

Something Better For Us

A Survey of Hebrews, Lesson #1

1:1 – 2:18

Jim Hoffman



Our (8) week schedule.

Week 1

Heb 1:1 - 2:18

Week 2

Heb 3:1 - 4:16

Week 3

Heb 5:1 - 6:20

Week 4

Heb 7:1 - 8:13

Week 5

Heb 9:1 - 10:25

Week 6

Heb 10:26 - 11:29

Week 7

Heb 11:30 - 12:2

Week 8

Heb 12:3 - 13:25



Introduction

- Our title is from Heb 11:40 ...God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. NKJV
- Many consider this a deep book, and it is, but we will keep our study within the reach of all of us by focusing on the things that are clearly understood.
- By the time we are done you may have just as many questions about Hebrews as you do now, but they will be questions based upon a new depth of knowledge.



Introduction

- The letter was written around A.D. 65 which makes it contemporary with I & II Timothy, Titus, and I & II Peter.
- The author is unknown, the occasion of the letter is unstated, and even the location of the readers is a mystery.
- However, the message of the letter is powerful and challenging to all who read it in any age and in any place.
- I do not have to know all of those particulars in order for the Lord to speak to me today in Camp Hill, PA.



Introduction

- Three primary audiences of the letter.
 - Hebrew Christians who were struggling to let go of the old covenant systems
 - Hebrews who were convinced intellectually of who Jesus was, but were uncommitted spiritually.
 - Hebrews who were unconvinced intellectually and uncommitted spiritually.



Introduction

- Imagine the difficulty for the saved Jew who had been committed to a system that was created by God Himself.
- How hard would it have been to convince them to leave what God had ordained for something better that God had ordained?
- It's not like they were being called to leave a cult. They were being called to leave God's old covenant for God's new covenant.
- The old versus the new What's the difference? (If you will, I will versus I John 1:9)



Introduction

- The theme of the letter is revealed in our course title; Something Better for Us.
- Jesus is better than anyone or anything that came before Him.
 - A better priest offering a better sacrifice that seals a better covenant.

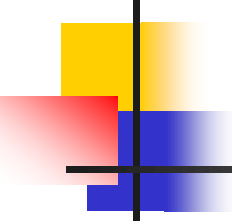


Introduction

- Tongue in cheek theme

Hebrews was written to the Hebrews,
to tell the Hebrews to stop being
Hebrews!

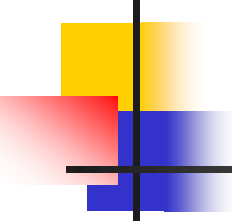
Hebrews 1:1-2



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;

- The God who spoke through others has come and has spoken to us in person.
- We only know God because He has chosen to reveal Himself through **creation**, through His **word**, through His **Spirit**, and through His **Son**.
- Jesus is here identified as the Creator of all and heir of all. (and we are joint heirs with Him) See also John 1:1-3.

Hebrews 1:1-2



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;

- In the world's false religions we have attempts by mortals to elevate to the spiritual.
- With God, we have the Eternal Immortal God descending to mortals for the express purpose of telling us about Himself and how to approach Him.
- The false says 'reach for God', the true says 'God has reached you'.

Hebrews 1:3

3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, 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, NKJV

- Jesus is what we can see of God. He is the radiance of His glory.
- In John 14:9 Jesus said 'he who has seen me has seen the Father'. If you want to know what God is like in His character, you need look no further than Jesus.
- Furthermore, it is God's plan that if you want to know what Jesus is like you should be able to look at us and see Him as well.
- God had a message to deliver and a payment to be made so He followed that old axiom of 'if you want something done right, do it yourself'.

Hebrews 1:4-14

So why point out the superiority of Christ to angels?

- For reasons known only to the author he gets right to the point and his first point is that Jesus is better than the angels.
- The writer knew that he had to overcome a number of Jewish misconceptions about angels.
- The writer also knew that he would have to point out the superiority of Jesus from their own O.T. scriptures. (7 separate O.T. quotes to prove his case)

Hebrews 1:4-14

So why point out the superiority of Christ to angels?

- The Jews had been taught that angels were nearly as important as God Himself.
- Some believed that the 'us' of Gen 1:26 was God conferring with an angelic council.
- They also knew that angels played a role in the giving of the old covenant. (Gal 3:19)
- So if the writer was going to have any credibility for a better covenant then the new 'giver' had to be better than the angels they held in such high esteem.

Hebrews 1:4-14

Jesus is better than the angels.

- Did God ever say to an angel, “you are my Son, this day I have begotten you”? (Vs 5)
- The angels are commanded to worship the Son. (Vs 6)
- Angels are servants, but Jesus is God. (Vs 7-8)

Hebrews 1:4-14

Jesus is better than the angels.

- Jesus was 'anointed' (exalted) above angels. (Vs 9)
- He also has a better existence in that He is eternal. (Vs 12)
- And did God ever invite the angels to sit at His right hand as an equal? (Vs 13)

Hebrews 1:4-14

Jesus is better than the angels.

- Better in title; Son of God
- Better in worship; He is God
- Better in nature; Not created, but Creator
- Better in existence; He is Eternal
- Better in destiny; The right hand of the Father

Hebrews 1:4-14

So who are these beings called angels?

- They are spirit beings created by God.
- God has dispatched them to earth for our good. (II Kings 6:15-17)
- The ministry of angels is to serve us. (Heb 1:14)
- They are many and are able to interact with us. (Heb 13:2)
- They are personal. (Matt 18:10 see possessive 'their')

Hebrews 2:1-4

The sin of neglect.



- If the old covenant, delivered to Moses by angels was binding, how much more binding will the new covenant be since it has been delivered by the Son of God Himself?
- We are also warned about losing our focus on the word of God lest we drift away.
- I have observed over the last 30 years that most who stop living for the Lord rarely do a quick about face, but usually turn away slowly almost as if they are testing the waters to see if they will really get burned.

Hebrews 2:1-4

The sin of neglect.

- God decided to do a new work and He confirmed it's authenticity in ways that would grab the attention of those who heard the message.
- On the day of Pentecost, there were many in Jerusalem who witnessed first hand the power that God was lending to men.
- The apostles spoke in tongues and prophesied and the result was that 3,000 souls were swept into the kingdom.
- To this day there are some demonstrations of God's power that are undeniable and hard to resist.

Hebrews 2:1-4

The sin of neglect.

- As the book Acts unfolds it is as though God would leave nothing to the imagination with respect to who was behind the gospel message.
- Miracle after miracle, sign after sign, the Holy Spirit was at work giving men power to preach and confirming with visual aids that the message they preached was true.
- Is it so far fetched to think that He (the Holy Spirit) continues in similar fashion to confirm the gospel today?



Hebrews 2:1-4

The sin of neglect.

- And why, do you suppose, that He is just as interested in confirming the gospel today?
 - Because many hear, but few believe
 - Because those who don't believe will suffer an eternal punishment
 - Because He loves us and wants us to fulfill our intended destiny of being with Him.



Hebrews 2:1-4

The sin of neglect.

- The question of the ages 'How shall we escape if we neglect such a compelling message of truth?'. (the Word, the Spirit, nature, and conscience)
- Clearly the answer is 'we will not' and our consciences even testify to this as is evidenced by so many man made ways to heaven.
- The question is for (2) of our audience groups, the spiritually uncommitted and the unconvinced. It is a soul searching warning.

Hebrews 2:1-4

The sin of neglect.

- And then there are the committed and the convinced as well we certainly have not neglected to believe and trust the Lord for salvation, but we must be careful not to stop there.
- God did not redeem us so that we could slink through this life unnoticed and unaffected by His presence in us.
- It is His express desire that He be allowed to work in us and change us into trophies of His grace so that others will trust Him as well.

Hebrews 2:5-9

Man's destiny was interrupted, but will be restored.

- The plan of God was (and is) to have man in a ruling position over creation. (Ps 8:4-6)
- Psalm 8 is quoted in verses 6-8 and now the writer of Hebrews, speaking under divine influence, gives us more light.
 - **Not only was man to have dominion over the earth, but over all creation.**
 - **If the Psalmist was amazed at what he could see of God's appointment for man, what would he think had he seen the whole plan?**

Hebrews 2:5-9

Man's destiny was interrupted, but will be restored.

- Rev 5:9-10 spells it out for us. Jesus redeemed us to be kings and priests who will reign on the earth.
- Now we cannot see it all just yet, except by faith, but it is more sure than tomorrow for the believer.
- The writer says that we can see Jesus, but what did he mean?
 - When He changes us, He is seen.
 - When He fills us, He is seen.

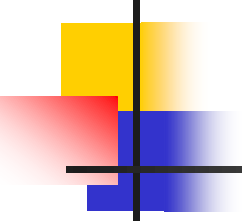
Hebrews 2:10

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 of their salvation perfect through sufferings. NKJV

- Jesus suffered in our place, the Just for the unjust it is was necessary that sin's penalty be paid.
- It was fitting in this respect God is love and His love compelled Him to die for us so that His holiness would be uncompromised.
- It also is very much in keeping with all that we know about our God to learn that He did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Hebrews 2:11

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,
NKJV



- What a wonder it is that God, the sanctifier, would become one with those whom He sanctified.
- How convicting it is for us who sometimes shrink from identifying with Him in our realm to learn that in His realm He gladly owns us as His brethren.
- I'm not sure we can fully grasp the fact that Jesus plans to elevate us far above what we could ever earn or dream of being.

Hebrews 2:14-15

14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, 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. NKJV

- Through His death He destroyed the Devil's power in that He disarmed him. If death is your weapon, and someone takes your weapon, what power do you then have?
- Death, where is your sting? Grave, where is your victory? (I Cor 15)
- Christ has set us free from the fear of death. People naturally fear death if for no other reason than the unknown, but when you know your destiny, the fear is gone and anticipation sets in.

Hebrews 2:16

For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. NKJV

- In eternity past there was an angelic rebellion and there are a host of angels waiting in darkness and chains for the what is due to them for their deeds.
- There is no remedy for the sins of angels as there is for the sins of men.
- So why this seeming inequity? Probably due to the starting point of angels versus men.

Hebrews 2:17-18

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. NKJV

- Jesus became man so that He could redeem us and so that He could fully identify with us.
- Since He knows what it is to hurt, to feel pain, to experience rejection, to be lonely, to suffer loss, and to resist temptation He can be a merciful and faithful High Priest.
- When we tell Jesus how we are feeling, He knows what it's like and comes to our aid.



Truths that Transform

- Praise God that He has spoken.
- He is passionate about confirming His truth when it is preached.
- We are destined to rule and reign with Jesus as His joint heir.
- Jesus is not ashamed to own us, flawed as we are; why do we sometimes hesitate to own Him?