

OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF HEBREWS – SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST –HIS DOMINION, FAITHFULNESS, PRIESTHOOD AND NEW COVENANT MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION: JESUS IS BETTER

Almost every commentary or overview of the Book of Hebrews begins with the much debated topic of **authorship**. Was it the Apostle Paul?

Most commonly suggested authors		
Candidate	Why suggested	Major difficulty
Paul	Early church tradition; theology compatible with Paul; Hebrews 13:23 mentions Timothy	Style is very different from Paul's known letters; no Pauline greeting; author identifies himself as someone who received the gospel through earlier witnesses (2:3), which seems unlike Paul
Barnabas	Early tradition; Levite (Acts 4:36), making him particularly suited to explain priesthood and sacrifice; associated with Paul	No direct evidence; Hebrews' vocabulary/style cannot be definitively connected to Barnabas
Apollos	Excellent knowledge of Scripture; eloquent teacher; associated with Alexandria; understood the Old Testament deeply (Acts 18:24–28)	No ancient tradition explicitly identifies him as author; proposal is based largely on circumstantial evidence
Luke	Sophisticated Greek; theological similarities with Luke-Acts; close associate of Paul	Hebrews' distinctive style and extensive Old Testament argumentation don't strongly identify Luke
Priscilla	Deep theological knowledge and teaching ability (Acts 18:26); associated with Timothy and Paul's circle	Hebrews was anonymous, and there is no ancient evidence identifying Priscilla as author
Clement of Rome	Very early connection with Hebrews; his 1 <i>Clement</i> quotes/alludes to Hebrews	Clement appears to treat Hebrews as an earlier work, not as his own
Others	Aquila, Silas, Philip, Jude, Aristion, etc.	Little or no historical evidence

So much ink has been spilled on this topic. So much discussion and argumentation. My reaction?

I could care less – apparently this was the only NT book where God chose not to reveal the author. I would rather like to conjecture why this is the case.

Instead of our focus being on the human author, we need to highlight the **Voice of God** which finds expression in the opening verses:

Heb. 1:1-4 *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.³ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;⁴ having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.*

Let's just quickly unpack the rich theology revealed here:

**(1:1-4) SUPERIORITY OF GOD’S FINAL REVELATION IN JESUS CHRIST --
NT REVELATION IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST TO ALL MANKIND IS FAR
SUPERIOR TO OT REVELATION THROUGH THE PROPHETS TO THE JEWISH
PATRIARCHS**

A. (:1-2) SUPERIOR REVELATION BECAUSE OF ITS CULMINATION IN HIS SON

1. (:1) Diversity of Revelation Long Ago through the OT Prophets
2. (:2) Culmination of Revelation Now in His Son

**B. (:3a) SUPERIOR REVELATION BECAUSE OF THE SUPREMACY OF THE
PERSON OF CHRIST**

1. Radiance of His Glory – Makes Visible God’s Glory
2. Representation of His Nature – Makes Visible God’s Essence

**C. (:3b) SUPERIOR REVELATION BECAUSE OF THE SUPREMACY OF THE
POWER OF CHRIST**

**D. (:3c-4) SUPERIOR REVELATION BECAUSE OF THE SUPREMACY OF THE
WORK OF CHRIST**

1. (:3c) Ultimate Reward for His Work
 - a. Work of Redemption and Atonement
 - b. Privilege of Enthronement – Place of Honor and Authority
2. (:4) Ultimate Recognition of His Work
 - a. More Excellent Ministry
 - b. More Excellent Reputation

While we are not going to spend any time debating the authorship, it is important that we understand **the recipients of this book.**

John MacArthur: When the various NT books were formally brought together into one collection shortly after A.D. 100, the titles were added for convenience. This epistle’s title bears the traditional Greek title, “*To the Hebrews*.” Since the epistle is filled with references to Hebrew history and religion and does not address any particular Gentile or pagan practice, the traditional title has been maintained.

So we have a group of primarily Jewish believers at some unknown location who were completely familiar with the OT and with the OT priesthood and sacrificial system which were apparently still in operation at the time. So this would have been written before the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Now the form of Judaism practiced at that time had many legalistic elements as we can see from the Pharisees at the time of Christ. This was in no way pure biblical OT Judaism.

Overview:

This Book of Hebrews cannot be understood apart from its original Jewish audience and focus on the transition from the Old Covenant Levitical system (best detailed in Leviticus) to the New Covenant. The superiority of the New Covenant with its superior priesthood, superior sacrifice and superior sanctuary is driven home with the practical application that it would be foolish to

abandon Christianity and revert back to any of the Old Covenant types and shadows. The theme of **perseverance in the faith** [with its counterpart of **preservation of the saints**] is set against very severe warnings against apostasy — against falling away from the faith to ultimate perdition. Or warnings about failing to continue on to genuine conversion, having intellectually embraced the truth. The genuineness of faith (as opposed to false professions of faith and just external association with the Christian church) is demonstrated by one's perseverance. So that perseverance is not a condition of salvation but an evidence of the sovereign working of God's grace. The focus on Jesus Christ and the finality and sufficiency of His once-for-all sacrifice on the cross should be our vision as we *“lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith.”*

So we must understand that the audience of Hebrews fell into a number of different categories — all growing out of a background in Judaism.

- There were many genuine converts who were evidencing perseverance in the faith but still needed to be reminded to press forward and not abandon the faith — but continue strong to the end. They were in danger of going back into the standards and patterns of Judaism — not of losing their salvation but of confusing the gospel with Jewish ceremony and legalism and of thereby weakening their faith and testimony.
- There were those whom the Holy Spirit had granted some association with the truth and who maybe had even come to associate outwardly with the church but were in danger of retreating from Christ back to their Jewish roots. They needed to act with urgency on their opportunity to move forward in repentance and faith.
- There were those who had recently made a profession of faith and seemed indistinguishable from true believers but who would end up showing their true colors by falling away from the faith and becoming apostates.

You might ask: **Why such a strong pull from Judaism** that would attract people back to such a system of types and shadows when the reality had arrived in the person of Jesus Christ? Why would people be tempted to turn back?

- 1) Strong persecution and opposition against Christians — remember the parable of the soils: some seed falls on rocky paths and is snatched away by Satan; some plants seem to spring up initially but have no root and then wilt under pressure; some seed is choked out by worldliness and other distractions; good soil is hard to find.
- 2) The natural man rejects the path of faith in Christ. He resists trusting in invisible reality. He lives according to his physical senses. He is legalistic and is attracted to the types of external regulations and rites and religious practices where the flesh can excel in self-righteousness

I like the illustration that Pastor Harmon used in his series on Hebrews. I will modify it for my situation. My youngest daughter Julie is about to give birth to twin boys in a couple of months. She has shown us the sonogram pictures of the developing babies. Those pictures are captivating. I love to look at them. But when the twins arrive, you won't find me rejecting them and holding on to the sonogram pictures. The reality in substance is better than the shadowy prefigurements in the womb.

Homer Kent: Among the problems with which Jewish Christians must have grappled, the following were surely included:

- 1) How Christ was to be understood in relation to the teaching of many Old Testament passages.
- 2) The religious, cultural and ancestral attractions of the Old Testament system, particularly the visible features of that worship in contrast to the largely spiritual nature of Christian worship.
- 3) The relationship of the Christian movement to the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah.
- 4) The persecution from their own Jewish brethren, and the temptation to avoid it by abandoning the Christian faith.
- 5) The efficacy of Old Testament sacrifices.
- 6) The relation of Gentile converts to Jewish religious practices.
- 7) The relation of Jewish Christians to Gentiles socially.

Big Idea: PERSEVERE IN FAITH FOCUSED ON JESUS CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT, AS SUPREME, SUPERIOR AND SUFFICIENT

OUTLINE

I. (1:5 – 2:18) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS DOMINION AS RIGHTEOUS RULER – CONTRASTED WITH ANGELS

II. (3:1-6) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS FAITHFULNESS AS GOD’S REPRESENTATIVE – CONTRASTED WITH MOSES

III. (4:14 – 7:28) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS ROLE AS HIGH PRIEST

IV. (8:1 – 10:18) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS NEW COVENANT MINISTRY

V. (10:19 – 13:25) PRACTICAL EXHORTATIONS

The unique feature of the book which catches everyone’s attention is the series of **5 Warnings** that are sprinkled throughout the various chapters. These are stern warnings that some people have misunderstood to mean that it is possible for a believer to lose his salvation. Of course we know from studying the totality of Scripture that once God saves us He seals us with His Holy

Spirit. Christ said that no one can pluck us out of His hand. Romans 8 teaches us that the gospel train picks us up at the point of predestination and carries us all the way home to glorification. There is no possibility of getting off that train. But we need to address these warning passages.

The author of Hebrews makes it plain that the “*falling away*” with which he is concerned is not simply “**backsliding**.” Rather, it is a falling away to “**perdition**” [damnation, *apoleia*, Heb. 10:39 – “*but we are not of those who shrink back (withdraw) to damnation but we are of faith resulting in (the) saving of the soul*”]. So these warnings are dealing with the serious issue of salvation vs. damnation / of heaven vs. hell.

(2:1-4) **WARNING #1 – AGAINST DRIFTING AWAY**

(3:7 – 4:13) **WARNING #2 – AGAINST HARDNESS OF HEART AND UNBELIEF**

(5:11 – 6:20) **WARNING #3 – AGAINST SPIRITUAL IMMATURITY**

(10:26-31) **WARNING #4 – DON’T PERSIST IN DELIBERATE SIN –
DON’T WILLFULLY ABANDON CHRIST’S SACRIFICE**

(12:19-29) **WARNING #5 – GREATER PRIVILEGES MEAN
GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY – DON’T FAIL TO RESPOND TO GOD**

The warning passages in **Chapter 6** and in **Chapter 10** are especially difficult because the language seems to describe genuine believers and yet the punishment is definitely “hellish.” Since we believe in the eternal security of the believer, unlike, the Arminians, we are forced to wrestle with the tension of these passages. In keeping with the overall context of the epistle it seems reasonable to find the author addressing those who appear to be genuine believers on the surface, or are close to embracing Christianity, but who fall short and must either move forward to full saving faith or they will end up in a state of **apostasy** from which there is no recovery. The specific warning in Chap. 10 relates to **persisting in willful or deliberate sin**.

Let’s take a more in depth look at Warning #4 – 10:26-31

**I. (:26-27) NO REMEDY FOR APOSTASY UNDER THE NEW COVENANT – ONLY
TERRIFYING JUDGMENT**

A. (:26a) Condition of Apostasy

“*For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth,*”

B. (:26b-27) Certainty of Eternal Judgment

1. (:26a) No Escape

“*there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,*”

2. (:27) No Relief

a. Terrifying Expectation

“*but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment,*”

b. Consuming Fire

“*and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.*”

II. (:28-29) NO LESSENING OF JUDGMENT UNDER THE NEW COVENANT -- REJECTING CHRIST WORSE THAN REJECTING THE LAW OF MOSES

A. (:28) Severe Judgment Under the Old Covenant

1. Offense: Rejecting the Law of Moses

“Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses”

2. Judgment: Dies Without Mercy

“dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

B. (:29) More Severe Judgment Under the New Covenant

1. Clear Comparison

“How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve”

2. Three Charges of Apostasy:

a. First Charge – Contempt for Christ

b. Second Charge – Contempt for Christ’s Sacrifice as Accepted by the Father

“and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified,”

c. Third Charge – Contempt for the Holy Spirit

“and has insulted the Spirit of grace?”

III. (:30-31) NO SURPRISES SINCE THE JUDGE REMAINS THE SAME

A. (:30) Familiarity with the Judge

“For we know Him who said,”

Two OT Quotes with the same message:

1. You Can Count on God Judging

“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.” Deut. 32:35

2. You Can Count on God Judging

“And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’” Deut. 32:36; Ps. 135:4

B. (:31) Fear of the Judge

“It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

But we must deal with the expressions in Chap. 6 that sound like they might characterize a believer:

6:1-8 FAILURE TO PROGRESS TO GENUINE CHRISTIANITY DOOMS ONE TO THE FRUITLESS LIFE OF IRREVERSIBLE APOSTASY

II. (:4-8) AVOIDING THE DANGER OF IRREVERSIBLE APOSTASY

A. (:4-6) No Second Chance for Apostates

1. (:4-5) Counterfeits Look Like the Real Deal

a. Enlightened

“For in the case of those who have once been enlightened”

b. Gifted

- “and have tasted of the heavenly gift”
 - c. Indwelt
 - “and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,”
 - d. Empowered
 - “and have tasted the good word of God
and the powers of the age to come,”

Jerry Harmon:

Once enlightened means to have, again, an intellectual perception. Every man gets a measure of light, but not every man will be saved. John 1:9; Matt. 4:16

tasted of the heavenly gift -- They kind of got a pre-taste of salvation. Refers to a momentary experience. They haven't made a full commitment to Christ.

Partakers of the Holy Spirit -- The word here refers to association. It simply means they were around when the Holy Spirit was at work. They shared the common experience of seeing the Holy Spirit work. Did you know that an unbeliever can see the Holy Spirit work? An unbeliever can even experience some of the ministry of the Holy Spirit without being saved.

Tasted of the good word of God – They haven't feasted on it. It's someone who comes and hears the spoken word.

Tasted of the power of the world to come -- They had been exposed to the miraculous power of the apostles and the Lord Jesus, and they had tasted it, they witnessed it, and yet they still had not made a decision to trust in the Lord.

2. (:6a) Counterfeits are Exposed When They Fall Away from the Faith

“and then have fallen away,”

3. (:6b) Condition of Apostasy is Irreversible

“it is impossible to renew them again to repentance,
since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God,
and put Him to open shame.”

B. (:7-8) Illustration from Nature – Fruitfulness is the Proof of Genuine Life

1. (:7) Fruitfulness Connected to God's Blessing

a. Fruitfulness

“For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it
and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled,”

b. Blessing

“receives a blessing from God;”

2. (:8) Thorns and Thistles Connected to God's Cursing

a. Thorns and Thistles

“but if it yields thorns and thistles,”

b. Cursing

“it is worthless
and close to being cursed,

and it ends up being burned.”

The warning passages in Hebrews are not interruptions in the author's argument—they are **integral to the argument**. Hebrews alternates between **explaining the superiority of Christ** and **warning the readers not to turn away from Christ**.

A helpful way to see the book is:

Doctrine → Warning → Doctrine → Warning → Doctrine → Warning → Exhortation

The author is doing theology in order to produce perseverance.

1. The warnings show that the truths about Christ demand a response

Hebrews is not merely asking, “*Who is Jesus?*” It is asking, “*What will you do with Jesus?*”

The warnings function as God's means of preserving His people – they communicate Urgency-- The warnings become increasingly urgent.

This is an important theological point.

Some Christians ask:

“If genuine believers are eternally secure, why does Hebrews give such severe warnings?”

Because **God uses warnings as one of the means by which He preserves His people in faith**.

Think of a mountain road with a dangerous cliff. A sign saying:

DANGER — BRIDGE OUT — DO NOT PROCEED

The warning is there **to keep people from going over the cliff**.

Likewise, the warnings of Hebrews are genuine warnings that God uses to produce perseverance.

The warnings and encouragements work together

One of the most beautiful features of Hebrews is that the author doesn't merely say:

“Don't fall away!”

He continually gives them reasons **why they can persevere**.

1) **Warning**

“*Pay much closer attention...*” (2:1)

Encouragement

Jesus is the perfect Son who became like His brethren and is able to help those who are tempted (2:10–18).

2) **Warning**

“*Do not harden your hearts...*” (3:8)

Encouragement

“*We have a great high priest... Jesus the Son of God*” (4:14).

3) **Warning**

“*Let us leave the elementary teaching...*” (6:1)

Encouragement

“*We have this hope as an anchor of the soul*” (6:19).

4) **Warning**

“Let us consider how to stimulate one another...” (10:24)

Encouragement

“We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus” (10:19).

5) **Warning**

“See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking” (12:25)

Encouragement

“You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God” (12:22).

The pattern is deliberate:

Warning keeps us from presumption; Christ's sufficiency gives us confidence.

WORKING THRU THE OUTLINE

I. (1:5 – 2:18) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS DOMINION AS RIGHTEOUS RULER – CONTRASTED WITH ANGELS

A. (1:5-14) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST OVER ANGELS – PROVEN BY 7 OT MESSIANIC QUOTATIONS

All but 1 from the book of Psalms

B. (2:5-18) THE VALUE OF CHRIST’S HUMANITY – CHRIST’S SUPERIORITY OVER ANGELS NOT COMPROMISED BY HIS HUMANITY

1. (:5-9) Superiority of Jesus Christ over Angels Temporarily Obscured by His Human Mission of Redemption

a. (:5) Dominion Never Given to Angels

b. (:6-9) Dominion Given to Christ – Although Not Realized Yet

2. (:10-18) Superiority of Jesus Christ over Angels Enhanced by His Identification with Humanity

a. (:10-13) Necessity of Humanity to Truly Suffer

b. (:14-16) Necessity of Humanity to Experience Death as the Pathway to Victory and Deliverance

c. (:17-18) Necessity of Humanity to Qualify as a Merciful / Faithful High Priest

Look at the emphasis in this opening section on the **Sovereign Reign of Jesus Christ – 1:8; 13; 2:8**

II. (3:1-6) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS FAITHFULNESS AS GOD’S REPRESENTATIVE – CONTRASTED WITH MOSES

(:1) PROLOGUE – CONSIDER JESUS – APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST – GOD’S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SAINTS – common family identity

A. (:2) BOTH CHRIST AND MOSES COMMENDED AS FAITHFUL

B. (:3-4) CHRIST SURPASSES MOSES IN GLORY BY VIRTUE OF HIS CREATIVE WORK AS GOD

C. (:5-6a) THE FAITHFULNESS OF A SON SURPASSES THAT OF A SERVANT

1. (:5) Moses was Faithful as a Servant

2. (:6a) Christ was Faithful as a Son

(:6b) APPLICATION: PERSEVERE IN FAITH AND HOPE

Note the emphasis in this section on the **Faithfulness** of the Son of God

3:2, 6

III. (4:14 – 7:28) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS ROLE AS HIGH PRIEST

A. (4:14 – 5:10) HIS EFFECTIVENESS, QUALIFICATIONS, DIVINE APPOINTMENT AND PREPARATION FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

1. (:14-16) His Effectiveness –

Three Pastoral Implications of the Superiority of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ

a. (:14) Our Superior High Priest Encourages Us to Persevere

b. (:15) Our Superior High Priest Empathizes with Our Weaknesses

c. (:16) Our Superior High Priest Emboldens Our Petitions for Help

2. (5:1-3) His Qualifications

a. (:1a) Solidarity with Humanity

1) Taken from Among Men

2) Represents Man to God

b. (:1b) Sacrifice for Sin = Mission

c. (:2) Sensitive / Compassionate Mediator -- Can Identify with Weakness

1) Gentle – Not Harsh

2) Understanding – Not Insensitive

d. (:3) Sacrifice for Sin = Mission

3. (:4-6) His Divine Appointment Based on Divine Decrees

4. (:7-10) His Preparation for the Priesthood

B. (7:1-10) IDENTIFICATION AND GREATNESS OF MELCHIZEDEK – GREATNESS OF MELCHIZEDEK TYPIFIES SUPERIOR PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

1. (:1-3) Who is Melchizedek? This Mysterious King-Priest!

2. (:4-10) How Great is Melchizedek? Greater Than Abraham!

**C. (7:11-28) DRAWING NEAR TO GOD VIA THE SUPERIOR PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST – WHICH BRINGS NEW COVENANT ACCESS TO GOD --
3 ARGUMENTS FOR THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST’S PRIESTHOOD OVER THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD**

1. (:11-19) Because Christ’s Priesthood Offers a Better Hope –
Based on the Power of an Indestructible Life
2. (:20-25) Because Christ’s Priesthood is Permanent –
Guaranteeing a Better Covenant
 - a. (:20-21) Priesthood of Promise
 - b. (:22) Priesthood of Preeminence = a Better Covenant
 - c. (:23-25) Priesthood of Permanence
3. (:26-28) Because Christ’s Priesthood is More Effective –
Based on His Perfection
 - a. (:26) More Effective Because of His Perfect, Sinless Character
 - b. (:27) More Effective Because of His Perfect, Once-for-all Sacrifice
 - c. (:28) More Effective Because of His Perfect Intercession as Son of God

IV. (8:1 – 10:18) SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS NEW COVENANT MINISTRY

A. (8:1-13) SUPERIORITY OF THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST AND THE NEW COVENANT

1. (8:1-6) Superiority of the Ministry of Christ –
Christ’s Ministry is Superior Because He Ministers in a Better Sanctuary and Mediates a Better Covenant
2. (8:6-13) Superiority of the New Covenant – Out with the Old and In with the New –
The New Covenant with its Better Promises Necessitates the Abandonment of the Inadequate Old Covenant
 - a. (:7-9) The Old Covenant Had Limitations Which Required a New Covenant
 - b. (:10-12) The New Covenant Provides Better Promises That are Inwardly and Spiritually Focused – 4 Better Promises:
 - 1) (:10a) Superior Power -- Promise of Regeneration and Inward Transformation
 - 2) (:10b) Superior Relationship -- Promise of Secure Relationship with God with No More Apostasy
 - 3) (:11) Superior Knowledge -- Promise of Universal Revelation and Knowledge of God based on Personal Experience
 - 4) (:12) Superior Forgiveness -- Promise of Permanent Forgiveness of Sins Based on Finality of Sacrifice of Christ
 - c. (:13) The Old Covenant Has Become Obsolete



B. (9:1-14) COMPARISON OF OLD COVENANT AND NEW COVENANT WORSHIP SYSTEMS

1. **(9:1-10)** Worship Under the Old Covenant System –
The Old Covenant Worship System with its External Focus on the Earthly Sanctuary and Priestly Service Must be Viewed as Inadequate and Temporary
2. **(9:11-14)** Advantages of Worship Under the New Covenant System –
Only the Blood of Jesus Christ under the New Covenant can Cleanse the Conscience and Obtain Eternal Redemption

C. (9:15 – 10:18) SUPERIORITY OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

1. **(9:15-28)** Superiority of Christ's Sacrifice in Ratifying the New Covenant –
As the Mediator of the New Covenant, Christ's Sacrifice is Clearly Superior

(:23-28) Superiority of the New Covenant with its Better Sacrifice –
Confirmed in 4 Key Areas:

- 1) **(:23)** Superiority of New Covenant Sacrifice and Cleansing
 - 2) **(:24)** Superiority of New Covenant Sanctuaries
 - 3) **(:25-26)** Superiority of New Covenant Atonement
 - 4) **(:27-28)** Superiority of New Covenant Efficacy
2. **(10:1-18)** Superiority of the Once-for-all Sacrifice of Christ –
The Once-for-all Sacrifice of Christ Provides the Ultimate Cleansing and Forgiveness that was Impossible under the Old Covenant

- a. (:1-4) Inadequacy of Repetitive Old Covenant Animal Sacrifices
- b. (:5-10) Christ's Sacrifice Supersedes the OT Sacrifices
- c. (:11-14) Christ as the Priest Who Sits Supersedes the Levitical Priests Who Continually Stand and Minister
- d. (:15-18) Adequacy of Christ's Once-for-all Sacrifice for Sins – Supported by OT Prophecy
 - 1) (:15-16a) Regarding the Superiority of the New Covenant
 - 2) (:16b-18) Regarding the Final Resolution of the Sin Problem

V. (10:19 – 13:25) PRACTICAL EXHORTATIONS

A. (10:19-25) PRACTICAL OUTWORKING OF THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD -- THE REALITY OF THE SUPERIOR PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST IMPACTS BOTH OUR STANDING BEFORE GOD AND OUR STEADFASTNESS IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

- 1. (:19-21) Our Standing Before God –
Two Encouragements from the Superiority of Christ
 - a. (:19-20) We Enjoy Great Access to the Presence of God by Christ's Sacrifice
 - 1) (:19) Entrance into the Heavenly Sanctuary
 - 2) (:20) Embracing the New Pathway of Life
 - b. (:21) We Enjoy Great Representation by Christ's Priestly Ministry
- 2. (:22-25) Our Steadfastness in Faith, Hope, and Love --
Three Exhortations from the Superiority of Christ
 - a. (:22) Draw Near to God in Confident FAITH
 - b. (:23) Hold Fast the Confession of Our HOPE
 - c. (:24-25) Encourage One Another in LOVE

B. (10:32-39) EXHORTATION TO PERSEVERE IN LOVE, HOPE AND FAITH CONSISTENT WITH YOUR EARLY CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

- 1. (:32-34) Persevere in **Love** as You Endure Suffering and Persecution – Focus on the Past Experiences
- 2. (:35-37) Persevere in **Hope** as You Anticipate Christ's Return – Focus on the Future Reward
- 3. (:38-39) Persevere in **Faith** as You Remain on Track until the Final Goal – Focus on the Present Challenge

C. (11:1-40) EXHORTATION TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLES OF THE CHAMPIONS OF FAITH

D. (12:1-17) EXHORTATION TO PERSEVERE IN FAITH BY FOCUSING ON JESUS AS YOU RESPOND TO SUFFERING AND DIVINE DISCIPLINE

E. (13:1-17) EXHORTATION TO PERFORM CHRISTIAN DUTIES

1. **(13:1-6)** Practical Exhortations Regarding Social Duties –
Our Love and Reverent Service to God Must be Coupled with Cultivating:
 - Aggressive Love Towards the Brethren
 - Marital Fidelity and
 - Confident Contentment
2. **(13:7-17)** Practical Exhortations Regarding Religious Duties –
Sustaining Perseverance Requires:
 - Stability in Grace and Faith
 - Sacrifices of Praise and Good Works and
 - Submissiveness to Our Spiritual Leaders

**F. (13:18-25) CLOSING PERSONAL INSTRUCTIONS --
THE DYNAMICS OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER AND ENCOURAGING
FELLOWSHIP SUPPORT OUR GOAL OF TRUSTING OUR GREAT SHEPHERD TO
EQUIP US TO DO THE WILL OF GOD**

1. **(:18-19)** Closing Request for Intercessory Prayer
 2. **(:20-21)** Closing Benediction Focused on the Equipping to do the Will of God
 3. **(:22-25)** Closing Postscript of Encouraging Fellowship
- (:25)** Final Benediction -- *Grace be with you all.*

**SUPERIORITY OF JESUS CHRIST –HIS DOMINION, FAITHFULNESS,
PRIESTHOOD AND NEW COVENANT MINISTRY**

CONCLUSION:

Why go backward?

- Christ is better than angels.
- Christ is better than Moses.
- Christ is better than Joshua.
- Christ's priesthood is better than Aaron's.
- Christ's covenant is better than the old covenant.
- Christ's sacrifice is better than animal sacrifices.
- Christ's heavenly sanctuary is better than the earthly sanctuary.
- Christ's promises are better.
- Christ's blood is better.
- Christ's kingdom is unshakable.

Therefore: **Don't go back to the shadows when you have the substance.**

WHY STUDY THIS BOOK?

- To understand the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant – especially as supported by numerous quotations or references to OT passages.
- To see how the types and foreshadowings in the OT are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.
- To focus on the supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus Christ
- To appreciate the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ
- To reinforce a high view of the authority of Scripture
- To encourage believers to persevere in the face of persecution or suffering and to press on to maturity in light of the danger of apostasy
- To challenge us to live by faith and follow the example of the heroes of faith we see in the Scriptures
- To examine ourselves as to whether we truly are in the faith and to be sobered by the warning passages

Big Idea: PERSEVERE IN FAITH FOCUSED ON JESUS CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT, AS SUPREME, SUPERIOR AND SUFFICIENT
