



Hebrews

An introduction

Why?

Fellowship in the Word of God

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”

(2 Peter 3:18)

“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended ...

***I press toward the goal** for the prize of the upward call of God in*

Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind”

(Philippians 3:13-15)

But first...

➤ **Who wrote it?**

➤ **When?**

➤ **From where?**

➤ **To whom?**

➤ Who wrote it?

- Clement of Alexandria (150 - 215 AD) suggested that **Paul** wrote it in Hebrew, and Luke translated it into Greek.
- **Clement of Rome** (died 99 AD) quotes or alludes to Hebrews in some of his writings, but didn't write it (or understand it!).
- **Luke** because of similarities in the Greek vocabulary and excellent style?
- **Barnabas**? Tertullian (200 AD) refers to "an epistle of Barnabas entitled 'To the Hebrews'", but is it this one?
- **Peter** – 1 Peter is similar in thought and language?
- **Silas**?
- **Stephen**, because of his speech recorded in Acts 7?
- **Apollos** - Martin Luther argued for him, but no ancient writer did.
- **Priscilla** (and Aquila) – a modern favourite – but in 11:32 “telling” (m)...

➤ Who wrote it?

Pray for us ... that I may be restored to you the sooner.

(Hebrews 13:18-19)

*Know that our brother Timothy has been set free,
with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly.*

(Hebrews 13:23)

A clue?

...as also our beloved brother Paul, ... , **has written to you**, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also **the rest of the Scriptures**.

(2 Peter 3:15-16)

➤ When?

- Before 70 AD (8:13)

➤ From where?

- Probably not Italy (13:24)

➤ To whom?

- Hellenistic Jewish believers
- Probably not in Palestine
- Assumed acceptance and knowledge of Jewish Scripture and practices



Form and substance:

➤ Is it a letter?

- No greeting - like 1 John
- Pastoral throughout

➤ What is the tone?

- Sober, urgent, confident, uplifting

➤ How is it reasoned?

- The superiority of Christ over all

Exposition with exhortation:

Exposition	Exhortation
▪ Greater than angels (2:1-2)	▪ Do not neglect (2:1-4)
▪ Psalm 8, greater than Moses (2:4-3:6)	▪ Beware of unbelief, enter into rest (3:7-4:16)
▪ The High Priest (5:1-11)	▪ Go on from immaturity (5:12-6:20)
▪ Melchizedek, tabernacle, one sacrifice, new covenant (7:1-10:18)	▪ Hold fast, the witnesses, chastening, Mt Zion, go outside the camp (10:19-13:25)

Warnings with encouragement:

Warning		Encouragement	
▪ Drift away, neglect	(2:1-2)	▪ Give earnest heed	(2:1)
▪ Unbelief, hard heart	(3:12)	▪ Exhort one another	(3:13)
▪ Fall away, immaturity	(6:6)	▪ Go on to perfection	(6:10)
▪ Deliberate sin	(10:26)	▪ Hold fast, draw near	(10:22)
▪ Refusal to hear	(12:25)	▪ Come to Mt Zion	(12:22)

Relevance:

➤ To Jewish Christians

- No return to the old ways

➤ To Gentiles

- To understand Christ and His work

➤ To you and me

- The unseen and the spiritual



Maturity,
completeness

Let us go on to perfection...

(Hebrews 6:1)

And this we will do if God permits.

(Hebrews 6:3)