

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

Introduction

Author

Is the authorship of the letter to the Hebrews easily ascertained?

Date

Was the Jewish temple still standing when the letter was written? What three factors would substantiate this point?

Themes and Characteristics

How are the themes of the priesthood of Christ and covenant theology developed in the letter?

Chapter 1

God Has Spoken by His Son

What is the difference between God's revelation to the prophets of old and the revelation proclaimed by Jesus the Son of God? (Note 1:1–4)

What is the meaning of the phrase “heir of all things”? (Note 1:2)

Word Study – *First-born*

What is the meaning of the term first-born?

Chapter 3

Moses a Servant, Christ a Son

How does Jesus in his glory compare with that of the angels and Moses? (Note 3:3)

Chapter 5

Jesus the Great High Priest

What is the function of a priest?

What is the difference between Jesus priesthood and that of the Aaronic priesthood? (Note 5:1–4)

What is the meaning of the following verses?

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee”

as he says also in another place,

“Thou art a priest forever,
after the order of Melchiz’edek.”

(Note 5:5-6)

What is meant by the phrase “although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered”? (Note 5:8)

Chapter 6

The Certainty of God's Promise

What is the significance of God swearing by himself?
(Note 6:13)

What is the significance of the promise made to Abraham being upgraded to a covenant oath? (Note 6:14)

Chapter 7

The Priestly Order of Melchizedek

How does the priesthood of Melchizedek contrast with that of the priesthood and Aaron as it relates to requirements for priestly ministry? (Note 7:3)

Why does Melchizedek outrank Abraham? (Note 7:4–10)

Another Priest, According to the Order of Melchizedek

Why was the priesthood of Aaron deficient? (Note 7: 11–19)

What is meant by the passage “for when there is a change in the priesthood, there is a necessarily a change in the law as well.” (Note 7:12)

What is meant by the following passage “the former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” (Note 7:25)

Topical Essay – The Order of Melchizedek

Who is Melchizedek?

Chapter 8

Mediator of a New Covenant

Where does Jesus exercise his priesthood and what does he offer as a sacrifice? (Note 8:1, 8:3)

How does Jeremiah's prophecy foretell the New Covenant and how was it to differ from the Old Covenant? (Note 8:8-12)

Chapter 9

The Earthly and the Heavenly Sanctuary

How was the Mosaic tabernacle laid out and how do the first and second chambers symbolize the old and new covenants? (Note 9:1–14)

What is located in the Holy Place and in the Holy of Holies? (Notes 9:2 and 9:3)

How does the Day of Atonement liturgy compare to what Jesus does in the heavenly sanctuary? (Note 9:7)

Why is the sacrifice of Jesus once and for all? (Note 9:12)

Topical Essay - Will or Covenant?

How is the interpretation of the passage “for where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only death, since it is not force as long as the one who made it is alive” best served if understood as a covenant?

Why is it appointed for man to die only once? (Note 9:27)

Chapter 10

Christ's Sacrifice Once for All

What is the difference of the posture of the Levitical priests with that of Jesus? (Note 10:11–13)

A Call to Persevere

What is the meaning of the following phrase “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water?” (Note 10:22)

Chapter 11

The Meaning of Faith

What is the meaning of faith? (Note 11:1)

Is faith necessary for salvation? (Note 11:6)

Chapter 12

The Example of Jesus

Are we surrounded by a cloud of witnesses? (Note 12:1)

What is the relationship between divine discipline and divine love? (Note 12:5–6)

Exhortation to Be Strong and Avoid Sin

Is personal sanctification necessary in order to enter into the beatific vision? (Note 12:14)

What is the difference between Mount Zion and Mount Sinai? (Note 12:18–24)

Word Study-Mediator

What is a mediator?