

The Book of Hebrews

1. Review: Introduction to Hebrews.

- a) *Reasons for the Neglect of the Study of Hebrews.*
 - i) *Its argument seems unfamiliar and difficult to understand* (=we don't know the OT).
 - ii) *Its form is unusual* (=not a typical letter).
 - iii) *Its authorship is uncertain.* Who wrote Hebrews? An inspired author by the Spirit.
- b) *Other Questions of Introduction.*
 - i) *When was the book written?* Before 70 AD.
 - ii) *Who was the book written to and why?*
 - a) Probably Jewish Christians but not limited to them since most churches in the Roman Empire included Jews and Gentiles. Probably in the mid-60s.
 - b) Why? Because their world was falling apart. They were facing *external* pressures (=persecution) and more significantly, *internal* compromise.
 - iii) *What is the message of the book?* The glory, exclusivity, and sufficiency of Christ.
- c) *Outline of the Book.*

2. Hebrews 1:1-4: The Thesis of the Book (The Glory and Supremacy of Christ).

- a) *Thesis.*
 - i) Christ is greater.
 - ii) He is the fulfillment of God's promises/covenants.
 - iii) He is in a category all by himself because of *who* he is and *what* he does.
 - iv) *Assumption:* We must place Christ within the covenantal story of the OT. No vacuum.
- b) *Continuity from Old to New: God's speech/revelation.*
 - i) Foundational: God who is there and the God who speaks.
 - ii) Application for this church and for us today.
- c) *Discontinuity/Contrast from Old to New: Christ, who is the Divine Son incarnate.*
 - i) In the past... in these last days (=concept of the last days [Acts 2, 2 Tim 3, etc.]).
 - ii) Many times, various ways... finality, sufficiency (=application to Christ and canon).
 - iii) Prophets... Christ (Prophet but more than a Prophet, he is the Son) (Matt 5:17-19; 11)
- d) *Why is the Son Better/Greater than the Prophets (and everyone else from the OT).*
 - i) How does the author warrant such a claim? Because of *who* he is and *what* he does.
 - ii) *Chiasm.*
 - a) The Son, whom the Father appointed heir of all things.
 - (1) The Son, *through whom the Father* created the universe (John 1, Col 1:15-20).
 - (a) The Son is the radiance of God's glory (=Father).
 - (b) The Son is the exact correspondence of his being (=Father).
 - (2) The Son, *through whom the Father* sustains all things by his powerful word.
 - b) The Son provided purification for sin and sat down at the Father's side (=Ps 110).
 - iii) *Conclusion:* So, the Son became much superior to angels... (now we have contrasts).

3. Concluding Reflections/Application.

- a) Christ's exclusivity and sufficiency. The doctrine of the Trinity.
- b) How we understand the Bible's story.
- c) The canon of Scripture and its closure in Christ. The NT as new covenant Scripture.
- d) Two foundations for theology and all knowledge, etc.: God and his word.