

New Testament Overview – J. Carl Laney

FACTS ON HEBREWS

Author

The author is not identified. The epistle has been ascribed to Paul, but Hebrews 2:3 presents a major problem for this viewpoint. Suggestions include: Barnabas, Apollos, Clement of Rome, Luke Silas, Philip, Priscilla, and John Mark. _____ confessed, "Who the author of Hebrews is, God truly knows."

Readers

The ancient title designates the readers as "Hebrews," but the letter does not mention the readers as either Jews or Gentiles. Internal evidence suggests that they were _____ Christians, perhaps at Rome (13:24).

Date of Writing

A date of writing in the _____ accords well with the available data. The epistle may have been written before the Neronian persecution which began in July of A.D. 64 (12:4).

Historical Setting

Although they had been Christians for some time, the readers were making no spiritual progress (5:11-12). They had failed to grow in the Lord, and this was reflected in their Christian conduct (10:25, 13:2-17). These Hebrew Christians were looking backward to their Jewish ways instead of forward to Christ (12:2). In the face of the hardships of the Christian faith they were in danger of drifting away (2:1) from the _____, Christ, to the _____ of the OT sacrificial system (10:1).

Purpose

The purpose of Hebrews is (1) _____ concerning the superiority of Christ, (2) _____ against drifting to sin and disobedience, and (3) _____ the readers to move on to maturity in Christ.

Theme

"Christ's Person and work--the believer's _____ to maturity and service."

Outline

- I. The Superior Person of Christ 1-7
- II. The Superior Work of Christ 8:1-10:18
- III. The Superior Life of Faith 10:19-13:24

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THE SUPERIOR PERSON OF CHRIST 1-7

Superior to Prophets 1:1-3

Heir of all things

Creator of the world

Radiance of His glory

Exact representation of His nature

Sustainer of creation

Redeemer of mankind

Intercessor for believers

Superior to Angels 1:4-2:18

Better because of . . .

The _____ He was given 4-5

The _____ He receives 6-7

The sovereignty He _____ 8-9

The _____ He accomplished 10-12

The triumph He _____ 13-14

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1st Warning Passage 2:1-4

Who are these people that the writer is addressing? Believers, unbelievers or what? The context of the book is the key. They are believers who are tempted to backslide into Judaism (3:1,12,14).

These readers will not be saved from the power and influence of sin by drifting from grace and back to Jewish law and ceremonies.

Superior to Moses 3:1-4:13

The superior person 1-4

The superior position 5-6

2ND Warning Passage 3:7-19

As the Israelites failed to enter Canaan because of unbelief (3:19), so the readers will miss out on similar blessings if they do not continue steadfast in their faith (3:12,19).

Superior to Aaron 4:14-7:28

The believer's great High Priest 4:14-16

The qualifications for High Priesthood 5:1-10

3rd Warning Passage 5:11-6:20

Who are these people? 3:1,12,14, 6:4-5

What is impossible? 6:6

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To renew again by re-crucifying Christ is impossible!

E. The order of Christ's priesthood 7

Christ=s priesthood is . . .

1. Of a higher order 6-7
2. More efficacious 19
3. More firmly established 20
4. Of longer duration 24
5. Exactly suited to the sinners= need 28

THE SUPERIOR WORK OF CHRIST 8:1-10:18

Minister in a Better Sanctuary 8:1-5

Ministers in a heavenly sanctuary 1-2

Offers a better sacrifice 3

Mediator of a Better Covenant 8:6-13

Mediated by Christ 6a

Enacted on better promises 6b

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Imperfection of the Old Covenant 7-9

Provisions of the New Covenant 10-12 Cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34

Implanting God=s law on hearts and minds 10a

Renewed relationship with God 10b

Universal knowledge of God 11

Final forgiveness of sin 12

Old Covenant obsolete 13

A new covenant makes the old one obsolete.

Priest of a Better Tabernacle 9:1-12

The earthly sanctuary 1-5

The temporal ritual 6-10

The final redemption 11-12

Offerer of a Better Sacrifice 9:13-10:18

The superiority of the sacrifice 13-14

The necessity of the sacrifice 15-22

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The finality of the sacrifice 23-28

The efficacy of the sacrifice 10:1-18

THE SUPERIOR LIFE OF FAITH 10:19-13:34

The Confidence of Faith 10:19-39

Embrace the life of faith 19-25

Great privilege means great responsibility.

4th warning passage 10:26-31

If there was sever discipline for God=s people under Mosaic law,
how much more severe will be God=s chastening on those who
have received greater privilege!

The exhortation to persevere 32-39

The Examples of Faith 11

What is faith? 1

What can faith accomplishment? 2-3

Heros of faith 4-38

Conclusion and summary 39-40

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The Endurance of Faith 12

The example of endurance 1-3

The blessings of discipline 4-17

The blessings of salvation 18-24

5th warning passage 12:25-29

Take seriously the importance of heeding what God has spoken!
The greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility (v. 25).

The Workings of Faith 13

Ethical responsibilities 1-6

Examples to follow 7-9

Sacrifices of the Christian 10-17

Although blood sacrifices are no longer necessary, what kind of sacrifices would be appropriate for a New Covenant believer?

Personal instructions 18-25