

- From Calvin, "Now, the beginning is respecting the dignity of Christ; for it seemed strange to the Jews that the Gospel should be preferred to the Law. And first indeed he settles that point which was in dispute, that the doctrine brought by Christ had the preeminence, for it was the fulfillment of all the prophecies.... He shows that Christ was far superior to all others."
- Calvin, first four chapters position the supremacy of Christ to reader.
- Likely the letter written to Jewish Christians, or Greeks who had converted to Judaism before become Christians. Reason here is that there are many references to Old Testament and to the Law.
- Likely dated around 70AD pre-destruction of the Jewish Temple
- ESV study Bible say theme is Christ is greater than any angel, priest, or old covenant institution; thus each reader, rather than leaving such a great salvation, is summoned to hold on by faith to the true rest found in Christ and to encourage others in the church to persevere.
- ESV study Bible. "Thus the book encourages the church to hold fast to its faith, because that faith is grounded in the most superior revelation."
- ESV SB In addition to the rhetoric of argument and debate, readers will find in the book of Hebrews a persuasive rhetoric of exhortation in which the writer appeals to his readers not to abandon their faith.
- From Calvin about Hebrews 1:3 "for it was not his object to show what likeness the Father bears to the Son; but,... his purpose was really to build up our faith, so that we may learn that God is made known to us in no other way than in Christ."

Key Themes

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| 1. Jesus is fully God and fully man. | 1:1–14; 2:5–18 |
| 2. Jesus as Son of God reveals God the Father, is the agent of creation, and sustains all creation. | 1:1–14 |
| 3. Jesus serves as the eternal high priest, who as a man sympathizes with human weaknesses, and yet who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin. | 1:3; 2:10–18; 4:15–16; 9:11–10:19 |
| 4. Jesus is superior to angels, to Moses and the Mosaic covenant, and to the earthly tabernacle and its priesthood. | 1:4–2:18; 3:1–6; 5:1–10; 7:1–10:18; 8:1–13 |
| 5. All humanity faces eternal judgment for sin. | 4:12–13; 9:27–28; 10:26–31 |
| 6. Faith is necessary to please God and to participate in his eternal salvation promises. Faith requires conviction about the unseen realities of God and his promises. Such faith produces perseverance. | 4:2–3; 6:1, 12; 10:22, 38–39; 11:1–40 |
| 7. Perseverance is necessary in the Christian life, and thus church participants are warned against a lack of endurance. | 2:1–4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:12; 10:19–39; 12:1–29 |
| 8. God's promises are trustworthy, including his promise of eternal salvation. | 6:13–20 |
| 9. With the advent of Jesus Christ, the last days have begun, though they await consummation at his return. | 1:2; 2:5; 4:9–11; 9:9–28; 12:22–29 |

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"It is the superiority of our Lord Jesus, then, that remains the theme of this eloquently written letter."
-<http://www.gotquestions.org/Book-of-Hebrews.html>