Hebrews

The Riddle of Hebrews

- [ ] What is Hebrews?
- [ ] Who wrote Hebrews?
- [ ] Who are the Hebrews?!
- [ ] When was it written?

“Hebrews is in many respects the riddle of the NT. Nothing is known of its origin.... It stands … ‘without father, without mother, without genealogy’ … like … Melchizedek …”

E. F. Scott

What IS Hebrews?

- [ ] A letter?
- [ ] Does not have the form of a Greco-Roman letter, e.g.:
  - Address: [name of writer] to the Hebrews
  - Greeting: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (borrowed from Eph 1:2),
  - Thanksgiving/prayer: In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...(from Col 1:2)

“Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.”

(Hebrews 1:1–2)

- [ ] A Sermon?

- “I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.”(Heb 13:22)

- Cf: “After the reading of the law and the prophets, the officials of the synagogue sent them [Paul, Barnabas etc] a message, saying, “Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, give it.””(Acts 13:15)

“a sermon sent from one place to another”

- ☐ Only ch.13 contains any indication this is a letter:

- “Now may the God of peace [cf. Rom 15:33; 16:20; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9; 1 Thess 5:23;], who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been set free; and if he comes in time, he will be with me when I see you. Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send you greetings. Grace be with all of you.”(Heb 13:20–25)

Profile of the Author

- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Highly educated; steeped in Greek thought
- ☐ Brilliant expositor of the (Greek) Scriptures
- ☐ Male (see on Priscilla as author)
- ☐ Within Pauline circle ("our brother Timothy"--Heb 13:23)
- ☐ Not an eyewitness of the Lord ("It was declared at first through the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him..." Heb 2:3)
- ☐ Known to the community ("Pray for us; we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honourably in all things. I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you very soon." Heb 13:18-19)

The anonymity remains all the more surprising since without doubt "the author of Hebrews ranks with Paul and the Fourth Gospel as one of the three great theologians of the NT"

Anthony C. Thiselton quoting Barnabas Lindars

The Author:
Some Suggestions (of many)

- [ ] Paul
- [ ] Barnabas
- [ ] Priscilla
- [ ] Apollos

Paul

- [ ] Earliest MSS do not attribute it to Paul (or anyone!)
- [ ] Patristic opinion of Pauline authorship "very divided" (Blomberg 411)--but they never debated the named Pauline letters
- [ ] All of Paul's letters bear his name (cf. 2 Thess 3:17)
- [ ] Not written in his style, either writing or argument (Lane: "The language of Hebrews constitutes the finest Greek in the NT, far superior to the Pauline standard both in vocabulary and sentence-building.")
- [ ] Themes/thoughts not found in Paul
- [ ] Heb 2:3 shows the author was taught by "those who heard the Lord"

Barnabas

- [ ] Barnabas was a Levite (hence interest in priestly things and exhortation?)
- [ ] Nickname 'son of encouragement' (Acts 4:36)
- [ ] Companion of Paul

Priscilla

- [ ] Priscilla (and Aquila) corrected ("explained more accurately") Apollos (Acts 18:26)
- [ ] Nice explanation for anonymity
- [ ] But the author appears to be male:

- “And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell [διηγούμενον not διηγούμενην] of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah...” (11:32)

Apollos

- A Jew from Alexandria (Acts 18:24): hence Hellenistic-Jewish thought-world, exclusive use of Greek Bible, Greek concepts
- "Eloquent" = rhetorical training
- Well-versed in the Scriptures

“Who it was who wrote the epistle, [only] God knows the truth”

Origen

(quoted by Eusebius in Hist. Eccl. 6.25.14)

Whence Epistle? Why Paul? Why Canon?

- [ ] Clement of Rome (writing c.95AD) knows Hebrews but does not say it is by Paul
- [ ] Tertullian and Hippolytus thought not Paul (both c.200)
- [ ] Clement of Alexandria (c.200AD) thought language and style not Paul's, but content was (Origen writing around the same time had a similar opinion, but concluded "God knows")
- [ ] Earliest MS (Chester Beatty Papyrus P46, c.200AD): 'To the Hebrews' and placed between 'To the Romans' and 'To the Corinthians)
- [ ] Jerome (c.390) and Augustine (c.400) argued for Paul

“Pauline authorship was simply a common conviction in the Middle Ages passed on by the KJV translators from various later manuscripts that had added the reference at the end of the letter. Indeed, the various early Church Fathers who did ascribe the letter to Paul did so largely to support their convictions of its apostolic authority, not because they had actual evidence that Paul wrote it. ”

Craig L. Blomberg

“Yet such was the widespread recognition of the spiritual authenticity, intellectual power, and pastoral value of the epistle that we may think of its canonicity as pointing to Hebrews as “the Letter which would not be denied.... Hebrews finally obtained a place in the NT because it could not be kept out” .”

Anthony C. Thiselton, quoting W. Barclay

Who are the Hebrews? (audience)

- [ ] 'Hebrews': from P46 manuscript. The title reflects:
  - heavy interest in Jewish things
  - it's placement between similarly titled Romans and 1 Corinthians
- [ ] House church in Rome:
  - Heb 13:24: "Those from Italy send you greetings."
  - Clement of Rome writing from Rome in c.95AD knows Hebrews
  - Fits historical picture from Claudius to Nero

- [ ] Backsliding: tempted to return to Judaism because:
  - spiritual (in)sufficiency: is Jesus really enough?
  - protection from persecution (religio licta)
- [ ] Weary Christians in need of encouragement and prompting to keep moving forward

When Was It Written?

- ☐ Certainly in the 1st century:
  - Clement of Rome, writing c.95AD, knows Hebrews (see e.g. 1 Clem 36:1-5)
  - Author of Hebrews knows Timothy (Heb 13:23)
- ☐ References to temple (destroyed 70AD) are ambiguous (e.g. Heb 8:13)
  - present tense references to the cult also found in much later rabbinic texts
- ☐ After 49AD edict of Claudius (Heb 10:32-34: e.g. "plundering of your possessions")
- ☐ But before Neronian persecution beginning in 64AD (Heb 12:4: "In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.")

Literary Observations

- Alternating blocks of teaching and exhortation
- ‘Hook words’ or ‘catchwords’—connecting sections (L. Vaganay)
- Introduces topics inversely (F. Thien)

3 Inverted Topic Introductions

- Heb 2:17: “so that he might be a [1] merciful and [2] faithful high priest in the service of God”
  - [2] faithful: “Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, was faithful to the one who appointed him” (Heb 3:2)
  - [1] merciful: Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. 4:14–16)

- [ ] 5:9–10 Jesus is [1] “the source of an eternal salvation” and [2] “a priest like Melchizedek.”
  - [ ] [2] 7:1–28 Mechizedek
  - [ ] [1] 8:1–10:18 Jesus as source of eternal salvation
- [ ] 10:36–39 [1] Endurance and [2] faith
  - [ ] 11:4 [2] Faith
  - [ ] 12:1 [1] Endurance

“There is at the present time no consensus regarding the literary structure of Hebrews.”

William L. Lane, writing in 1991

Structure

(adapted from Craig Blomberg, From Pentecost to Patmos, p.414.

I. Prologue (1:1-4)

II. The Central Thesis: Christ is Supreme (chs. 1-12)

A. Over Angels (chs. 1-2)

a. First warning

B. Over Moses (chs. 3-4)

b. Second warning

C. Over Other Priests (chs. 4-7)

c. Third warning

D. Over the Old Covenant (chs. 8-10)

d. Fourth warning

E. Over Previous “Heroes of the Faith” (chs. 11-12)

e. Fifth warning

III. Concluding Exhortations (ch. 13)

IV. Letter Closing (ch. 13)

Prologue

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

(Heb. 1:1–4)

Function of the Prologue

- ☐ Introduces the topic: the supremacy of Christ
- ☐ Introduces key concepts, themes, keywords

- [ ] Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son… (1:1–2)

    - Immediately demonstrates Christ’s supremacy and finality in revelation

    - This revelation occurred in “these last days”

- …whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. (1:2–3)

  - Emphasises Christ’s role in creation, like John’s prologue
  - ‘heir’ royal imagery from Ps 2
  - He is identified exactly with God
  - Everything continues to depend upon His creative power

For she is a **reflection** of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness.

(Wis. 7:26)

- [ ] When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. (1:3–4)

    - Use of priestly language here to describe the atonement
    - Exaltation—the beginning was creation, the middle purification, the end sitting down
    - Mix of royalty and priestly language/imagery
    - Keywords and hook words: ‘superior’ and ‘angels’

The Supremacy of Christ: First, Angels (chs. 1-2)

1:5-14 Scriptures to Prove Jesus' Superiority to Angels

- There follows a battery of scriptures about Jesus as
  - Son
  - Lord
  - God
  - Creator

- For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you”? (1:5)
- But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever (1:8)
- And, “In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands…” (1:10)

Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

(Heb. 1:14)

Therefore…

Therefore we must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the message declared through angels was valid, and every transgression or disobedience received a just penalty, how can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was declared at first through the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God added his testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will.

(Heb. 2:1–4)

- ☐ God spoke through the angels i.e. gave the Law
- ☐ God spoke through His Son (1:1) the Gospel
- ☐ Both are revelations of God for salvation
- ☐ But if Jesus as the Son is superior to the angels
- ☐ Then Jesus' message 'speech' is likewise superior
- ☐ And if the message of the angels included punishments for neglecting/disobeying the salvation
- ☐ How much more so the punishment for neglecting the message of the Son?

A Threefold Testimony

1. It was declared at first through the Lord
2. and it was attested to us by those who heard him
3. while God added his testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will.

Jesus is Above and Below Angels: His Human Nature

Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. But someone has testified somewhere,

“What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals,
that you care for them?
You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you
have crowned them with glory and honour,
subjecting all things under their feet.”

(Heb. 2:5–8)

- Still on theme of angels, the author moves down ‘the scale’ to humans
- God [+Jesus]—>angels—>humans
- The world is for the humans, not the angels

but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

(Heb. 2:9)

Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,
he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- [ ] Jesus (first use of His name) is:

A. higher than the angels as the Son

B. but becomes lower than the angels as human

B. tastes death for everyone (substitution)

A. crowned with glory and honour

The Champion of Salvation who Creates a New Family

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,
saying,

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

(Heb. 2:10–12)

Through Death He Destroys the Devil

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

(Heb. 2:14–18)

- [ ] Jesus becomes human to share in our sufferings and experience temptation

- [ ] and ultimately through His death to destroy the devil

- Concluding his comparison with the angels, he writes:
  - v.16: “For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham.”
- Then the next topic is introduced:
  - v.17: Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

Second Comparison: the Priesthood (chs.3-10)

The Priesthood (priests, covenant and cult)

- [ ] Priests
  - [ ] Moses
  - [ ] Melchizedek
  - [ ] Levi
- [ ] Covenant
  - [ ] Old and New
- [ ] Cult
  - [ ] Tent
  - [ ] Sacrifice

Jesus is Superior to Moses

Therefore, brothers and sisters, holy partners in a heavenly calling, consider that Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses also “was faithful in all God’s house.” Yet Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honour than the house itself. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) Now Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken later. Christ, however, was faithful over God’s house as a son, and we are his house if we hold firm the confidence and the pride that belong to hope.

(Heb. 3:1–6)

- [ ] “Apostle and High Priest” unique language here
- [ ] Like the angels, Moses is a servant
- [ ] Therefore Jesus, as the Son, is superior
- [ ] Note the condition: “we are his house if we hold firm the confidence and the pride that belong to hope”

Warning about Unbelief

- [ ] The Israelites whom Moses led did not believe

- Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, as on the day of testing in the wilderness (3:7–8)

- Therefore I was angry with that generation, and I said, ‘They always go astray in their hearts, and they have not known my ways.’ As in my anger I swore, ‘They will not enter my rest. (3:10–11)

Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you may have an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partners of Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end.

(Heb. 3:12–14)

More Urgent Exhortation

And again in this place it says, “They shall not enter my rest.” Since therefore it remains open for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again he sets a certain day—“today”—saying through David much later, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not speak later about another day. So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; for those who enter God’s rest also cease from their labours as God did from his. Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through such disobedience as theirs.

(Heb. 4:5–11)

The Assurance of Jesus' Priestly Ministry

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. **Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness**, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

(Heb. 4:14–16)

We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

(Heb. 6:19–20)

Melchizedek

This “King Melchizedek of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him”; and to him Abraham apportioned “one-tenth of everything.” His name, in the first place, means “king of righteousness”; next he is also king of Salem, that is, “king of peace.” Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

(Heb. 7:1–3)

A High Priest of the Order of Melchizedek

- [ ] Jesus is our High Priest because of His sacrifice
- [ ] But he offers the sacrifice not TO a priest but AS a priest
- [ ] How then is He a priest, being of Judah not Levi?
- [ ] Jesus was appointed (not born) a priest into a higher order, that of Melchizedek

The Supremacy of Melchizedek's Priesthood over Israel's

See how great he is! Even Abraham the patriarch gave him a tenth of the spoils. And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to collect tithes from the people, that is, from their kindred, though these also are descended from Abraham. But this man, who does not belong to their ancestry, collected tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had received the promises. It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. In the one case, tithes are received by those who are mortal; in the other, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

(Heb. 7:4–10)

Implied Fulfilment

Now if perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood—for the people received the law under this priesthood—what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron?

(Heb. 7:11)

By Right or by Power?

It is even more obvious when another priest arises, resembling Melchizedek, one who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent, but through the power of an indestructible life.
For it is attested of him, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”

(Heb. 7:15–17)

Confirmed with an Oath

This was confirmed with an oath; for others who became priests took their office without an oath,
but this one became a priest with an oath, because of the one who said to him, “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever’”—accordingly Jesus has also become the guarantee of a better covenant.

(Heb. 7:20–22)

The Foreverness of the Order

Furthermore, the former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

(Heb. 7:23–25)

The Finality and Completeness of this Priesthood

For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself. For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

(Heb. 7:26–28)

Better Covenant, Better Ministry (Tent/Tabernacle)

- “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”(Heb. 8:5)
- For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need to look for a second one. (8:7)

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary….Such preparations having been made, the priests go continually into the first tent to carry out their ritual duties; but only the high priest goes into the second, and he but once a year, and not without taking the blood that he offers for himself and for the sins committed unintentionally by the people. By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary has not yet been disclosed as long as the first tent is still standing. This is a symbol of the present time, during which gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various baptisms, regulations for the body imposed until the time comes to set things right.
(Heb. 9:1, 6–10)

But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

(Heb. 9:11–14)

Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

(Heb. 10:1–4)

And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, “he sat down at the right hand of God,” and since then has been waiting “until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.” For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

(Heb. 10:11–14)

Finally! A ‘Therefore’!

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

(Heb. 10:19–25)

But a Warning Also

For if we willfully persist in sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy “on the testimony of two or three witnesses.” How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by those who have spurned the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know the one who said, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

(Heb. 10:26–31)

Chs.11-12 More Encouragements and Exhortations

- Ch11 The Cloud of Witnesses
- 12:1–2: Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

In Summary

- Hebrews is a sermon sent to Christians who are tired, failing, looking back to the comforts of Judaism
- It is a towering piece of theology, exposition and preaching
- The author emphasises how Jesus is in every way possible superior to Judaism
- This is not in replacement but fulfilment: the insufficiency of the Law (covenant, priests, cult) all pointed towards the necessity of ‘something greater’ (Matt 12:6)

- [ ] Jesus is the ultimate High Priest, of the better covenant and promises, of the eternal order of Melchizedek
- [ ] He enters the true, heavenly sanctuary with His own blood
- [ ] He pays for our sins, not His, and this only once, not continually
- [ ] Because of this, we have full assurance to approach God
- [ ] But we are also warned not to give up, not to disbelieve, for there is nothing that can save those who turn away from ‘so great a salvation’