

VIA EMMAUS:

A CHRIST-CENTERED WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

Hebrews: Believe and Draw Near, For Jesus Christ is Greater Still (40)

INTRODUCTION

Author	Barnabas, Paul, Clement, Luke, Apollos – “ <i>Who actually wrote the epistle, only God knows</i> ” The author knew Timothy (13:23) & presumably the apostles – he wrote <i>Hebrews</i> before 70 AD
Audience	Jewish Christians suffering abuse (Heb 10:32-34; 13:3) and temptation to turn back (10:24-25) <i>Teaches us something about human nature & sin – 1 Pet 4:1-3; cf. Num 11:4-4; 21:4</i>
Aim	The letter is a sermon letter designed to show how Christ fulfills and exceeds OT expectation Bolster faith in the face of suffering (12:1-11) by increasing the worth of Christ (3:1-6)
Christ is Better...	“Christ is better” (25x)...than angels (1:1-2:4), Moses (3:1-6); Joshua (4:8-9); Aaron (5:1-10) Melchizedek (7); mediates a better covenant (8); offers a better sacrifice (9-10)

Key Themes in Hebrews¹

Christology: Jesus is fully God and fully man, serves as the eternal high priest who sympathizes with human weakness and who offered the final sacrifice.	1:1-14; 2:5-18; 4:15-16; 9:11-10:19
Anthropology: All humanity faces eternal judgment for sin. Jesus Christ is the intended and only provision for salvation	4:12-13; 9:27-28; 10:26-31
Faith: Faith in Christ pleases God, requires conviction about the unseen realities of God and his Word, and produces perseverance.	4:2-3; 6:1, 12; 10:22, 38-39; 11:1-40
Perseverance: The litmus test for genuine faith. It is necessary for the Christian life. Hebrews warns believers of falling away.	2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; 12:1-29
Eschatology: With the advent of Jesus Christ, the last days have begun, though they await consummation at his return.	1:2; 2:5; 4:9-11; 9:9-28; 12:22-29

Warning Passages

- “Hold fast to your confidence in Christ!” (2:14; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; 12:1-29)
- Written to a Christian congregation—aimed at believers but also true for unbelievers
 - Similar pattern in each, with escalation throughout the letter
 - Do not teach that you can lose your salvation—*God motivates with promise & warning*

Warning Passages in Hebrews²

2:1-4	how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?
3:7-18	do not harden your hearts... Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.
6:4-8	For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened... and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance.
10:26-31	For if we go on sinning deliberately ... there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins... How much worse punishment ... will be deserved ... ?
12:25-29	See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape... much less will we.

¹Adapted from the ESV Study Bible, p. 2358.

²Taken from the ESV Study Bible, p. 2366.

OUTLINE

1. Jesus Is Superior to Angelic Beings (1:1–2:18)

- a. The supremacy of God's Son (1:1–14) – *Establishes the person of Christ*
 - i. Triple Office (v. 1-3) – *Prophet (1:1-2:4), Priest (2:5-10:18), King (2:5-8; 12:18-29)*
 - ii. Honor (v. 5-6; cf. Ps 2:7; 2 Sam 7:14; Deut 32:43)
 - iii. Eternity (v. 7-12; cf. Ps 104:4; 45:6-7; Isa 61:1-3; Ps 102:25-27)
 - iv. Authority (v. 13-14; cf. Psalm 110:1)
- b. Warning against unbelief (2:1–4) – *If Israel was judged for unbelief, how much more...*
- c. The founder of salvation (2:5–18)
 - i. Comparison with Adam (v. 6-8; cf. Ps 8) – *The Son must suffer*
 - ii. Salvation for Abraham and his offspring (v. 16) – *not angels, not all Adam's race*

2. Jesus Is Superior to the Mosaic Law (3:1–10:18)

- a. Jesus is greater than Moses (3:1–6) – *Jesus is over the house*
- b. Jesus is greater than Joshua (3:7–4:13) – *Jesus gives rest*
 - i. The failure of the exodus generation (3:7–19)
 - ii. Entering God's rest (4:1–13)
- c. Jesus is greater than Aaron (4:14–5:10)
- d. Interlude (5:11-6:20)
 - i. Warning against apostasy (5:11–6:12)
 - ii. The certainty of God's promise (6:13–20) – (1) *God's character*, (2) *God's oath*
- e. Jesus is greater than Melchizedek (7:1-28) – *Priest by the power of an indestructible life (7:16)*
He is able to save to the uttermost (7:22)
- f. Jesus mediates a better covenant (8:1–13) – *Jesus inaugurates the New Covenant (8:6; cf. 7:12)*
Quotes Jer 31:31-34 – Intended Obsolescence
- g. Jesus serves a greater tabernacle (9:1–10) – *Jesus ministry destroys the first temple (9:8-9), and*
Applies the blood to heaven's throne (9:12, 23-24)
- h. Jesus offers a greater sacrifice (9:11–28) – *The blood (10x/20x) cleanses the conscience (9:14),*
Ends the OC (9:15) & Ratifies the NC (9:16),
Secures forgiveness (9:22), Put away sin (9:26)
- i. Jesus finishes the law and makes access into the heavenly place (10:1–18)

3. Call to Faith and Endurance (10:19–12:29)

- a. The full assurance of faith (10:19–39)
 - i. Exhortation to draw near (10:19–25) – *Indicative + Imperative = Draw Near thru Jesus*
 - ii. Warnings against shrinking back (10:26–39) – *Greatest warning*
 - iii. Examples of faithfulness (11:1–40) – *The greatest example (12:1-3); Incomplete (11:40)*
- b. Endurance until the kingdom fully comes (12:1–29)
 - i. Jesus, founder and perfecter of faith (12:1–2) – *Run the race*
 - ii. Do not grow weary (12:3–17) – *Suffering is part of God's fatherly discipline / sanctifying*
 - iii. A kingdom that cannot be shaken (12:18–29) – *Amazing view of the universal church*

4. Concluding Exhortations and Remarks (13:1–25)

- a. Sacrifices pleasing to God (13:1–19)
- b. Benediction (13:20–21)
- c. Final greetings (13:22–25)