

Some initial considerations:

The Theological Background: Matthew 13:3-9; 13:18-23

Author: Unknown. Some considerations.

Recipients.

Type of Writing. A letter? A sermon?

Greek style.

Profound Theology.

An Exhortation to Faithfulness

The following is an excellent outline of Hebrews. We will be using this throughout the class.

Theme: THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

*I. Christ superior to the prophets:* his absolute uniqueness as Divine Son, Incarnate Redeemer, and Exalted Lord (1:1–3).

*II. Christ superior to the angels (1:4–2:18)*

Proved from the Old Testament: 1:4–13.

First warning: the peril of neglecting such a great salvation: 2:1–4.

Christ the true Man exalted above the angels: 2:5–9.

The purpose and consequence of the Incarnation: 2:10–18.

*III. Christ superior to Moses (3:1–4:13).*

Moses and Christ compared: 3:1–6a.

Second warning: the peril of copying the example of the Israelites in the wilderness: 3:6b–4:2.

Necessity of faith and obedience for entry into God's rest: 4:3–11.

The sharp and penetrating discernment of God's word: 4:12–13.

*IV. Christ superior to Aaron (4:14–10:18).*

Our compassionate High Priest: 4:14–16 (resuming the subject already introduced in 2:17–3:1).

High priesthood: general qualifications: 5:1–4.

Christ's qualifications: 5:5–10.

Third warning: the peril of stagnation and apostasy: 5:11–6:8.

Encouragement to persevere: 6:9–20.

The order of Melchizedek: 6:20b–7:28 (already mentioned in 5:6, 10; cf. 2:17; 4:14f.).

Significance of Melchizedek: 7:1–10.

Imperfection of the levitical priesthood contrasted with the perfection of Christ's priesthood:  
7:11–28.

The shadows of the old covenant superseded by the realities of the new covenant: 8:1–9:10.

The redemption procured by Christ's sacrifice all-sufficient and eternal: 9:11–10:18.

V. *Christ superior as the new and living way* (10:19–12:29).

Encouragement to enter boldly into the true sanctuary: 10:19–25 (cf. 4:14–16).

Fourth warning: the peril of despising the gospel: 10:26–31.

Encouragement to endure: 10:32–39.

The triumph of faith and perseverance illustrated by the example of the believers of the former age: 11:1–39.

The supreme example of Christ: 12:1–4.

The significance and value of discipline: 12:5–11.

Encouragement to resume the struggle: 12:12–14.

Fifth warning: the peril of following the example of Esau: 12:15–17.

Mount Sinai and Mount Zion compared: 12:18–24.

Sixth warning: the peril of refusing him who speaks from heaven: 12:25–29.

VI. *Concluding exhortations, requests, and greetings* (13:1–25).<sup>1</sup>

The purpose for Hebrews:

The author intends to present a series of arguments for the superiority of Jesus over all rival claims to allegiance which his readers were feeling and hearing. Their attention was easily diverted off in other directions, just as our attention is easily distracted today. They, like us, were being tempted, frightened or pressured into following other voices and serving other masters. In chapters 1–7, he examines these rival authorities and reveals their inadequacies. None was, in itself, a false or fraudulent voice. Each was ordained by God and proper in its intended place. Each had served the people of God well in the past, and no teaching or expectation was wrong at the time it was given. But now the final word, the ultimate revelation from God toward which all the other voices had pointed, had come. To this supreme voice the author directs his readers' attention, and ours, by contrasting this final word with the past utterances.

Ray C. Stedman, Hebrews, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Westmont, IL: IVP Academic, 1992), Heb 1:1–3.

---

<sup>1</sup> Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, [\*A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews\*](#), The New International Commentary on the Old and New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), 3–4.