

NEW THRU 30 HISTORY

History: Hebrews

Author: No definitive author can be determined. Many possibilities have been offered, but the most common and likely are Apollos, Barnabas, and Priscilla.

When was the book of Hebrews written, where was it composed and to who was it written to?: Hebrews dates sometime between 60-70 AD. As the title of the book indicates, the book was written to Jewish Christians, probably located in either Jerusalem or Rome.

Purpose of the book: Jewish Christians had been undergoing intense social and physical persecution and were being tempted to forsake their Christian faith and return to Judaism and its sacrifices and rituals. The author of Hebrews desires to encourage these Christians to remain in the faith by arguing for the superiority of Jesus over anything the Jewish system has to offer.

How does the book of Hebrews fit into the Jewish Culture of the New Testament?: Hebrews competes with the Gospel of Matthew for being the most Jewish of any of the books of the New Testament. The book is full of references to Old Testament figures (Moses, Melchizedek) and the sacrificial system associated with the temple.

Interesting notes about the book of Hebrews:

- The book is actually a combination of a letter and a sermon.
- It is by far the most linguistically advanced book in the New Testament. The only other book that comes close is Luke-Acts.

Main Takeaways from the book of Hebrews:

- There is nothing in all of creation that is superior to Jesus and what he has to give us.
- Jesus has provided the final, full sacrifice needed to atone for our sins and provide us forgiveness. Besides our unbelief, no barriers between us and the presence and salvation of God remain.
- The superiority of Jesus should lead us to remain faithful to him in times of hardship or persecution. Because there is nothing better than Jesus, there is nothing that should be able to entice us away from him.
- The example of other faithful believers, both past and present, and above all the example of Jesus should inspire us to remain faithful to him.