

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Jan 2014

Hebrews

The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

Lesson #1: God's Final Word – His Son

INTRODUCTION

What are some of the ways that God has “spoken” to us? Rom 1:20; Jn 1:1-3; 6; 14

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Note: The author of Hebrews is debatable. He was known to his audience and he knew the people to whom he was writing. The timing is around 65 AD – after Christian persecution started and before the Temple destruction. The major doctrine is the person of Jesus Christ – both His humanity and His deity. Key words are “better, superior & best.” According to John MacArthur, knowing the intended audience is the key to understanding Hebrews. MacArthur thinks that the Hebrews were similar to churches today. Among the many categories of people, there were believers and two types of non-believers. Believers were immature Christians who struggled to break from their “pre-Christian” friends and life. One group of non-believers were intellectually convinced of Jesus but were unwilling to commit (make Him Lord). The other non-believers were still trying to grasp who Christ was and their relationship to Him. Knowing these differences helps us understand that some passages may be meant for one group rather than another.

Read Hebrews 1:1-4

Note: Since most of the audience was Jewish, the prophets held a significant place of reverence for them. “Last days” refers to time after Jesus’ resurrection. Since so many prophecies were recently completed, many people (like today) thought that history was coming to a swift conclusion. Joel 2:28-32

1. What is the significance of the word “but” in verse two?
2. Why is Christ superior to the prophets? 2 Pet 1:21; Col 1:17; Matt 5:17
3. What seven descriptive statements does the writer make about Christ?
4. What point do these statements collectively make?

Note: We are then taken on a tour of seven Old Testament passages, largely from the Psalms, to assure the first readers of Christ’s superiority over angels. This may not be a burning issue for our day, but with the proliferation of alternative spiritualities, often quite pagan and yet with Christian overtones, we do need to listen. The repeated theme is the uniqueness of sonship, and the humbler role of angelic ministry.¹

5. How do these verses show God’s preparation, presentation and Jesus’ preeminence?
6. How do you think the “last days” would be different if the Jews had accepted Christ as the Messiah?

APPLICATION

What makes Jesus more than just a name to you?

He was born contrary to the laws of nature, lived in poverty, was reared in obscurity, and only once crossed the boundary of the land in which He was born – and that in His childhood. He had no wealth or influence and had neither training nor education in the world’s schools. In infancy He startled a king. In boyhood He puzzled the learned doctors. In manhood He ruled the course of nature. He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His services. He never wrote a book and yet all the libraries of the world could not hold all the books about Him. Herod could not kill Him. Satan could not seduce Him. Death could not destroy Him and the grave could not hold Him.

The MacArthur New Testament Hebrews Commentary, p. 9, 10

¹ Hacking, P. H. (2006). *Opening up Hebrews*. Opening Up Commentary (14). Leominster: Day One Publications.