

Outline of HEBREWS

by L. Dwight Custis

I. Introduction -- the Theme of the Epistle: the High Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-4).

II. The Doctrinal Section (Heb. 1:5-10:18).

In order to show the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over the Levitical priests of the Old Testament, the writer shows how Christ was better and greater than those in the Old Testament who had anything to do with the Law and the Old Testament priests.

A. Christ, the Son of God, is greater than angels (Heb. 1:5-2:18).

The reason for this comparison is because the Law was given from God to Moses by angels. See Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2.

1. Christ's greatness over angels established by Old Testament passages (Heb. 1:5-14).
2. Warning #1 (Heb. 2:1-4). Since Christ is greater than angels, "the more earnest heed" should be given to what He said.
3. Christ's incarnation gives further evidence of His superiority over angels (Heb. 2:5-18).

It is not the purpose of God that all things should eventually be under angels, but under a man. Thus, this is one reason why our Lord became a man. His incarnation and the reasons for it are stated three times in these verses -- leading up to the statement in verses 17 and 18 regarding His priesthood.

B. Christ, the Son of God, is greater than Moses -- which also makes Him greater than Joshua (Heb. 3:1-4:16).

1. Moses and Christ compared (Heb. 3:1-6).
2. Warning #2 (Heb. 3:7-4:13). The failure of the children of Israel to enter into rest because of their unbelief is a warning to present-day professing Christians to be concerned about their faith.

The superiority of Christ over Joshua is brought out in Heb. 4:8 where "Jesus" should read Joshua.

3. The superiority of Christ over Moses and Joshua is finally due to His present position and the work that He can do for us which they could not do (Heb. 4:14-16).

C. Christ, the Son of God, is greater as a High Priest, "after the order of Melchisedec," than Aaron and the high priests under the Levitical order (Heb. 5:1-10:18).

1. Christ's right to be a priest -- established on two grounds (Heb. 5:1-10).
 - a. He was a man (5:1-3).
 - b. He was "called of God" (5:4-10). See Psalm 110.
2. A Digression (Heb. 5:11-6:20).

The retarded spiritual state of the recipients of this Epistle presented problems to the writer in teaching the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ. This passage actually forms an exhortation for them to "go on unto perfection," as stated in Heb. 6:1.

3. The main discussion of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ (Heb. 7:1-28).

- a. The historical background on Melchisedec (Heb. 7:1-10). See also Genesis 14:17-24.

Here the writer of Hebrews shows from the history that Melchisedec was greater than Abraham, and greater than Levi, and so, by implication, greater than Aaron. Therefore, since Christ is a priest "after the order of Melchisedec," this proves that He, too, is greater than Abraham, Levi, and Aaron.

- b. The announcement of another priesthood after the Levitical priesthood had been established shows the need for the Melchisedec priesthood, and consequently the inferiority of Aaron to Melchisedec (Heb. 7:11-28). This is another way of establishing the superiority of Christ since He is a priest "after the order of Melchisedec" who was greater than Aaron.
- 4. The chief point that the writer of Hebrews has made (Heb. 8:1-13). It is that we have such an High Priest in heaven Who has a better ministry than the Old Testament high priests because He has mediated a better covenant established on better promises. See verse 6.
- 5. The superiority of Christ as an high priest is brought out by a further comparison with the high priests and their ministry under the Law (Heb. 9:1-10:13).

III. The Practical Section (Heb. 10:19-13:17).

- A. Exhortations regarding faith (Heb. 10:19-25).
- B. Warning #3 (Heb. 10:26-39). This has to do with wilful sin and drawing back instead of believing.
- C. Encouragements to trust the Lord (Heb. 11:1-12-24).
 - 1. The testimony of Old Testament saints (Heb. 11:1-40). The emphasis throughout this chapter is on their faith.
 - 2. Under the figure of running a race, we are to be "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1-4).
 - 3. To be patient and hopeful under the chastening of the Lord (Heb. 12:5-24).
- D. Warning #4 (Heb. 12:25-29). This has to do with the fear of the Lord.
- E. Final exhortations regarding their lives and their relationship to their leaders in the church (Heb. 13:1-17).

IV. Conclusion (Heb. 13:18-25).

This contains a request for their prayers, a prayer for them, a final appeal for them to heed his exhortations, and salutations.

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