

Hebrews

Outline of the Message

- 1.4 - 1.14** **Jesus is God's own son, greater than any angel.** Angels are his servants and messengers; they worship him. Unlike angels, the son is eternal, creator and ruler supreme.
- 2.1 - 2.4** We must hear and obey God's word delivered by his son. Disobedience to God's law delivered by angels brought punishment. Disobedience to God's word delivered through his son will be dealt with even more severely.
- 2.5 - 2.16** **Jesus also became fully human, flesh and blood like us.** Through his human death, he broke the devil's power, released us from the fear of death, and led us into salvation, glory and sonship.
- 2.16** He can help us when we suffer and are tempted, since as a human he himself experienced these things.
- 3.1 - 3.6** **Jesus is greater than Moses.** Both were faithful prophets and priests in God's household, but Jesus is the builder and owner of the house, not just its servant. We are also part of God's household if we hold on to our faith and hope in Jesus.
- 3.7 - 3.19** We must not harden our hearts to this word from God. The lesson of those who followed Moses is that persisting in unbelief, allowing your heart to stray and flirting with sin can lead to being excluded from God's promised rest.
- 4.1 - 4.14** **Jesus is greater than Joshua.** God promised his people a place of 'rest' which, generations after Joshua settled Canaan, God declared they had not entered. He meant his permanent 'rest'—where he has resided since creation—which can only be reached through his great high priest, Jesus.
- 4.11 - 4.13** We must diligently obey God to enter that rest. There is nowhere to hide from God's message through Jesus. Our thoughts, desires and very essence are exposed to him.
- 4.14 - 4.16** **Jesus is our great high priest before God.** As the divine and human son of God himself, he is our sympathetic yet supremely effective advocate. He is uniquely qualified in several ways:
- 5.1 - 5.10** (1) **He is representative of mankind.** He was human like other priests, subject to suffering, hardship and temptation. Unlike other priests, however, he was fully submissive and obedient to God and did not need to make offerings for his own sin.
- (2) **He is divinely appointed.** God Himself appointed Jesus as our high priest, as described by Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah being God's son and a priest like Melchizedek.

- 5.11 - 6.12** Surely there's no need to revisit the basics! We must be diligent, responsive and faithful, and not renounce the son of God. It is impossible to repent again after knowingly and deliberately rejecting him. In your case, however, there is every reason to expect better things—that you will inherit what was promised.
- 6.13 - 6.20** **(3) He was promised by God on oath.** Like Abraham's promised descendants, Jesus was promised by God with God's own oath. This gives us hope and encouragement whereby we can enter God's presence following Jesus.
- 7:1 - 7:10** **Jesus is greater than the Levitical priests.** He is the eternal priest and king that God promised, like Melchizedek rather than Levi. Even Abraham (and Levi through Abraham) gave offerings to Melchizedek, indicating his superiority to both Abraham and Levi.
- 7:11 - 7:28** **Jesus replaces the old priesthood.** The Levitical priesthood could not bring perfection. It relied on weak and mortal priests of a certain human ancestry to offer sacrifices repeatedly. Jesus is sinless and immortal, appointed by God himself as high priest forever. His death was the one-time sacrifice for all sin. The old system is set aside. A better hope and covenant for drawing near to God is here.
- 8:1 - 8:13** **Jesus is the heavenly high priest of the promised 'new covenant'.** This new covenant is superior to and based on better promises than the old, which is obsolete and passing away. The new covenant involves personal knowledge of God, provides effective forgiveness of sin, and is available to all.
- 9:1 - 9:28** **Jesus serves in the heavenly 'tabernacle', of which the earthly version is only a copy.** In the earthly tabernacle, only the high priest had access to God, via the blood of animals offered once every year for ceremonial cleansing. Now we all can worship before God via the blood that Christ offered once for all, which removes sin and the power of sin and cleanses the conscience.
- 10:1 - 10:18** **Jesus has provided the full and final sacrifice for sin.** The law, a shadow of better things to come, could never take away sin or a guilty conscience. Jesus' sacrifice has done both. He makes us holy and perfect, and eliminates the need for other sacrifices. He now sits at God's right hand until all God's enemies are defeated.
- 10:19 - 10:21** **Summary:**
- **We have a great high priest in heaven.**
 - **We have access to God through Jesus' own sacrifice.**
 - **We have confidence to enter God's most holy place through Jesus's blood.**

- 10:22 - 10:31 **Therefore:**
- **Draw near to God with faith and sincerity.**
 - **Hold fast to your confession of faith.**
 - **Spur one another toward love and good deeds.**
 - **Keep meeting together.**
 - **Encourage each other.**
 - **Avoid deliberate sin.** (Deliberate rejection of the Son of God will bring a fearful judgement.)

- 10:32 - 10:39
- **Remember how you were faithful in the face of previous persecution.**
 - **Stay confident. Persevere.**

The righteous person lives by persevering faith, which will be richly rewarded. Jesus will come. He will not delay. You will receive what he has promised.

- 11:1 – 11:40 **Faith is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen, and the evidence of things we cannot yet see.** It is impossible to please God without such faith. Anyone who wants to come to God must believe that he exists and rewards those who seek him diligently.

God approved the ancients on the basis of such faith, which looked to promises of God that had not yet been fulfilled. Some did great things and saw great miracles by faith. Others had faith but were mistreated, oppressed, tortured, and even killed. None received all that God had promised, or his heavenly city, in his or her lifetime.

- 12:1 – 12:4 **Therefore, let us:**
- **Throw off anything that holds us back, especially sin.**
 - **Run the race set before us with perseverance.**
 - **Fix our eyes on Jesus.** He is the source and goal of our faith. Because there was such joy to come, he himself endured opposition and death at the hands of sinful people.

- 12:5 – 12:11 **Hardship is a form of discipline by God.** He disciplines us as his children for our good, so that we can share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but it produces righteousness and peace.

- **Endure hardship as discipline.**
- **Strengthen feeble arms and weak knees.**
- **Make level paths for your feet,** so that lameness may not degenerate but be healed.

- 12:12-17
- **Strive to live at peace with everyone and be holy.**
 - **Don't miss the grace of God or let a 'bitter root' spring up.**
 - **Avoid sexual immorality.**
 - **Don't trade your inheritance for temporary gratification.**

12:18 – 12:24 **You have come not to Mt. Sinai but to Mt. Zion.** You have not come to terror and separation from God. You have come to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, where angels feast, the faithful ancients are now perfected, and the firstborn of God's children are gathered. You have come to God the judge, but through Jesus who mediates on your behalf on the basis of the new covenant and his own sacrifice.

12:25 – 12:29

- **Don't refuse him who speaks.**
- **Be thankful.**
- **Worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.**

13:1 – 13:24

- **Keep loving each other as brothers.**
- **Entertain strangers.**
- **Remember those who are in prison and mistreated.**

- **Honour marriage. Avoid adultery and sexual impurity.**
- **Avoid greed. Be content with what you have.**

- **Imitate your leaders that taught and modelled the word of God. Jesus never changes.**
- **Avoid strange teachings, like those about food.**
- **Bear Jesus' disgrace. We are looking for a future city.**

- **Offer a continuous 'sacrifice' of praise.**
- **Remember to do acts of kindness and generosity.**
- **Obey your leaders. Submit to their authority.**
- **Pray for us.**

13:20 – 13:25 **Blessing.** May the God of peace, who brought our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, back from the dead through the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good for doing his will. May he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.