

Study of Hebrews

- **Authorship**

- The author of this letter does not identify himself
- Several possible authors have been proposed, including Apollos, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, and the apostle Paul
- One argument against Paul's authorship is the Paul always corrected the septuagint where it was wrong; the writer of Hebrews did not.
 - Since Paul knew Hebrew as well as Greek, it is to be expected that he would make corrections.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Hebrews 13:18-19, 22-24
 - A friend of Timothy
 - Imprisoned in Italy
 - Requests prayers to be released

Hebrews 13:18-19, 22-24

- [18](#) Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.
- [19](#) I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order **that I may be restored to you the sooner.**
- [22](#) I appeal to you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.
- [23](#) You should know that **our brother Timothy has been released**, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon.
- [24](#) Greet all your leaders and all the saints. **Those who come from Italy** send you greetings

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Paul customarily invokes grace upon readers of his writing
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:1 – “Grace to you and peace”
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:2 – “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:18 – “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all”
 - 2 Timothy 1:2, 2:1, 4:22
 - Titus 3:15
 - Philemon 1:25
 - Hebrews 13:25 – “Grace be with all of you”
 - 2 Peter 1:2, 3:18 --- Peter does this also, but he did not write as much as Paul.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Use of the word 'covenant'
 - 7 times in N. T. outside of Paul's writings
 - 9 times in Paul's other writings
 - 17 times in Hebrews

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Similar figures of speech
 - 1 Corinthians 9:24-25
 - “[24](#) Do you not know that **in a race all the runners run**, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.
 - [25](#) Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.
 - Galatians 2:1-2, 5:7
 - [1](#) Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me.
 - [2](#) I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, **in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain.**
 - [5:7](#) **You were running well.** Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Similar figures of speech
 - Philippians 3:13-14
 - [13](#) Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,
 - [14](#) **I press on toward the goal for the prize** of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
 - 2 Timothy 4:7
 - [7](#) I have fought the good fight, **I have finished the race**, I have kept the faith.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Similar figures of speech
 - Hebrews 12:1-2
 - 1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, **and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,**
 - 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Use of the word 'mediator'
 - Galatians 3:19-20
 - [19](#) Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and **it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.**
 - [20](#) Now an **intermediary** implies more than one, but God is one.
 - 1 Timothy 2:5
 - [5](#) For there is one God, and there is **one mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,
 - Hebrews 8:6
 - [6](#) But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he **mediates** is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- Use of the word 'mediator'
 - Hebrews 9:15
 - [15](#) Therefore he is the **mediator** of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.
 - Hebrews 12:24
 - [24](#) and to Jesus, the **mediator** of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.
 - No other usage in the N. T.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- View of the law similar to Paul's other writings
 - Acts 13:36
 - [39](#) and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you **could not be freed by the law of Moses**.
 - 1 Corinthians 9:19-21
 - [19](#) For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.
 - [20](#) To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (**though not being myself under the law**) that I might win those under the law.
 - [21](#) To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- View of the law similar to Paul's other writings
 - Romans 7:1-6
 - 1 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that **the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?**
 - 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is **released from the law of marriage**.
 - 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, **she is free from that law**, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.
 - 4 Likewise, my brothers, **you also have died to the law** through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.
 - 5 For while we were living in the flesh, **our sinful passions, aroused by the law**, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.
 - 6 But **now we are released from the law**, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- View of the law similar to Paul's other writings
 - 2 Corinthians 3:7-11
 - 7 Now if **the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone**, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end,
 - 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?
 - 9 For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.
 - 10 Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it.
 - 11 For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- View of the law similar to Paul's other writings
 - Galatians 3:16-4:31
 - [3:19](#) **Why then the law?** It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.
 - [4:4](#) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,
 - [4:5](#) to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
 - Ephesians 2:14-15
 - [14](#) For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility
 - [15](#) **by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances**, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- View of the law similar to Paul's other writings
 - Colossians 2:13-14
 - [13](#) And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,
 - [14](#) by **canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.**

Internal Evidence of Paul's Authorship

- View of the law similar to Paul's other writings
 - Hebrews 8:7-10:18
 - [8:7](#) For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.
 - [8:13](#) In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete.
 - [9:15](#) Therefore **he is the mediator of a new covenant**, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Audience

- Jewish Christians, who were in danger of apostatizing from Christ and returning to Judaism, who were subjected to persecution by their own race because they had left Moses and accepted Christ.
- Hebrews 2:1
 - Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it

Purpose

- To show the unsurpassed glory of the new covenant in contrast with the old.
- To exhort Hebrew Christians to steadfastness in Christ
 - Hebrews 3:12-13
 - [12](#) Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.
 - [13](#) But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
 - Hebrews 4:14
 - Hebrews 6:4-8
 - Hebrews 10:23
 - Hebrews 13:22

Date

- Much is written about worship and sacrifice in the Temple, but in absence of any hint that the Temple had been destroyed --- therefore, prior to 70 AD
- Assuming authorship of Paul:
 - Pauls' first imprisonment in Rome --- 61-63 AD
 - More likely than during the 2nd imprisonment
 - Paul's second imprisonment in Rome --- 68 AD
 - Tradition alleges that Paul was beheaded by Nero in Rome in the 2nd imprisonment.

Hebrews Chapter 1

- The superiority of Christ as founder of Christianity
 - The three-fold place of Jesus
 - Prophet: Hebrews 1:2 --- he has spoken unto us
 - Priest: Hebrews 1:3 --- he made purification for sin
 - King: Hebrews 1:3 --- at the right hand of the majesty
 - Note song #532, verse 3 “Crown Him! Crown Him! Prophet, and Priest, and King!”
 - Prophet – represents God to man
 - Priest – represents man to God
 - King – rules over his subjects

Hebrews Chapter 1

- Hebrews begins with an assumption of God's existence, like Genesis. It makes no attempt to prove the existence of God.
 - No Christian, Hebrew or Gentile, ordinarily needs a proof that God exists.
- God has spoken:
 - To Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
 - To Moses
 - Through all the prophets, major & minor.
 - Many times, many ways
 - Genesis 2:15-17 --- to Adam & Eve in the garden
 - Genesis 8:15-19 --- to Noah
 - Genesis 12:1-3 ---to Abraham
 - Genesis 14:18-20 --- through Melchizedek
 - Genesis 35:1 --- to Jacob
 - Genesis 40 --- to Joseph (dreams, interpretation)
 - Exodus (All) – to Moses (burning bush and other ways)
 - Prophets --- 2500+ times “and God said”

Hebrews Chapter 1

- God has spoken:
 - Unto the fathers by the prophets
 - John 8:39 --- Abraham is our father
 - Everyone of Jewish race, beginning with Abraham should be considered as included.
 - “by the prophets” seems to exclude the patriarchs who lived before Moses.
 - But, prophet need not be limited to one who foretold an event.
 - Prophet means “to tell” (literally, a mouth for God; an advocate for God). Noah was not considered among the prophets of Israel, but he told of the coming judgment of God.
 - 2 Peter 2:5 --- Noah a preacher of righteousness.

Hebrews Chapter 1

- At the end of these days
 - The days of the fathers and prophets?
 - The end of the Mosaic, Jewish dispensation?
- Spoken to us by His Son
 - John 8:28 --- speak just as the Father taught me
 - John 12:49 --- the Father who sent me has given me a commandment – what to say and what to speak
 - John 14:10 --- The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Hebrews Chapter 1

- Whom He has appointed heir of all things
 - Hebrews 1:4 --- inherited an excellent name
 - Isaiah 9:6
 - Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23
 - Philippians 2:5-11 --- God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him a name that is above every name
 - Acts 2:36 --- God has made Him both Lord and Christ
 - Matthew 28:18 --- All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me
 - John 5:22-23 --- has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Hebrews Chapter 1

- Through whom also He created the world
 - Genesis 1:26 --- Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.
 - John 1:2-3 --- He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him ...
 - Psalm 24:1-2 --- the world and those who dwell therein
 - Psalm 50:10-11 --- everything that moves in the field is mine
 - Colossians 1:16 --- by him all things were created

Hebrews Chapter 1

- He is the radiance of the glory of God
 - The word radiance (or effulgence) only appears once in the New Testament
 - John 1:14-18 --- we have seen his glory
 - John 14:6-11--- whoever has seen me has seen the Father

Hebrews Chapter 1

- and the exact imprint of His nature
 - 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, **who is the image of God**
 - Colossians 1:15
 - He is the image of the invisible God
- Upholds the universe by the word of his power
 - Acts 17:28
 - in him we live and move and have our being
 - Job 12:10
 - In his hand is the life of every living thing
 - Colossians 1:17
 - in him all things hold together

Hebrews Chapter 1

- After making purification for sins
 - John 1:29 --- “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
 - Much of this book will focus on the superiority of Jesus’ sacrifice for sin
 - Hebrews 9:28 --- having been offered once to bear the sins of many
 - Hebrews 12:2 --- who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame,
 - Revelation 1:5 --- who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

Hebrews Chapter 1

- he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
 - Acts 2:33
 - Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God,
 - Acts 7:56
 - “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”
 - Hebrews 10:11-12
 - [11](#) And **every priest stands daily** at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.
 - [12](#) But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, **he sat down** at the right hand of God,

Hebrews Chapter 1

- Hebrews 1:5-14
 - **5** For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”?
 - **6** And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”
 - **7** Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.”
 - **8** But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.
 - **9** You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”
 - **10** And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, 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** like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”
 - **13** And to which of the angels has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?
 - **14** Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Hebrews Chapter 1

- having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.
 - Was there a time when Jesus was not superior to angels?
 - Philippians 2:5-10 --- made himself nothing
 - Hebrews 2:9 --- for a little while was made lower than the angels
 - Hebrews 1:5, 14 --- He is a son; angels are servants.
 - Psalm 2:7, 89:26-27
 - Hebrews 1:6 --- angels worship Him.
 - Hebrews 1:8 --- scepter of righteousness
 - Psalm 45:6-7
 - Hebrews 1:9 --- anointed with oil of gladness beyond ...
 - Isaiah 61:1
 - Hebrews 1:10 --- addressed as “Lord”
 - Psalm 102:26-27
 - Hebrews 1:13 --- seated at God’s right hand
 - Psalm 110:1

Hebrews Chapter 1

- “Better” is used at least 12 times in Hebrews (sometimes translated “superior” or “more excellent”).
 - Hebrews 1:4 --- better than angels
 - Hebrews 6:9 --- better things
 - Hebrews 7:7 --- inferior blessed by superior
 - Hebrews 7:19 --- better hope
 - Hebrews 7:22 --- better covenant
 - Hebrews 8:6 --- better covenant
 - Hebrews 9:23 --- better sacrifices
 - Hebrews 10:34 --- better possession
 - Hebrews 11:16 --- better country
 - Hebrews 11:35 --- better life
 - Hebrews 11:40 --- something better
 - Hebrews 12:24 --- better word than the blood of Abel