

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIBLE FOR ALL (BFA) MATERIAL FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Dig Deeper Study Tools

- Author's Purpose
- Context
- Structure
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- "Who am I"
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Hebrew—Anchored to Christ

STUDY 1 (For Sermon on 06 April 2025)

Hebrews 1:1-4 **Hold Fast, Jesus Is God's Final Word**

STUDY 2 (For Sermon on 27 April 2025)

Hebrews 1:5-14 **Hold Fast, Jesus Is Superior to Angels**

Background

- Hebrews' author is unknown, likely a second-generation leader after the apostles (2:3)
- Recipients were not mentioned. They were likely Jewish, persecuted and discriminated against for their faith (10:32–34)
- Returning to Judaism, a legal religion in Rome, would spare them from persecution.
- Hence its warnings **not to fall away** (2:1–4; 3:12–4:13; 5:11–6:12; 10:26–39; 12:25–29)
- Instead, it's a call to **hold fast** to their faith in Jesus (3:6, 14; 4:14; 6:18; 10:23).
- It's likely a sermon in written form, described as a “word of exhortation” in 13:22. “Exhort” appears four times (3:13; 10:25; 13:19, 22) and “exhortation” three times (6:18; 12:5; 13:22)
- It was possibly written before the temple's destruction in AD 70. 12:4 could suggest a date before Nero martyred the Christians after Rome's great fire.
- It is laden with OT thoughts: “Thirty-five quotations from a Greek translation of the Old Testament and thirty-four allusions work to support the development of Hebrews' argument. In addition, the writer offers nineteen summaries of Old Testament material, and thirteen times he mentions an Old Testament name or topic, often without reference to a specific context.”¹
- To help the readers step back and see God's sovereign hand amid their sufferings.

Message

- Hebrews is also a “word of exhortation” because God is a speaking God.
- His voice is “living and active” (4:12).
- Today if we hear His voice, we must pay heed (3:15).
- As long as it is called ‘today’, we must “exhort one another” (3:13)
- To listen to God's voice in His Son is to read OT in light of its fulfillment in Jesus Christ (1:1-2).
- Otherwise, to revert to OT sacrifices and rituals would deny Christ.
- Given the temptation to return to Judaism, the writer reminds his persecuted readers of the faith of OT saints, their leaders, and the pattern in Jesus' life—suffering comes before glory.
- Its already-not-yet end-time perspective implies the reward promised, the heavenly city, still awaits the believers.
- The theological truths in Hebrews thus serve as the foundation to exhort believers not to fall away.
- The greatness of Christ and His work makes falling away foolish.
- ***Its call is to hold fast to Christ, the superior mediator of a better covenant.***

¹ Guthrie, George H.. Hebrews (The NIV Application Commentary Book 15. Zondervan. Kindle Edition.)

Broad Outline Aligned to the Sermon Series:

Hold Fast to Jesus, the Superior Mediator of a Better Covenant with:

A Better Revelation

- 6 Apr Hold Fast, Jesus Is God's Final Word (1:1-4)
- 27 Apr Hold Fast, Jesus Is Superior to Angels (1:5-14)
- 4 May Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Incarnate Son (2:1-18)
- 11 May Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Builder of God's House (3:1-6)

A Better Rest

- 25 May Hold Fast, Believe and Enter His rest (3:7-19)
- 1 Jun Don't Doubt, Enter His Rest (4:1-13)

A Better Representative

- 8 Jun Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Perfect High Priest (4:14-5:10)
- 15 Jun Hold Fast, Mature in Jesus (5:11-6:3)
- 22 Jun Hold Fast, Don't Fall Away (6:4-12)
- 29 Jun Hold Fast, God is Unchangeable (6:13-20)
- 6 Jul Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Eternal High Priest (7:1-28)
- 20 Jul Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Inaugurator of the New Covenant (8:1-13)
- 27 Jul Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Anticipation of the Old Covenant (9:1-14)
- 3 Aug Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Mediator of the New Covenant (9:15-28)
- 10 Aug Hold Fast, Jesus Is the Perfect Sacrifice (10:1-18)
- 24 Aug Hold Fast, Jesus Is Faithful (10:19-25)
- 31 Aug Hold Fast, God Will Judge (10:26-34)

A Better Reward

- 7 Sep Hold Fast, God Will Reward (10:35-39)
- 14 Sep Hold Fast, Live by Faith (11:1-7)
- 21 Sep Hold Fast, Learn from Abraham (11:8-19)
- 28 Sep Hold Fast, Conquer by Faith (11:20-40)
- 5 Oct Hold Fast, Look to Jesus (12:1-4)
- 12 Oct Hold Fast, Grow through God's Discipline (12:5-11)
- 19 Oct Hold Fast, Pursue Peace and Holiness (12:12-17)
- 26 Oct Hold Fast, Come in Awe (12:18-29)

A Better Rededication

- 2 Nov Hold Fast, Continue in Love (13:1-8)
- 9 Nov Hold Fast, Offer Up Your Lives (13:9-16)
- 23 Nov Hold Fast, Uphold the Gospel Work (13:17-25)

How to Read the Book of Hebrews in its Old Testament Context

A. Look for Promises Fulfilled in Jesus.

1. Jesus as the true Son of David—He is the Messiah, the kingdom OT promised is realised in Him. (1:2 // Ps 2:8, 1:5 // Ps 2:7, 2 Sam 7:14.)
2. Ps 110: 1, “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool.’ ” fulfilled in Jesus Christ (See 1:2, 13; 8:1; 10:12–13; 12:2).
3. Jesus as the Great High Priest “sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (8:1; See Ps 110:4, “. . . ‘Forever, You are a priest like Melchizedek.’”)
4. Jesus as the Greater Moses and Joshua
 - a. Covenant Fulfilment of Jer 31:31-34 in 8:8-12, 10:15-18; Jesus as the Greater Moses
 - b. Land-Rest Fulfilment of Gen 12:1-3 in 3:12-4:13, Jesus as the Greater Joshua

B. Look for OT Events, Institutions, and Persons (Typology) Anticipating Jesus and Heavenly/Eternal Realities.

1. The fulfilment is always greater than the type
2. In OT, God spoke through Israel His Son (Ex 4:22; Jer 31:9). Now, God has spoken finally and definitively in His Greater Son (1:1-2)
3. Jesus is pre-eminently the better king, priest, and prophet, bringing a better sacrifice, covenant, rest, and promise.
4. Warnings of earthly penalties for disobeying OT Laws anticipate eternal judgment for rejecting eternal salvation in Jesus (2:2-3)
5. Earthly priests and the tabernacle are copies of the heavenly ones (8:5, 9:11).
6. The blood of bulls and goats anticipates Christ’s sacrifice through the eternal Spirit (9:12-14, 23-24).
7. Believers are earthly exiles, looking to a heavenly home (11:13-16)

C. Look for End-Time Perspective—Already but Not Yet

1. “We do not yet see everything subjected to” Jesus (2:8)
2. The present heavens will perish and be rolled up like a cloak (1:11–12).
3. The created things, the present heavens and earth, will be shaken and removed, and only God’s kingdom will remain (12:26–28).
4. Jesus will appear a second time for those awaiting salvation (9:8)
5. Believers are perfected in holiness for all time by Christ’s one offering (10:14)
 - a. Yet, for now, they must persevere in faith amid suffering (10:39-11:40).
 - b. They must pursue holiness without which no one will see the Lord (12:4)
 - c. They’re members of the heavenly assembly (12:22-33)
 - d. They seek the city to come (13:14).

06 April 2025

Study 1: Host Fast, Jesus Is God's Final Word

Hebrews 1:1-4

PREPARE (INDIVIDUAL): READ, MARK, AND REFLECT

Read the text throughout the week(s) before your group time.

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. 4 So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

(NIV 2011)

Notes and Questions

PREPARE TO SHARE (INDIVIDUAL): LOOK BACK

What has God been teaching you in the last few weeks?

Who has God laid on your heart to pray for?

GROUP: SHARE AND PRAY

Take note of one another's prayer concerns.

Come together to pray for each other, the church, and the world (see this month's prayer bulletin).

GROUP: WORSHIP TOGETHER

Prepare your hearts to meet God and one another in His Word through worshipping together.

GROUP: STUDY 1

Read Hebrews 1:1-4

OBSERVATION



What do you notice as you read this passage?

(The answers for this *observation* segment are usually straightforward, drawn directly from what you can see in the text given.)

1. How has God spoken “in the past”, to whom and through whom? (v.1)
2. How has God spoken “in these last days”, to whom and through whom? (v.2)
3. What did God do through His Son and made Him an heir of? (v.2)
4. Who is this Son who now sits at God’s right hand? What did He accomplish and attain? vv.3-4

Heb. 1:1-4 is rightly the most beautifully crafted sentence in the NT written with perfect Greek. It’s written in worship to exalt the Son, by riveting the readers’ attention on Him because **God has spoken to us in Him.**

Consider what power God has exerted to purify His creation from sin (v.3)! Realise that for the first creation, He only needed to speak, and it came into being. But to bring about the new creation, He had to incarnate as a man and die. The new creation cost God everything. As a fitting inheritance of the Son, its greatness, value, and glory will be measureless, awaiting to be revealed at His coming.

Note: In the Old Testament time, angels were sometimes referred to as the sons of God (see Job 1:6, Ps 29:1). This may be why the author explains that the Son is greater than the angels. This is to distinguish Jesus from the

INTERPRETATION



What is the meaning and significance of your observations?

(This segment requires you to reflect on what you have observed in the earlier segment)

5. What is the significance of God sending His Son into the world (vv.1-2, see also 9:26)? What does it tell us about God, the church, and the era we are living in?

6. How is Jesus the fulfilment of Old Testament Scripture? Consider his offices as a prophet (v.1-2), priest (v.3) and king (See v.3 and compare it with Psalms 110:1).

7. What is the significance of Jesus inheriting a superior name to the angels? (v.4)

BIG IDEA



What is the main message of the passage?

(Sum up the main idea and supporting ideas)

angels as God's unique Son. More importantly, angels are mediators of the old covenant (Dt 33:2; Heb. 2:2-3) while Jesus is the mediator of the new. Contrasting the Son with angels serves to highlight the superiority of the new to the old.

APPLICATION



Why did the Holy Spirit give us this text?

(Considering the big idea and the Holy Spirit's intent helps us make applications faithful to the text.)

1. How does knowing that we are living in these last days help to reorder your priorities?
2. Since God is a speaking God, how has this text encouraged you as God's people to pay attention to His voice through His Son?
3. Since Jesus is the exalted Son, and God's full and final revelation of Himself to us, how does that encourage you to draw near to Him?

GROUP: DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS

Discuss and pray over how you can better hear God's speaking to you through Christ, His word, and one another's life in your DG?

27 April 2025

Study 2: Host Fast, Jesus Is Superior to Angels

Hebrews 1:5-14

PREPARE (INDIVIDUAL): READ, MARK, AND REFLECT

Read the text throughout the week(s) before your group time.

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say,
“You are my Son;
today I have become your Father”?

Or again,
“I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son”?

6 And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.” s

7 In speaking of the angels he says,
“He makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire.” t

8 But about the Son he says,
“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your
companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.” x

10 He also says,
“In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the
earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

11 They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.

12 You will roll them up like a robe;
like a garment they will be changed.
But you remain the same,
and your years will never end.” b

13 To which of the angels did God ever say,
“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet”?

14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who
will inherit salvation?

(NIV 2011)

Notes and Questions

PREPARE TO SHARE (INDIVIDUAL): LOOK BACK

What has God been teaching you in the last few weeks?

Who has God laid on your heart to pray for?

GROUP: SHARE AND PRAY

Take note of one another's prayer concerns.

Come together to pray for each other, the church, and the world (see this month's prayer bulletin).

GROUP: WORSHIP TOGETHER

Prepare your hearts to meet God and one another in His Word through worshipping together.

GROUP: STUDY 2

Read Hebrews 1:5-14

OT Scriptures cited in Hebrews 1:5-14

vv. 5-14	OT Text cited (In NIV unless specified)
v.5a	Ps 2:7 I will tell the decree; Yahweh said to me: "You are my son; today I have begotten you.
v.5b	2 Sam 7:14 I will be a father to him, and he will be a son for me, whom I will punish when he does wrong, with a rod of men . . .
v. 6	Dt 32:43 (ESV) Rejoice with him, O heavens; <u>bow down to him, all gods</u> , . . .*
v. 7	Ps 104:4 He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants.
v. 8-9	Ps 45:6-7 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.
v. 10-12	Ps 102:25-27 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded.. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.
V. 13	Ps 110:1 The LORD says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

*(Note that the phrase underlined in Dt 32:43 does not appear in most English translations like the NIV translated from the Masoretic Text [near AD 1000]. This phrase appears in the earlier Qumran's Dead Sea Scrolls [near Jesus' time] and the Septuagint [the Greek OT in Jesus' time]. The New Living Translation translates "bow down to him, all gods" in ESV as "let all of God's angels worship him.")

OBSERVATION



What do you notice as you read this passage?

(The answers for this *observation segment* are usually straightforward, drawn directly from what you can see in the text given.)

1. Highlight the most frequently repeated verb from vv.5 to 13 in the NIV text. How does it connect us to what God was doing in vv.1-2?
2. What did God say is the main difference between Jesus and the angels in v.5?
3. What did God say He created the angels for? (v.6, 7, 14).
4. What did God say about how the Son is superior to the angels (v.6 to 13)?

Comments

This text is an exposition of the introduction in Heb. 1:1-4 using numerous OT texts.

Heb. 1:4 concludes vv.1-4 by exalting Jesus as superior to the angels. V.5 to 14 continue to explain how this is true.

V5 and 13 forms the bookend to this segment with the phrase, "Of the angels did God ever says." They are both citations from Psalms about the enthronement of the Son. They lead to v.14, the conclusion of the whole segment.

Heb. 1:1,2 declares that God is a speaking God. He has spoken, through OT prophets and now to us through Jesus.

Vv.5-13 expound this truth by applying OT citations to Jesus. As God continues to speak, instead of "it is written", these citations are preceded by "God says".

Hebrews thus calls us to listen to the speaking God by reading scriptures through their fulfilment in Jesus. Heb 1 begins by painting a

INTERPRETATION



What is the meaning and significance of your observations?

(This segment requires you to reflect on what you have observed in the earlier segment)

5. See the table on page 6. What is the significance of citing the Davidic promises of Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14 in v.5? How does this fulfil the Abrahamic promise in Gen 12:1-3 and Gal 3:16?
6. Why do you think the author saturated vv.5-13 with God speaking through the OT citations?
7. Why do you think the supremacy of Jesus as God's unique Son, having an eternal unchangeable divine nature, ruling forever, worshipped by angels, and subduing His enemies in due time mattered to Hebrews' readers (see 10:29, 12:4)?

BIG IDEA



What is the main message of the passage?

(Sum up the main idea and supporting ideas)

portrait of God's eternally exalted Son.

V5 cites Ps 2:7. This Ps refers to the coronation of the Davidic King. The nations should fear because God has enthroned His Son. Ps 2:7 is cited also in Acts 13:33 in reference to Jesus installed as God's Messianic King.

V.6 anticipates His exaltation in His resurrection, ascension and return, hence the responses of the angels in worship of Him.

V.7 is a citation of Ps 104:4. As wind and fire are God's servant, so are angels to which they were compared. V.7 implies angels are servants/ministers in God's created world.

V.10-12 affirms Christ's eternal divine nature. Ps 102:25-27 cited here refers to Yahweh and yet is applied to Jesus.

(Here are further NT examples where OT texts referring to Yahweh are applied to Jesus: Rom 10:13; 14:11; 1 Cor 1:31; 2:16; 10:22, 26; 2 Cor 10:17; Phil 2:10-11; 1 Thess 3:13;

APPLICATION



Why did the Holy Spirit give us this text?

(Considering the big idea and the Holy Spirit's intent helps us make applications faithful to the text.)

1. What does it mean to you that God is speaking and that Scriptures are His spoken words with a unified message in His Son?
2. How does God's pleasure in Jesus' love for righteousness encourage you to be righteousness?
3. How does Jesus' superior, eternal, unchanging nature and sovereign reign in this transient world make a difference for you?
4. How do angels as messengers and servants of believers encourage you about God's protecting care for you and your salvation?

4:6; 2 Thess 1:7–8; 2 Tim 2:19)

V.13 cites Ps 110:1. This verse is used by Jesus in Matt 22:41-46 to show He is both David's son as a man and David's Lord as the Son of God.

(Realise also how frequently Ps 110:1 is alluded to elsewhere in NT: Acts 2:34; 5:31; Rom 8:34; 1 Cor 15:25; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; 1 Pet 3:22.)

Psalms 2 and 110 that frame vv.5 to 13 are key texts in framing Hebrews' understanding of Jesus.

Ps 110 says Yahweh will extend the Davidic son's rule by triumphing over his enemies. His subjects will gladly join him in his victory. He will reign as the priest-king in Melchizedek's order, a theme Hebrews will further expound.

Hebrews 1 therefore asserts that Jesus is superior because Jesus is fully divine. He is the exalted God-Man.

GROUP: DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS

As a DG, thank God for giving us His Son. Praise and worship Jesus for His supremacy. Commit one another's care into His hands, trusting in His wise and sovereign rule over all things to bring out the best in us and for us.