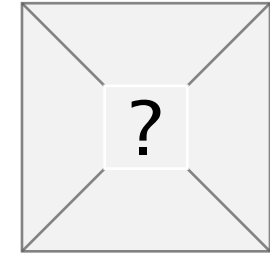




Hebrews

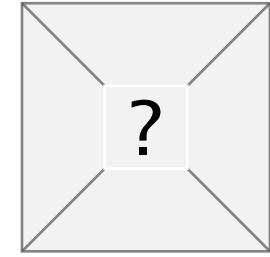
THE BREAK FROM JUDAISM

Hebrews



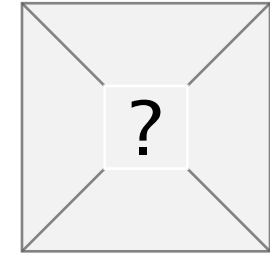
- Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.
- Heb 4:14

Historical Setting



- Apostolic church – predominantly Jews
- Gentile world always in view (Gen 12:3, OT, Gospel glimpses, Mt 28:20, Acts 1:8, 2:39)
- Significant resistance to overcome – Acts 10/11 (~40 AD)
- Paul’s missionary journeys – started in synagogues, shifted to the Gentiles. Acts 18:5–7 (30–60 AD)
- Mounting Controversy – e.g. Galatians, Jerusalem Council – Acts 15. (48/49 AD)
- Romans – Israel’s unbelief rom 9/10, Remnant, in-grafted branches, all Israel saved. Rom 11
- Romans – Paul “minister to the Gentiles”. (56 AD).
- Destruction of Jerusalem 70 AD. No land, no temple.
- For the Jewish Christian : How to make sense of this great loss and judgement? Identity? Nationalism?
- Hebrews : Helping the Jewish Christian deal with all of this. New centres of worship.
- Big Question : Press forward in Christ or go back to the synagogue etc.

Place, Author



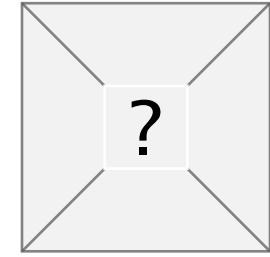
- **Place of Writing**

- “Those in Italy” – written from Rome? (Heb 13:24)
- Earliest quotation 1 Clement (Rome)

- **Author**

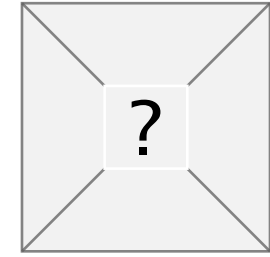
- “The Hebrew Writer”
- Good quality “classical” Greek. Well-versed in OT.
- Not a direct disciple of Jesus. (Heb 2:3)
- In Paul’s orbit ? – friend of Timothy, “Righteous live by faith”
- Many Suggestions : Paul, Luke, Apollos, Barnabas, Clement, Priscilla.
- Late inclusion in Canon due to disputed authorship.
- Origen (185–254 AD) “God only knows”.

Date



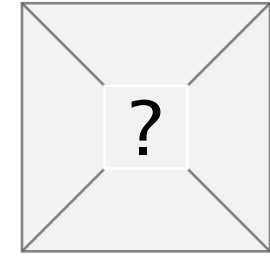
- Second generation of Christians (Heb 2:1–4).
- And some time since conversion... “former days”, some leaders dead. (Heb 13:7)
- Timothy in jail (13:23)
- Temple still standing, but destruction close may be Heb 12:27.
- Church in Rome fearing persecution.
- Clement of Rome quoted Hebrews in 95 AD.
- Late 60s – perhaps 68 AD.

Audience



- No formal salutation.
- “To the Hebrews” – title attached to the letter.
- Second generation Jewish disciples?
- OT Quotes from the Greek Septuagint (LXX).
- Persecuted in the past. (Heb 10:32–34).
- Persecution ramping up again.
- Roman Christians from Jewish background.
- Tempted to pack it in and go back to familiarity of the old Jewish ways.

Outline – “Better”



- **Christ’s Person (1–3)**
 - The Better Messenger – the Son (1–2)
 - The Better Apostle (3–4)
 - The Better Priest (4–7)
- **Christ’s Work (4–10)**
 - The Better Covenant (8–9)
 - The Better Sacrifice (10)
- **The Walk of Faith (10–13)**
 - The Better Way: Faith (11–12)
 - Conclusion : The practice of faith (13)

Outline – Parenthetical Warnings



- Peril of Neglect – Heb 2:1–4
- Peril of Unbelief – Heb 3:17–19
- Peril of Disobedience – Heb 4:11–13
- Peril of Immaturity – Heb 5:11–6:12
- Peril of Rejection – Heb 10:19–31
- Peril of Refusal – Heb 12:25–29

Key Themes – Jesus’ Divine Ministry



- **Jesus’ Divinity and Humanity (Heb 1–2)**
 - God’s Son.
 - Universe made through Jesus.
 - Exact representation of God’s being.
 - Not a created angel.
 - But made lower for a while as a man.
- **Present ministry and priesthood of Christ.**
 - Jesus high priest of a new covenant.
 - Jesus entered the Holy of Holies by his own blood. Heb 9
 - Jesus coming back with final salvation. Heb 9:28
 - Jesus serving as a mediating high priest on our behalf.

Key Themes – Perfect and Better in

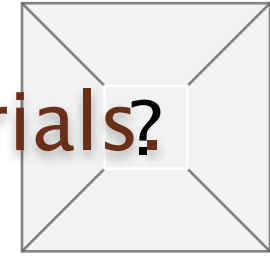
- Aaronic/Levitical priesthood – > Jesus, the perfect high priest.
- Ongoing sacrifices –> One-time sacrifice of Jesus.
- Earthly Temple/Tabernacle – > Heavenly tabernacle.
- Old covenant – > New covenant.
- Sin not taken away –> sin taken away.
- Earthly Mount Zion – > Heavenly mountain.
- Earthly Jerusalem – > Heavenly Jerusalem.
- Crumbling kingdom – > Unshakeable kingdom.
- Earthly trappings (regulation, sacrifice, temples, priests, altars, foods)–> True faith.

Key Themes – Keep Moving Forward!



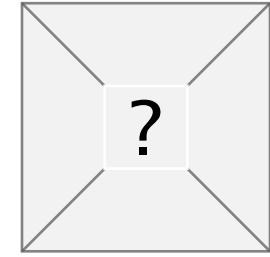
- Life might be hard but it's not an excuse!
- Unbelief, disobedience not acceptable.
- Jesus knows what it's like – he was made like his brothers. (Heb 2:17–18)
- Grace, mercy, atonement is available! (Heb 2:17–18)
- Sabbath–rest is not for now.... It's for later. Keep going! (Heb 4)
- You ought to be teachers by now (Heb 5:12)
- Let us go on to maturity (Heb 6:1)
- Don't become lazy, thorns and thistles (Heb 6:7–12)
- Hold unswervingly to the hope (Heb 10:23)
- Spur one another on (Heb 10:24–25)
- Persevere (Heb 10:26)
- Strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees (Heb 12:12)
- Make Every effort, see to it.... (Heb 12)

Key Themes – Handling Discipline and Trials?



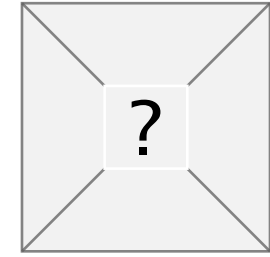
- Faithful living often accompanied by trials.
- Sometimes it doesn't seem to make sense (11:17 Abraham/ Isaac).
- But the final destination is glorious.
- God's promises remain.
- Aliens and strangers now, longing for a better country.
- Consider Jesus' endurance.
- Joy set before him.
- Discipline shows God's treating you as sons (12:7).
- God will judge those who shrink back (10:39)
- Don't make it harder than it needs to be – shake off entanglements. (12:1)

Practicals – Preaching



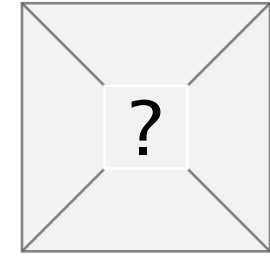
- Builds a Sound Theological Foundation
 - Quoting of Scripture
 - Actually basing the argument on points raised by the scriptures.
 - Logical Argument.
- Use of Rhetorical Techniques
 - Asking of Questions.
 - Multiple illustrations to reinforce the point.
- Practical Outworking of Scriptural Principles
 - Warnings against rejection of the teaching.
 - Positive examples of accepting the teaching.
 - Natural corollary: See to it...
- Multiple Facets
 - Approaches the issue from multiple angles.
- Example : Heb 1:1–2:4

Conclusion



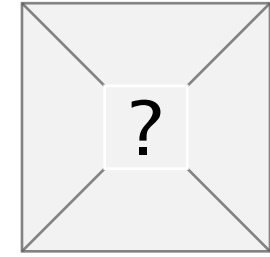
- To understand Hebrews need OT, to understand OT need Hebrews.
 - Best NT book on the ongoing work of Jesus.
 - Faith, Deeds and Perseverance. – You need an active faith to remain faithful.
 - Old and New Covenants really clear.
 - Perspectives on Discipline.

Practical Usage ???



- True Religion is active.
 - Word is Active – Heb 4:12–13
 - See to it – active with each other. Heb 10:25/26
 - Faith – By faith x did y. Heb 11
 - Ongoing Training and Growth (Heb 5/6)
 - Possible to fall away. Heb 6. Heb 10.
 - Righteous will live by faith. Heb 10:38
- Sabbath – its in heaven. Stop for a rest then. (Heb 4)
- Faith is active (Heb 11)
- Faithful to the every end.

Useful Verses



- Heb 1:1–4 Jesus superior to the angels
- Heb 2:18 Jesus able to help those being tempted.
- Heb 3:12–13 Daily encouragement.
- Heb 4:12–13 Word is living and active.
- Heb 5:14 Maturity – trained by constant use of the word to choose good.
- Heb 6:4–6 Warning against falling away.
- Heb 7: 27 Jesus – one–time sacrifice for all.
- Heb 8:1–13 New Covenant
- Heb 9:27 Live once, die once, judgement.
- Heb 10:24f Spur one another on. Don't give up meeting together.
- Heb 11 Hall of Faith
- Heb 12 Fix our eyes on Jesus, author and perfecter of our faith.