

# Survey and Introduction

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Hebrews  
**Preached on:** Monday, September 19, 2016

This morning it is my joy to be able to begin a study with you of the epistle to the Hebrews and actually what I want to do this morning is give you somewhat of a survey of this book and certainly an introduction to it, and this really begins a wonderful spiritual journey that I'm sure you'll find very encouraging, very instructive to each of us as we begin to unearth some of the rich truths of the book of Hebrews.

Now, unfortunately this is unfamiliar to many believers. It's often a neglected book. In fact, you may find that some of your pages are still stuck together in this particular book primarily because it's a bit complicated and it has so many references to Judaism because, guess what? It was written to Hebrews, to Jews. Lots about the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices, ceremonies, laws, prophets, old covenant, and these things are foreign to the Gentile mind so therefore it would seem to be irrelevant to most of us, especially in our modern era. But dear friends, you will see that nothing could be further from the truth.

Furthermore, it's a bit difficult because it's more of a sermon than a letter and you need to understand this. There is no greeting as in most epistles, no personal details from the author about the author. In fact, we don't know who really authored it other than the Holy Spirit. After weighing all of the evidence because I know you're going to ask me, I don't believe that it was the Apostle Paul for a number of reasons that I won't get into. I do believe that it may have been Barnabus who was a Levite, he was therefore a Hebrew scholar, and he was also therefore capable of writing in the very highest form of the Greek language which is indicative of this particular book. Or it might have been Apollos who was also a Jew born in Alexandria. In fact, Luke described him in Acts 18 as an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures; he had been instructed in the ways of the Lord and being fervent in spirit he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus.

Now, having said that, I don't know who wrote it. Nobody does but I'm sure that's probably by design because, after all, the theme of this epistle is the absolute supremacy of Christ over all things, therefore throughout our study, I will simply refer to the Holy Spirit as the author because indeed he is the author of all Scripture. But whomever the Spirit inspired, this person had a profound grasp of the Old Testament, especially the book of Leviticus, and I'm certain that some of your pages stick together in the book of Leviticus. He also had a profound understanding of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So basically what we have here in this book is a long and powerful argument written by a Jewish scholar for other believing Jewish scholars in a Christian community somewhere outside of Israel, probably in the realm of Greece. In chapter 13, verse 22, we read that it

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is a word of exhortation. A word of exhortation that sets forth a line of reasoning that is profound, that is compelling, and it is immensely practical to every generation of both Jews and Gentiles, one that requires us to think deeply, an exercise that seldom occurs in evangelical circles today. But when we do, when we set our minds to understand these profound truths, not only will we discover the captivating and compelling relevance of what the Spirit of God has to say to each of us, but also and most importantly, we will see the total, all-sufficient, complete and absolute superiority of Christ Jesus over all things.

This morning, I wish to offer this brief survey and introduction to the letter under three categories. We're going to look, first of all, at the historical context; and then secondly, the method of argumentation that is used; and then finally, the relevance for believers today.

So let's begin with understanding the historical context in which this was written so that we can better understand history from a Jewish perspective but indeed a biblical perspective. So let's go back 2,100 years before Christ was born, about 4,000 years ago to the days of Abraham. Dating all the way back to God's covenant with Abraham, the Jewish people knew that they were the undeserved recipients of God's covenantal favor. God had promised to bless them like no other people on the earth and through them God established a mediatorial kingdom on earth where he would rule through divinely chosen representatives who would speak on his behalf and who would represent the people before him, men who would sever in three functions: prophets, priests and kings.

We can go back in the Old Testament and we read that even before Abraham, there was a man named Melchizedek and he was both a priest and a ruler. Then you go on down in time and you see that Abraham and Moses were both prophets and rulers, and many others would follow. Of course, ultimately only the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, would be able to fulfill all three functions of prophet, priest and king, and he will do this when he rules in the final phase of that mediatorial kingdom on earth.

Now, you will recall that God made an unconditional, unilateral, irreversible covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12, in Genesis 15, it was later reaffirmed in chapter 17, an everlasting covenant that contained four elements. 1. There would be a seed out of which the Messiah, Christ, would come. Also that they would be given a land that they would possess. Thirdly, that they would be a nation; that they would arise as a nation. And finally, that he would bless them and protect them and all of their posterity. In fact, in Genesis 17:6, he promised that "kings shall come out of thee."

Well, later on Moses became the first mediatorial ruler in the theocratic kingdom of history. He was authorized to stand before Israel, according to Exodus 4:16, instead of

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God. So he spoke on God's behalf. In fact, as we look at Scripture, we see that Moses was ultimately a type of Christ who would eventually fulfill perfectly God's mediatorial ruler in the messianic kingdom.

But this historical kingdom was broadened at Mount Sinai to include the people of Israel. Exodus 19:6, "you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." And there we see the divine commissioning of Israel to mediate blessing to the whole world. They would become a witness nation; they would become the custodians of divine truth. In fact, in Psalm 114:1-2, the Psalmist reflects back on that period of responsibility saying, "When Israel went forth from Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah became His sanctuary, Israel, His dominion."

Well, during that time, Moses was inspired by God to frame a civil government that would exist upon the earth, one that would illustrate the kingdom of God and the theocracy of Israel became the greatest model of government in the history of the world. Through the Mosaic code and his mediatorial ruler, Moses, God guided men religiously, socially, morally, politically, and on the basis of their faithfulness to Jehovah they were blessed. Their supremacy over all the nations of the earth was without equal, and over the course of history, other mediatorial rulers would be set in place, leader/judges of Israel from Joshua to Samuel, men chosen directly by God, invested with regal functions, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Then eventually, God established a monarchical form of government where he mediated the rule of his kingdom through various kings; some of them were godly, most of them were not. And because of chronic rebellion and sin, the Old Testament records repeated cycles of tragedy and triumph, of judgment and captivity. Like all people, God's covenant people of Israel had a sin problem and their kings were also sinners. So in order for the kingdom of God to truly bring him glory, he had to do something to remedy this problem to defeat Satan, sin and death, and this remedy, of course, was the promised Messiah, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior King.

In fact, God made another promise to one of his mediatorial rulers, King David. We read about this in 2 Samuel 7. There God made a covenant with David that was really a reaffirmation of the regal terms of the original Abrahamic covenant, but also with the addition that the ultimate provision of those covenantal rights would be permanently attached to an historic dynasty of King David. And although its ultimate fulfillment would be interrupted for a season, it would eventually be fulfilled in a future restored Israel when finally that covenant nation will be all that it was intended to be, when according to the covenant, God's name will be made great and God will provide for Israel a place or a home of their own, when Israel will be given undisturbed rest from all her

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enemies, a royal dynasty and kingdom that will be given to David forever through David's greater son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So repeatedly in the Old Testament, the prophets speak of this future earthly kingdom and of its messianic king and the Jewish people longed for their Messiah to come, and he did in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. But first, as we know, he came as a suffering Savior and we await for him to return as the messianic King to rule over his kingdom. You will recall in Acts that at Pentecost 3,000 of these dear Jewish people believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and many more were added to the church in the days to follow. In fact, in Acts 6:7, we read "a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith." Really, a remarkable statement. But dear friends, with their newfound faith, these people faced a very difficult dilemma and that is the difference between Christianity and Judaism. I mean, after all, they were still Jews. They had come to Christ but they were still Jews. They understood the Gospel but they were Jews, they worshiped in the temple. They were trying to obey the law that God had given them at Mount Sinai and most of their family and their friends were still looking for the Messiah and they refused to believe that this guy from Nazareth called Jesus was that Messiah so they rejected not only their Messiah but also all who followed him which, by the way, included many Gentiles which was absolutely incomprehensible to Jewish people. The Jews saw the Gentiles as worse than dogs, and yet these Gentiles are joining in with this new faith, this Christianity. So this made unbelieving Jews all the more hostile towards Christianity.

So suddenly these new Jewish believers began to experience mounting persecution. Their families, their friends rejected them. Imagine what that would be like. As Jewish Christians, they knew that Jesus was the full and final sacrifice for sin, he was the ultimate fulfillment of the law, they understood all of that. They understood that no longer is there a need for animal sacrifices and priests, yet for centuries the Jewish people worshiped in the temple. They performed all of the sacrifices. Their very social life was inextricably bound to the temple and their individual regional synagogues that many of them would worship in. Worse yet, by the time this letter was written, Rome was beginning to persecute the Christians. They were in the process of outlawing Christianity so even the Gentiles began to persecute Christians, especially Jewish Christians, and by the time this letter was written, which would have been between about 65 and 70 AD just before the temple was destroyed by the Romans, even the apostles had stopped meeting in the synagogues. They were now meeting together with believers in the outdoors and in large homes, large porticoes, anywhere where they could find sufficient space.

So suddenly these new Jewish believers realized that true Christianity and Judaism simply do not mix. The old covenant had truly replaced the new, and the implications of that glorious truth was profound. They began to realize that the cost of following Jesus

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was so very high, so many of those believers were tempted to do what we would all be tempted to do and that is to compromise; to try to find common ground between two mutually exclusive religions. They were tempted to return to their Judaism, to return to what was comfortable, what was familiar, rather than having to die to their family and to their friends. So this letter was written to these dear Jewish believers who were tempted to compromise, some of them had even stopped meeting together for fear of persecution. Some of them, as we will see, even wanted to abandon Christianity altogether because the cost of discipleship was just too high. And my friends, as the church is increasingly persecuted here in the United States, and I believe there is a tsunami of persecution coming our way, many of us are going to be tempted in like manner.

Furthermore, since none of these people, the recipients of this letter, were Palestinian Jews, none of them had ever seen Jesus personally, all they knew about him was secondhand information according to Hebrews 2:3-4. They didn't even have any of the New Testament writings like we have, so whatever they knew about Christ and his Gospel had come from the mouths of other people, from other people who had come to Christ, or perhaps from an apostle or a prophet. So doubt began to creep into their heart. Moreover, many of them were unclear about the second coming of the Messiah to establish his messianic kingdom on earth as promised by the Old Testament prophets. So you have baby Christians here with much that they needed to learn experiencing great persecution and no doubt many of their Jewish leaders knew error better than they knew truth.

Now, as we will see, another factor in understanding the recipients of this letter and why it was written is that like any church, including ours, this Jewish Christian community was made up of three kinds of people. 1. You had genuine believers that truly knew the Lord Jesus Christ. Secondly, you had non-believers who were intellectually convinced that Jesus is the Christ but they had never really committed themselves to him. And then, thirdly, it was made up of non-believers who were interested but they were skeptical, they were unconvinced. And we must keep these three groups distinct as we study this epistle. So repeatedly in this letter in order to encourage them, the Spirit of God consistently puts the glory of Christ on display by depicting to these Jewish people his absolute preeminence in all things, that he is the preeminent prophet, priest and king. So given this historical context, here's the bottom line: this letter was written to warn true believers not to compromise; to encourage them; and to also compel unbelievers to believe in Christ and be saved, all of which makes this so relevant to us today.

Now, secondly, it's important for us to understand the method of argumentation that we find in this epistle. Think of it this way: it was an argument from the lesser to the greater, a common method of that day. In other words, if something small is true, how much

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greater is its larger counterpart also true. We see this used all through Scripture, for example in 1 Timothy 3:5, "if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?" The lesser to the greater. Jesus used the same method, for example in Luke 12:28, "But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith!"

Now, what's fascinating is that the Holy Spirit begins with this line of reasoning right from the start, proving Christ to be the superior prophet, priest and king. So let's look at Hebrews 1:1-3 which, by the way, we will examine much more closely next week. First of all, notice how he argues that he is the preeminent prophet. He says, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways." Now let's stop there. It's interesting. There is a play on words here in the original language. Many portions and many ways, two adverbs translated by two single words in Greek and these words have kind of a sonorous, a loud resonating sound to them, and this would have been consistent with Greek orators of that day. They would have said it this way, "Polymeros kai polytropos," in many portions and in many ways.

Now, the point of this is simply that the prophets spoke in parts, they spoke in fragments, sometimes through a vision; sometimes through parables or a type of a symbol; sometimes through poetry or prophecy or narrative; sometimes they were warning, sometimes they were encouraging; sometimes they would give a doctrinal treatise, matters of ethics or morality. It was always inspired by God, always infallible and authoritative but, folks, never complete. So he goes on to say in verse 2, but "in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world."

So the prophets were the lesser, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the greater, and the point that you're going to see resonating throughout the whole epistle is this: that being the case, why would you want to go back to what is lesser and forsake that which is greater? Jesus Christ is the ultimate, final, preeminent prophet. He alone has given us the full and final and perfect revelation. Jesus Christ alone brings the full revelation of God to sinful man and then he enables sinful man to believe, to be born again, to enter into his presence.

Not only is he the preeminent prophet but, secondly, he's also the supreme, the sovereign king. Notice at the end of verse 2, "He was appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power." In other words, he is the one who reigns in absolute, in unassailable sovereignty over a kingdom

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that he himself has created. You can't get any bigger than that. You can't get any greater than that. He reigns in unfathomable majesty in heaven. He reflects the glory of God. Later on in verse 8, we read that his reign is eternal, it's not temporary. He is a king of perfect righteousness. There we read, "But of the Son He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.'"

Well, not only is he the superior prophet and king, but also the perfect, the final high priest. Notice at the end of verse 3, "When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Now, that might not mean a lot to us but that would have meant a lot to the Jewish people because they understood that there was not a single seat in the tabernacle, not a single seat in the temple, because the work of the priest was never finished. Every hour of every day, he had to make sacrifices to God for the sins of the people. We read about this in Hebrews 10, beginning in verse 11. The Spirit says, "Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He," referring to Christ, "having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." He's saying Christ is the supreme high priest. He is the one that is holy and undefiled, separated from sin and sinners. He did not enter into the holy place to offer the blood of animals, no, he offered his very blood as the perfect and final sacrifice for sins. He accomplished all that can be accomplished, all that needs to be done for our salvation. And you will recall on the cross, what did he say? "It is finished." Then back to the end of verse 3, "When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

We read earlier in Hebrews 4:14 Jesus is called our great high priest. He is the one that not only sympathizes with us and intercedes for us, but loves us so much that he actually offered himself as the final sacrifice for sin. In Hebrews 3:1, "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession." This is the theme, "Dear Jewish brethren, consider Jesus. Don't fall back." Chapter 8, verse 1, now the main point in what has been said is this, "we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man." And there again you see the contrast between the lesser and the greater. The point is simply this: why would you go back to the lesser? Jesus is the preeminent prophet, the supreme and sovereign king, he is the ultimate priest.

And as he goes on throughout the epistle, you will see how the Spirit describes Christ as being superior to the angels, superior to Moses, Joshua, to Aaron and his priesthood, to the old covenant, to the endless sacrifices, even his people are superior to all who reject

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him. And in so doing, he offers hope in a superior covenant, superior promises and superior country that is heavenly, a superior life that is eternal, and what you will discover is that Christ's testimony, his majesty, his power is all superior to everyone and everything that exists because indeed he has created all things. So why would you settle for the lesser when you can have the greater?

So the great design of this epistle is to exalt the majesty and excellency of Christ above all else in existence and thereby expose the sheer folly of settling for that which is inferior and incomplete, that which can condemn men to eternal damnation, and throughout this book you will hear a reoccurring theme warning them not to go back to the old ways; not to turn away from what God has done. And unfortunately, this was Israel's history, wasn't it? You will recall in your Old Testament history that, as I mentioned earlier, God raised up his mediator, Moses. He delivered his people from the bondage and the idolatry of Egypt. His Shekinah glory led them and protected them in the wilderness. He parted the Red Sea and destroyed the Egyptian charioteers that were following them. He gave them his law. He promised them a land flowing in milk and honey. But what did they do? They began to grumble and to complain. They wanted to return to Egypt. Can you imagine that? They preferred to be like the idolatrous pagans that had oppressed them rather than trusting God and what happened? Well, God prevented the disobedient from entering the Promised Land and many of them died in the wilderness because they gave up. They compromised. They refused to trust God.

And throughout Hebrews, the Holy Spirit will remind the reader of what happens when a person gives up, when they refuse to persevere, in contrast to the faithful who, for example, are described in Hebrews 11, we often call that the Hall of Faith. Remember? And after Hebrews 11, beginning in chapter 12, verse 1, "Therefore," he says, "since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." Consider Jesus, he's saying. Don't do what your ancestors did and what many of your kinsmen are doing today. Don't exchange that which is far better for that which is far worse, namely a mixture of the old and new covenants, a compromised Christianity that would be nothing more than kind of a phony religion of rituals and ceremonies, legalism. By the way, it's not to say that the old covenant was bad or wrong. No, it was God-given and it was perfect in every way, but it was incomplete. It was preliminary. It was the shadow of things to come. It could never ultimately atone for sin. It could never impute righteousness. So what he's saying to them, "Yes, we've been given God's grace through

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Christ. You no longer need the temple. You no longer need priests. You no longer need these endless sacrifices. All of those things were symbols, they were rituals and ceremonies but they were mere shadows of a new and a better covenant with a new and a better priesthood, sanctuary, sacrifices, and so on."

So maybe now you'll understand why the letter was written, to whom it was written, and finally as I close this morning, we have to look at the relevance for believers today. First consider again the three groups that are being addressed in the letter. You've got genuine believers and you've got two kinds of non-believers: one kind is characterized by a mind that is intellectually convinced that Jesus is the Christ but they never really committed themselves to his Lordship, they've never really embraced his saving grace; and then finally you've got non-believers who, eh, they just don't buy it, they're still unconvinced. Well, my friends, all three of those groups exist here in this church. They exist here in this room.

Think of the relevance, first of all, for genuine believers. Some of you may be struggling with your faith. It's hard at times to live it out, isn't it? You begin to experience that persecution in the workplace, maybe with your families, and you're tempted to compromise, kind of let certain things go, and what this letter says to you is, "Dear believer, don't exchange what is far better for that which is far worse." Now, I'm not saying here, don't go back to Judaism. That's not at all the point, but rather don't go back to enslave yourself once again to your pre-Christian lifestyle and the slavery of sin, your love for the world. Don't go back to that time when foolishly you believed that life was easier. You remember, when everybody seemed to like you and you just got along with everybody. You didn't have to take a stand for anything. That time when tolerance was considered a virtue and you believed that all religions have something to offer and that there is no one true religion. I mean, who wants to hear that? That time when you didn't get maligned and mocked for your faith; when you just lived for yourself. You didn't live for Christ and you just indulged the desires of your flesh like everyone else, and you felt like you belonged here in this world rather than feeling like an alien.

Well, some of you are there right now. Your commitment to Christ and his church is waning. Examine your heart. Your love for Christ is not what it once was. Your flame of passion for obedience and sacrificial love is all but extinguished. You really have no appetite for the word of God. You have no real song in your heart. You just kind of mouth the words. It's not really a doxology that is just bursting from your soul. The great realities of the Gospel no longer thrill your soul. You have no burden for the lost therefore you have no zeal for evangelism, no longing for heaven. You're lukewarm and you're getting colder by the day. You're disillusioned, discouraged, distracted and, frankly, you've become more comfortable with your unsaved family members and friends than

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you are with those who truly love Christ. You feel kind of awkward around them. The Christian life is just too hard and you're just kind of tired of it all.

My friends, you're in the wilderness of the world and you want to go back to Egypt. Don't do it, and he's going to give you so many reasons why. God's ways for some of you are no longer superior, Christ is no longer supreme, you prefer comfort to suffering, you prefer compromise to contending earnestly for the faith, so little by little you're drifting back to the world and the corrupt, vulgar, degrading morals of the godless society in which we live just don't really bother you that much anymore. Beloved, wake up before your loving heavenly Father chastens you. Don't be like God's chosen people who became deluded, divided, demoralized and had to suffer so greatly for their rebellion. You see, the letter for Hebrews is for you today. You need to be reminded of the superiority of Christ, for the glory of the cross, so that you won't compromise.

Now, secondly, it's written for those of you that are non-believers. Oh, you intellectually understand the Gospel, you're convinced that Jesus is the Christ, but you've not committed yourself to him. You hang around the periphery of the church. You profess Christ with your lips but your heart is far from him. You know who you are. You don't really love Christ. You have no fear of God in your heart. You're not in awe of him. He is not your Lord, your Master. In fact, John describes you in John 12:43, you love the approval of men rather than the approval of God. Oh yes, you're intellectually convinced of the Gospel and you've even convinced yourself that that's enough, that's all I need, but you've never truly committed your life to Christ. Perhaps you've made a profession of faith in the past but there is no evidence in your life that you truly love him, that you serve him. You just want to go back to Egypt and if I can do that, I can be happy. Well, folks, if you do that, you'll never enter into the Promised Land, the glory of heaven.

Let me read you what the letter of Hebrews says regarding your situation in chapter 2, verse 1, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" Likewise in chapter 6, verse 4, "For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame." My friends, I plead with you to truly examine your heart. You understand the saving truths of the Gospel yet you refuse to truly trust him, to live for his glory.

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Hebrews 10:26-27 and verse 29 addresses this as well. There the Spirit says, "For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?"

Well then, finally, it's also relevant to you non-believers, those of you who are still unconvinced. You understand it but you just don't buy it. I don't know what else I can say other than this: you need to know who Jesus really is because obviously you don't. I can assure you, if you had one glimpse of him, you would understand and yet it would still be the work of the Spirit to breathe life into your soul. You see, Christ is superior to everyone and to everything. He is your only hope of salvation and eternal life and this letter is written by the Holy Spirit to show you this.

I want to leave you with his words, again, found in Hebrews 9, beginning in verse 14, "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." Then in verse 27 he goes on to say, "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him." Oh dear friend, as we are going to read all through this letter, consider Jesus.

Well, I hope this brief survey and introduction has been helpful and as we embark upon this expositional journey, it's of utmost importance that you understand the theme of this epistle and that is the absolute superiority of Christ, and that you also understand the method of argumentation from the lesser to the greater. This will help it all come alive to you and make it all very clear, but more importantly it is of utmost importance that we apprehend the glory of God in the face of Christ; that through this study we will once again find ourselves lost in the awe and adoration of the one who gave himself for us, and I pray to that end.

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# Survey and Introduction

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Hebrews  
**Preached on:** Monday, September 19, 2016

Let's pray together.

*Father, soften our hearts, penetrate them with the reality of the Gospel. And for those who have not truly committed themselves to you, for those who perhaps still just don't believe, Lord, all we can do is cry out for your mercy for the regenerating grace of your Spirit to impart spiritual life to the spiritually dead. And I pray today, Lord, that you will overwhelm them with the truths of their sin, the consequences of it, and the glories of the cross. And for those of us who know and love you, O Lord, help us not to compromise, not to want to go back to Egypt but to persevere by the power of your Spirit, that one day we may enter into that Promised Land and enjoy the splendors of heaven in your presence forevermore. I ask in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.*

We pray you've been edified by this presentation. You've been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at [otcr.org](http://otcr.org).

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