

# Hebrews 1:1-2

THE SUPREMACY OF JESUS  
CALLS US TO RENEWED  
PASSION, NOT RETREAT



# Introductory Information

## **Author:**

- Hebrews does not present the author, but he was known to the recipients
- Clement of Alexandria (150-215 AD) believed Paul wrote it in Hebrew, and Luke translated it into Greek
- Origen (185-253 AD) said the thoughts were Paul's, but it was written by someone else
- The eastern church in the third century accepted Paul as the author
- Eventually, the western church accepted Paul as the writer through the influence of Jerome and Augustine
- After the Reformation, both Luther and Calvin rejected Paul's authorship because of Hebrews 2:3
  - Hebrews 2:3
- We don't know who wrote Hebrews
- Recipients: Ethnic Jews who made professions of faith, now considering returning to Judaism

# Introductory Information

## Date:

- There is no date of composition given, and there are no time markers to indicate a time period
- Timothy is alive (Cf. 13:23), indicating it was written sometime in the 1st Century
- Warnings about returning to practices that describe practicing Jews reveal Hebrews was written before the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD
- Most believe Hebrews was written in the early 60's prior to Neronian hostilities



# Introductory Information

- Purpose: To encourage people who came to faith in Jesus as the Messiah of the New Covenant not to turn back to Old Covenant practices
  - Hebrews presents Jesus as the glorious fulfillment of the Old Covenant promises of God
  - The recipients are primarily ethnic Jews
  - The persecution and hardships of keeping the New Covenant faith are difficult to endure
    - Hebrews 10:32–34
  - Returning to Judaism would ease persecution brought by Jews and the Roman government since Judaism was an official religion of the empire
  - Those who attempt to go back to what no longer exists embrace damnation
    - Hebrews 2:1–4

# Introductory Information

## Purpose:

- Hebrews proclaims the exaltation of the fulfillment Jesus brings to the redemptive plan of God and puts forward His rule and reign as the believer's new abiding reality
- We have a glorious proclamation of truth from the Old Testament that speaks of the coming Messiah
  - Psalm 110:1
- Several texts in Hebrews declare emphatically that Jesus is the fulfillment of this promise and that He is now declaring His rule and reign as He regathers the nations
  - Hebrews 1:2
  - Hebrews 1:13
  - Hebrews 8:1
  - Hebrews 10:12–13
  - Hebrews 12:2

# Communication characterizes God (1:1-2)

God communicated in diverse ways during the Old Covenant (1:1)

<sup>1</sup> *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,*

- Old Testament revelation from God came in various ways (laws, commands, instructions, historical accounts, songs, proverbs, prophetic promises, etc.)
- God spoke to Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, the judges, Samuel, Saul, David, the kings of Israel and Judah and many prophets
- The Old Testament is still authoritative, but it must be viewed through the lens of Jesus Christ and the fulfillment He brought
  - We should not depreciate the Old Testament
  - We should learn it and love it with a Christ-centered perspective



# Communication characterizes God (1:1-2)

God's Communication in the New Covenant comes through His Son (1:2)

<sup>2</sup> *but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,*

- “*in these last days*” – ἔσχατος (eschatos) adjective – final(ly), last of a series
- “*These last days*” refers to the time when God's redemptive purposes have reached fulfillment
- We have been in the last days since the ascension of Jesus Christ inaugurated His sovereign rule and reign at the Father's right-hand
- The writer of Hebrews affirms we've been in the last days since the ascension of Jesus
  - The Apostle Paul makes the same point in his instruction to the church in Corinth
    - 1 Corinthians 10:11
  - The culmination has come
    - Matthew 5:17
    - Romans 10:4
  - Jesus is the target of Old Covenant instruction found in the law and prophets, and His life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension are the achievement of His mission

## Communication characterizes God (1:1-2)

- **It is the teaching of Jesus, declaring He is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, that undergirds His instruction of New Covenant Christians and churches by His Apostles**
- When Jesus is our Savior and Lord, we've received the fullness of God's redemptive plan
- God has spoken to us by His Son, and we do well to listen and obey what He says
  - Drifting away from the fullness of God's revelation through Jesus is disastrous
  - Hebrews 2:1



## Communication characterizes God (1:1-2)

*whom he appointed the heir of all things,*

- Old Testament inheritance language usually refers to the nation of Israel and the land of Canaan
  - Deuteronomy 4:37–38
  - Joshua 11:23
  - Joshua 23:14
- The writer of Hebrews is inspired to reinforce that God appointed Jesus to be the final heir of all things
- The Messianic promise made in Psalm 2 finds its fulfillment in Jesus
  - Psalm 2:8
- Jesus being the heir of all things means He is ruling and reigning as King

# Communication characterizes God (1:1-2)

*through whom also he created the world.*

- Jesus is the fully human fulfillment of Davidic promises, but He is also God of very God who created the world
  - John 1:1–3
  - Colossians 1:16
- The creative and sustaining power of Jesus should encourage followers of Jesus in the New Covenant

# Questions to Consider

- What was the author's purpose in writing Hebrews?
- How does the fact that God desires to communicate encourage you?
- What should your attitude be toward the Old Testament?
- Why is it important to know that it doesn't get any better than New Covenant gospel grace in Jesus?
- How does Jesus, being the Father's heir to all, relate to you as a child of God?
- How does the creative and sustaining power of Jesus encourage you?



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