms in the book of Hebrews to Christians. Research and locate the warnings in Hebrews and be prepared to share your findings on each one.