

HEBREWS — PART 1

FOR BELIEVERS IT'S ALL BETTER

JAMIE MCNAB

6.12.25

We know from the 4 Gospels what Jesus did during His First Coming — His teachings ... His miracles ... His death and resurrection. But that was nearly 2,000 years ago! Do we know what Jesus has been doing since then? Does He have a personal ministry today?

The Book of Hebrews gives the clearest teaching of Jesus' ministry today — and how it relates to us!

So let's review the Book of Hebrews — and see what we can learn about Jesus ... our Saviour.

BACKGROUND

No author is named. Paul is a popular choice ... though it lacks his normal "salutation".

However ... in the original inspired order of the New Testament books ... it appears in the middle of Paul's letters. It implies that the original organisers thought that Paul was the author?

Scholars today dispute its authorship. But it's the Truth that matters.

It's addressed to the "Hebrews" — taken to mean early Jewish converts.

It looks like there might have been a risk of their returning to Judaism? Two possible reasons:

- i. Pressure ... criticism ... from Jewish family and friends. The influence of Jewish culture.
- ii. The passage of time was having an impact? Prophecies don't seem to be working out ... older saints are dying off?

Paul (or whoever) wants to encourage them to “stick with it!”
The author gives a great deal of encouragement ... a wonderful destiny ahead. But also some very severe warnings of potential danger.

THERE ARE 7 MAJOR WARNINGS ... 11 MINOR “LEST” WARNINGS.

If we wanted to identify **one key theme to the book ... one key word that weaves the chapters together ... it's the word “BETTER”.** The author brings out in every chapter that the new ways are better than the old.

Hebrews 1:4

4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

JESUS IS BETTER THAN THE ANGELS

Hebrews 6:9

9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.

BETTER THINGS

Hebrews 7:19

19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

A BETTER HOPE

Hebrews 7:22

22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

A BETTER COVENANT

Hebrews 8:6

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as **He is also Mediator of a better covenant**, which was **established on better promises**.

A BETTER COVENANT ... WITH BETTER PROMISES

Hebrews 9:23

23 Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, **but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.**

BETTER SACRIFICES

Hebrews 10:34

34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, **knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.**

A BETTER AND ENDURING POSSESSION

Hebrews 11:16

16 **But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

BETTER COUNTRY

Hebrews 11:35

35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, **that they might obtain a better resurrection.**

A BETTER RESURRECTION

Hebrews 11:40

40 **God having provided something better for us**, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

SOMETHING BETTER

Hebrews 12:24

24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, **and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.**

BETTER THINGS

We get the idea! **The Christian life IS BETTER THAN WHATEVER CAME BEFORE!**

Although the Book doesn't directly address the audience as Hebrews (Jewish Converts) ... it seems clear from the topics covered.

Lots of references to the Old Testament ... 29 direct quotations ... plus 53 allusions to Old Testament matters.

It helps to be familiar with the Old Testament ... if we want to understand the Book of Hebrews.

CHAPTER 1 A BETTER MESSENGER

Hebrews 1:1-4

1 **God**, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

2 **has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;**

3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, (**Jesus utterly reflects His Father**) and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (**In the position of Universal authority**)

4 **having become so much better than the angels**, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

THIS MESSAGE IS IMPORTANT! It comes from God — through His Son — who is both Creator of all and Inheritor of all. THIS MESSENGER HAS UNBEATABLE CREDENTIALS!

Hebrews 1:5-14

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say:

You are My Son,

Today I have begotten You”? (*Psalms 2*)

And again:

I will be to Him a Father,

And He shall be to Me a Son”?

6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says:

“Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

7 And of the angels He says:

“Who makes His angels spirits

And His ministers a flame of fire.”

8 But **to the Son He says:**

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;

A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. (*My Son is a God!*)

9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;

Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You

With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”

10 And:

“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,

And the heavens are the work of Your hands.

11 They will perish, but You remain;

And they will all grow old like a garment;

12 Like a cloak You will fold them up,

And they will be changed.

But You are the same,

And Your years will not fail.”

13 But to which of **the angels** has He ever said:

“Sit at My right hand, (*Psalm 110:1. N.B. Psalm 110 is the most quoted Psalm in the New Testament*)

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?

14 **Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?**

At times ... God has communicated through angels (Gabriel to Daniel ... to Mary). **THIS MESSENGER IS WAY ABOVE ANY ANGEL!**

GOD speaks to Him as “My Son”. He is to be worshipped!

God calls Him “God”! — verse 8.

Angels are “merely” ministering (i.e. serving) spirits. **OUR MESSENGER IS MUCH GREATER than any angels — God’s Son — The Creator!** We had better pay attention.

CHAPTER 2 A BETTER MAN

Hebrews 2:1

1 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

MAJOR WARNING!

In view of the status of The Messenger ... we'd better heed very carefully! **PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION! DON'T DRIFT AWAY** (implies slowly becoming lukewarm ... Laodicean — over time?)

Hebrews 2:2-4

2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

3 **how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation**, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

4 **God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? (God backed the Word up)**

SECOND MAJOR WARNING!

If we neglect such an awesome message ... how can we escape?

Neglect is likely to be over a period? Not an abrupt turning away— but slowly turning lukewarm? Too many priorities and distractions — squeezing out time spent in prayer or Bible reading/study?

The purpose of the author is not to criticise people — but to encourage them to focus on their calling.

Hebrews 2:5-9

5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: (*Psalm 8*)

**“What is man that You are mindful of him,
Or the son of man that You take care of him?”**

**7 You have made him a little lower than the angels;
You have crowned him with glory and honor,
And set him over the works of Your hands.**

8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.”

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

9 But **we see Jesus, who was made for a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.**

Although man is now “for a little while lower than the angels” — **our destiny is to be glorified and over everything.**

Eventually the whole universe will be under mankind. (We will replace the “sons of God”).

JESUS HAS BEEN THE PIONEER. He has died. He is in glory and majesty. We need to follow His example.

Hebrews 2:10

10 **For it was fitting for Him**, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, **in bringing many sons to glory**, to make the captain/pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

God’s purpose — to bring many sons to glory — THAT IS US!!. Sons = intimate relationship.

JESUS IS OUR PIONEER ... LEADER ... AUTHOR.

Jesus wasn't "imperfect" (!) ... but He grew in experience as a human being ... now mature and complete. Well able to help us.

Hebrews 2:11-13

11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, **for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,**

12 saying:

"I will declare Your name to My brethren; (Jesus sees us as His siblings)

In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."

13 And again:

"I will put My trust in Him."

And again:

"Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

Jesus regards us as His siblings — "brothers". That's intimate family language.

We can reflect on:

"My Brother is a King!"

"My Brother sits on a throne"

"My Brother died for me"

Hebrews 2:14-15

14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, **He Himself likewise shared in the same, (flesh and blood) that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,**

15 **and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

TO BE A REAL BROTHER — JESUS HAD TO COME IN FLESH
... to experience life exactly as we do — the ups and downs ...
disappointments ... hunger ... tiredness.

He's walked the walk (got the tee shirt!).

HE ABSOLUTELY KNOWS WHAT OUR LIVES ARE LIKE — IN DETAIL!

Hebrews 2:16-18

16 For indeed **He does not give aid (support) to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.**

17 Therefore, **in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

18 **For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.**

“Seed of Abraham” means more than just physical Israel.

Galatians 3:26-29

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And **if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

Jesus experienced a full human life! Every aspect (other than sin!) He “gets it!” There is nothing we can surprise Him with.

That allows Him to act EFFECTIVELY as a High Priest. That's His key role today — interceding for you and me daily ... to help get us “over the line” and into Eternal Glory.

One of the key revelations of Hebrews is that **JESUS AS OUR FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST.** Nowhere else in the New Testament is Jesus identified as High Priest!