

USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out

When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews overview

You might begin this discussion by simply asking what kind of biblical literature Hebrews is.

This is one of the letters (epistles) in the Bible.

AUTHOR

Who wrote this letter of Hebrews? What does the text say about the author?

Direct your group to look at their notes about the author for this part of your discussion.

Hebrews 2:3-4 is the clearest description of the author in Hebrews.

He was one who heard about salvation from one who heard it from Jesus.

In other words, the author didn't hear directly from Jesus, but from one who did.

He was one who heard the good news and believed it, 4:2-3.

The author knew the Old Testament, which might indicate that he was a Jewish believer.

13:18-19 and 22-25 are personal requests from the author.

He wanted to be restored to the people he wrote.

He spoke of Timothy being released, and he sent greetings from the saints in Italy.

He hoped to go with Timothy to see the brothers he wrote.

Why did he write this letter?

13:22 states his purpose for writing.

It's an urging / appeal for those he wrote to bear with his brief word of exhortation.

He wrote to his brethren, believers, most likely Jewish believers.
Hence, the title of this book of the Bible, Hebrews

RECIPIENTS

Direct your group to look at their notes about the recipients for this part of your discussion.

Who were these people? How does the text describe them?

3:1 holy brethren / brothers, partakers of (ESV—who share in) a heavenly calling

3:12; 10:19 and 13:22 brethren / brothers

5:11-14 became dull of hearing

- ought to have been teachers by that time, but still needed teaching on the elementary things / basic principles
- needed milk and not solid food
- infants / children, not mature yet

6:9-10 saved, beloved believers, who had evidence of salvation;
work and love in ministering to / serving the saints

10:32 endured a great conflict of (ESV—hard struggle with) suffering after being saved

- made public spectacle / exposure through reproaches and tribulations / afflictions
- became sharers / partners with those who were so treated
 - showed sympathy / compassion to prisoners
 - accepted joyfully the seizure / plundering of their property
- knew they had a better possession and a lasting / abiding one

12:4 not yet resisted sin to the point of shedding blood

12:5 forgotten the exhortation about discipline for sons

13:9 exposed to varied / diverse and strange teachings

Ask your group if any of this description relates to them.

Let them discuss how this study might speak to them personally.

Review the purpose statement in 13:22.

Who is Hebrews about? Why did the author write what he did?

This is about Jesus

Jesus our high priest

Jesus brought a better covenant

Jesus' blood cleansed our conscience

Jesus brought eternal salvation

Those things were written a long time ago to a group of Jewish believers who had not matured as they should have.

They had suffered the loss of some things and had taken care of those in prison.

But they had not matured to where they should have been.

They had need of endurance.

Therefore, this is a letter for the church, for believers now.

This is a letter which can strengthen and offer hope to believers.

It's a book which can lead to spiritual maturity.

To close your discussion, give your group time to share how they think this word of exhortation can help them grow to maturity.

HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 2

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews overview
- Jesus, our High Priest
- Warnings

REVIEW

Ask your group why Hebrews was written.

13:22 says the author wrote this as a word of exhortation to believers.

Now, you might also ask if they remember what an exhortation is, or if they remember any of the words of exhortation in Hebrews.

God spoke in His Son.

He brought about eternal salvation.

Jesus is our high priest, hope, and anchor.

He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

A good order for this discussion is chapter by chapter through the whole letter of Hebrews.

Ask what your group observed as they studied the key words, themes, and warnings this week.

Good visual aids for them to look at are their At a Glance chart and the Hebrews Observations pages.

HEBREWS 1

What is this chapter about?

God spoke in His Son.

He's much better than the angels. They're to worship Him.

HEBREWS 2

What is this chapter about? What's the warning?

Pay close attention to what you've heard since God spoke in / by His Son.
Pay close attention to it so you don't drift away.
If we neglect salvation, we won't escape the just penalty / retribution of God.

It was first spoken by the Lord, then those who heard from Him, then to us from them.

Jesus was made a little lower than the angels; He partook of flesh and blood to make propitiation for sins.

To whom was Jesus compared in both chapters 1 and 2? What is this segment about?

Jesus and angels

HEBREWS 3

What's this chapter about? What's the warning?

Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest, is worthy of more glory than Moses.

If you hear His voice—remember that God spoke in / by His Son—don't harden your hearts. Unbelieving hearts fall away from God. Twice they're exhorted to hold fast to the end.

This chapter compares partakers of Christ now with Israel when they came out of Egypt led by Moses. They didn't all believe, but were disobedient.

HEBREWS 4

How does this chapter continue the thought from chapter 3?

Both chapters speak of entering His rest and Israel's disobedience. There are many Old Testament references in all chapters so far.

The warning continues by saying to be diligent to enter the rest through faith and don't fall away.

Ask your group what they learned from the use of "let us" in this chapter.

Verse 1—Let us fear if anyone come short of entering the rest.

Verse 11—Let us be diligent / strive to enter that rest.

Verse 14—Let us hold fast our confession.

Verse 16—Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace for help.

HEBREWS 5

What or who is the subject in this chapter?

This chapter continues exhorting about Jesus our High Priest, but it introduces Melchizedek.

Jesus is a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek, a priest forever.

The last verses admonish the brothers for being dull of hearing—God had spoken; they should have been more keen in listening.

The believers should have been mature by the time Hebrews was written, but they needed to be given the milk of the Word again, not the meat. That’s a sad commentary on holy brothers.

Give time for your group to discuss application at any relevant point in this discussion.

HEBREWS 6

How does this chapter continue?

Let us press on to maturity—that should be the cry of all believers.

What’s the warning in this chapter?

Those who tasted and then fell away cannot be renewed / restored to repentance again.

Who else is mentioned in this chapter?

Abraham obtained the promise after waiting patiently for it.

Again it says that Jesus is a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

HEBREWS 7

Who is this chapter about?

Melchizedek, Abraham, Levitical priests, and Jesus

“Spoke(n)” remains a key word and is connected with “the Law” and “word.”

A better hope and a better covenant are mentioned in this chapter.

Jesus is able to save forever those who “draw near” (another key phrase).

HEBREWS 8

What's the main point in this segment about the priesthood and Jesus?

We have a high priest who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven. He has a more excellent ministry than the Old Testament priests, and He is the mediator of a better covenant, enacted on better promises. It's the new covenant.

HEBREWS 9

How does this chapter continue in the segment about the Old Testament priests, covenant, sacrifices, and tabernacle?

This describes the earthly tabernacle / tent and what the priests did in continual service and worship. Christ appeared and entered the greater and more perfect tabernacle / tent, not of this creation.

He obtained eternal redemption through His own blood.

HEBREWS 10

What is this chapter about?

This continues the comparison / contrast between Jesus Christ and the Old Testament priests, sacrifices, tabernacle, and covenant. This chapter emphasizes His sacrifice.

He offered His body once for all to perfect for all time those who are sanctified. Therefore, we have confidence to enter the holy place.

Ask about the repeated use of "let us" in this chapter.

22—draw near in full assurance with a clean / true heart

23—hold fast the confession of hope, compare with 3:6, 14; 4:14; 6:11

24—consider how to stimulate / stir up one another to love and good works

What is the warning?

If one continues to willfully sin after knowing the truth, then that one faces judgment.

What had happened to the recipients of Hebrews when they were first enlightened, saved?

They endured a great conflict of (ESV—hard struggle with) sufferings, verse 32. They showed sympathy to prisoners, and their property was seized. They were reproached publicly.

Therefore, they were called to more endurance with confidence.

HEBREWS 11

What is this chapter about?

The men of old gained approval / received commendation by faith.

Abel

Enoch

Noah

Abraham

Isaac

Jacob

Joseph

Moses

Sarah and Rahab are also mentioned, as well as some judges and David in verse 32.

HEBREWS 12

How does this chapter relate to Hebrews 11?

“Therefore” . . . “let us” . . . Jesus, the author / founder and perfecter of faith . . . endured the cross.

What does this chapter tell “us” to do?

Verse 1—“let us”

- Lay aside every encumbrance / weight and sin
- Run with endurance the race before us

What had the recipients forgotten? How does it relate to believers now?

They forgot that whom the Lord loves, He disciplines.

They had not resisted sin to the point of shedding blood, even though they had been publicly reproached and lost property.

What’s the warning in this chapter?

Do not refuse Him who is speaking. God is a consuming fire.

“Let us” show gratitude / be grateful.

HEBREWS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3

Lesson emphasis

- Segment divisions in Hebrews
- Observations of Hebrews 1

REVIEW

You can begin by asking your group what Hebrews is about and why it was written.

It's a word of exhortation primarily about Jesus, our high priest.

“Let us draw near with confidence” is one of the repeated statements in this letter of exhortation.

But this letter is also a warning about listening to the Word of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus is compared with several Old Testament people and things.

Then ask to whom it was written. What were the circumstances of the people it was written to?

It was written to Jewish believers who had heard the word of the Lord from those who had heard from Jesus Himself. The author was one of those who probably heard from one of Jesus' apostles.

Those Jewish believers had endured to a degree, but the author wanted them to hold fast and endure to the end. His constant comparison of Jesus, our high priest, with the things of the Old Testament shows that they might have been tempted to go back to the elementary things and not press on to maturity.

Some of them had even turned away.
Hence, the warnings about doing so.

The author wanted to visit the recipients along with Timothy who had been released from prison.

He mentioned that others were in prison, evidently for their faith in Christ. So he wrote to exhort the believers to endure and hold fast to the end. They needed to draw near with confidence to their high priest Jesus, who is able to save forever.

To discuss the rest of this lesson, you might ask what your group learned from their observations of chapter 1, then move on to discuss the flow of thought and segment divisions of the rest of this letter.

There is a sample list of the segment divisions at the end of this guide, or your group can just look at their At a Glance charts as a visual aid.

HEBREWS 1

Who is this chapter about? What is the comparison in verses 1-2?

God spoke long ago to / by the prophets.
All Jews knew and believed that fact—the Old Testament contains what He spoke to them.

The comparison is that in these last days He spoke in / by His Son.

What does this text say about the Son in verses 1-4?

Heir of all things
Creator
Radiance of God's glory
Exact representation / imprint of God's nature
Upholds all things (ESV—the universe) by the Word of His power
Made purification of sins
Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high
Became much better / superior than the angels
Inherited a more excellent name than angels

What is in verses 5-14? What is the comparison?

These verses are filled with Old Testament references.
These are some of the things God spoke to / by the prophets.

The Son is better than the angels.

Verse 5, He is God's Son.

Verse 6 says God will again bring “the firstborn” into the world.

Encourage your group that in the next lesson they will begin to study in depth all this chapter teaches about “the Son.”

What does verse 6 say about the angels?

They're to worship the firstborn of God, the Son.

What does verse 7 teach about angels?

Encourage your group that they'll also study what the Bible says about angels.

God makes angels winds, His ministers a flame of fire.
Angels serve God.

What is the contrast in verses 8-9?

“But” the Son is God, and His throne is forever.
He'll rule in righteousness.
God anointed Him above His companions.

What do verses 10-12 teach about the Son?

He's the LORD who laid the foundation of the earth and made the heavens.
He'll exist after the heavens and earth are rolled up and changed.

He's eternal. He's the same forever.

Where is He now according to verse 13?

Compare with verse 3. After making purification of sins He sat down at God's right hand.

He'll be there until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet.

Then, according to verse 6, He'll come into the world again.

And He'll rule forever with righteousness.

What does the last verse teach about angels?

They are ministering spirits. Compare this with verse 7.

God sends them to serve for those who will inherit salvation.

HEBREWS 2

How does this chapter relate to chapter 1? What is the flow of thought? What is this segment about?

God spoke in His Son—pay close attention to what He said.

There is a comparison between what was spoken in the Old Testament through the prophets and the angels and what was spoken by the Lord and others in the New Testament.

His word of salvation was confirmed by signs and wonders by those who heard it from Him.

What are verses 5-18 about?

There is still a contrast between the Son and the angels.

For a while He, Jesus, was made lower than the angels so that He tasted death for everyone. He became flesh and blood. But He doesn't give help to angels, only people.

He gives aid to those who are tempted—tempted to what?

HEBREWS 3–10

What is this segment about, and what is the flow of thought in these chapters?

Consider Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

His faithfulness is compared to Moses'.

Therefore, if you hear His voice—don't harden your heart.
This is similar to the warning in 2:1-4.

Hold fast our confidence, our assurance, to the end.
Don't be like those in the wilderness who didn't believe and disobeyed.

What word is repeated in both chapters 3 and 4?

Rest—entering His rest by faith, belief
Those who don't believe harden their hearts when they hear His voice.

Therefore, hold fast our confession. Draw near with confidence because of Jesus, our high priest.

What do chapters 5:1–10:18 explain, contrast?

Jesus, our high priest with the Levitical priesthood.

Compare 4:14-16 with 10:19-25, 35-39.

Even though some might shrink back, not listen to His voice or believe, you hold fast.

What do these chapters compare Jesus with in the Old Testament? Why?

If the recipients of this letter were Jews (it's named Hebrews), then they would have known the Old Testament very well.

The Old Testament tells about the Levitical priesthood and sacrificial system of worship associated with the tabernacle.

In these chapters, the author told that Jesus is much better than all of that in the Old Testament. He makes perfect those who draw near.

He exhorted them to press on to maturity and partake of the meat (solid food) of the Word.

He also warned about continuing in willful sin as it leads to judgment.

HEBREWS 11–13

What is the exhortation in 10:38-39 and how does it relate to Hebrews 11–13?

The righteous live by faith—we have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Even the men of old gained approval / received commendation by their faith.

Jesus is the author / founder and perfecter of faith. He endured, so you endure.

Endure discipline from the God who loves you.

Don't refuse Him who is speaking, 1:1-2.

Show gratitude—offer to Him an acceptable service, obedience.

The letter ends with a list of instructions which are part of acceptable service to God.

Ask your group if they're willing to endure. Do they long to hold fast to the end? Do they want to draw nearer to God? Do they want confidence and assurance?

Hebrews 1–2

God spoke in His Son

Pay attention, don't drift away / neglect salvation

Hebrews 3–10

Consider Jesus, Apostle and High Priest

Hear His voice, *don't harden your heart*

disobedience=unbelief

Hold fast and draw near

Press on to maturity

willful sin=judgment

Hebrews 11–13

Jesus, author / founder and perfecter of faith

Don't refuse Him who is speaking

Show gratitude—offer service to God

HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis

- Deity of Jesus
- Firstborn

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember about the overall context of Hebrews.

It's a letter of exhortation written to Jewish believers who had endured suffering to a degree. They were exhorted to endure and hold fast with confidence to the end.

The letter's main character is Jesus, our high priest.

The recipients of this letter are encouraged to draw near because of His ministry as high priest.

They were also warned about those who don't listen and are not obedient. Those who fall away face God's judgment.

JESUS' DEITY

Ask what they learned about Jesus' relationship to the Father in Hebrews 1.

Direct them to the chart in their lessons, which is also at the end of this guide, as a visual aid for this discussion. Complete this chart as your discussion progresses to each point.

In these last days, God spoke to us in / by His Son.

This is contrasted with the fact that God spoke to the fathers, Israel, by the prophets.

God appointed His Son heir of all things.

He made the world through the Son.

The Son is the radiance, shining forth¹, of God's glory.

He is the exact representation / imprint, exact likeness or full expression², of God's nature.

¹ W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:79.

² Barclay Moon Newman, *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; United Bible Societies, 1993). 197.

The Son is seated at the Majesty's right hand.

God the Father begat the Son, the firstborn.

In verse 8, God said that the Son is God. Verse 10 calls the Son, "LORD."

What does or did the Son do, according to Hebrews 1?

He made the world and upholds all things / the universe.

He made purification, cleansing³, of sins.

Then He sat down.

But He'll come again into the world and rule in righteousness forever.

Ask your group what they learned from the other passages they studied in the lesson about Jesus' deity.

Genesis 1:26

God referred to Himself as more than one at creation.

Isaiah 6:8; 7:14 and 9:6

When God commissioned Isaiah, a prophet who spoke God's Word to Israel, He again used the plural to refer to Himself.

Matthew 1:22-23 says Jesus fulfilled the prophecy that a Son, named Immanuel, God with us, would come from a virgin.

The Son was also called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal / everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

The prophets spoke to the fathers that God was going to come in the form of a Son. Jesus was that Son—fully God.

John 1, 8, 10, 14 and 20

The Word was with God and was God.
The Word became flesh.

Jesus said, ". . . before Abraham was born, I am." (ESV does not use the word "born.")

³Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G2512.

Exodus 3:14-15 tells that God’s name is “I AM.”
Jesus said He is God, He and the Father are one.

Those who refuse to believe that will die in their sins.
Hear his voice, pay attention, don’t refuse Him who is speaking.

Jesus said if one sees Him, then that one has seen the Father.

Encourage your group to personalize all of this. You might use this as an encouragement to study the Gospels, or even to study the Old Testament and then the Gospels.

Ask what they learned from the New Testament letters.

Colossians 1:15-18

Paul wrote that Jesus is the image of the invisible God—seen Him, seen the Father.
Compare this with Hebrews 1:3.

Here again it tells of Jesus being the Creator, as both John 1 and Hebrews 1 say.

Philippians 2:5-11

Paul also wrote that Jesus existed in the form, *morphe*, “shape” or “nature”⁴, of God and was made in the likeness of men to be obedient to the point of death on the cross.

Then God exalted Him to His right hand so all will bow at His name.
He is Lord—Master of all.

JESUS IS THE FIRSTBORN

What term in Colossians 1 is also used in Hebrews 1:5-6?

Firstborn—literally means born first or preeminent

protos—first and *tikto*—“to bear, bring forth”⁵

What does this mean?

Since Jesus created all things and has always existed as God, this term cannot refer to His being born into existence as a created being.

⁴James Strong, *The New Strong’s Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996). G3444.

⁵Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G4416.

The firstborn son is used in the Old Testament as a reference to the son who is to be over the family when the father dies.

The firstborn son is the one who has preeminence in the family.

Therefore, Jesus, because He became a man is the firstborn of God. Although He is also God Himself.

Colossians 1:18 also says He's the firstborn from the dead.
Romans 1:3-4 speaks to this, too.

He holds the preeminence of those raised from the dead.

Where else in the Bible is this stated?

Psalm 2:7

This is the text from which the author of Hebrews quoted 1:5.
It was spoken to the fathers by God. He has a Son.

Acts 13:16-39

Paul preached to some men of Israel, Jews of his time, in Pisidian Antioch. As he explained part of Israel's history and the history of the gospel up to that time, he spoke of Jesus in the context of His resurrection after the cross. He quoted this statement from Psalm 2.

Help your group to appreciate the sound doctrine that they've studied and discussed in this lesson. Help them realize that they are feeding on the meat of the Word, not just milk.

You might direct their attention back to Hebrews 1, and ask what other passages are quoted in verses 5-13.

1:5 and 2 Samuel 7:5-17

"I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me (ESV—to me a son)."

Nathan spoke these words to David about David's son Solomon and his relationship to God. David wanted to build a temple for God, but the Lord told him his son would do it.

It's in the context of an eternal kingdom—the descendants of David on earth with a descendant of David on the throne forever. Jesus is also a descendant of King David, Romans 1:3-4. His throne is forever (Hebrews 1:8).

1:6 and Psalm 97:7

Those who worship idols will be ashamed.
All are to worship the Son.

The word “gods” in Psalm 97:7 can refer to supernatural powers.⁶
Hebrews 1:6 translates it as “angels of God / God’s angels.”

1:8-9 and Psalm 45:6-7

This is a song of love directed toward the King. Verse 6 tells of His eternal kingdom of righteousness.

Hebrews says this is a reference to the Son of God, Jesus. This is another place in the Old Testament where God spoke to the fathers about His coming King.

1:10-12 and Psalm 102:24-27

The introduction to this Psalm says it’s “A Prayer of the Afflicted / one afflicted when he is faint and pours out his complaint before the LORD.”

It’s a cry to the Lord for help.

It contrasts God being eternal with man being limited to days, even the heavens and the earth will perish. God will never come to an end.

The Son is God, the same for all eternity.

1:13 and Psalm 110:1 and Acts 2:32-36

This is a psalm David wrote. Long ago God spoke through David, a prophet as well as a king.

This is about a kingdom. All enemies of the king will be conquered.

God said this about Jesus, not the angels.

Peter explained it in Acts when he spoke to men of Israel in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. God raised Jesus and exalted Him to His right hand. He said this reference in Psalm 110 referred to Jesus, not David.

God made Him both Lord and Christ.

⁶*New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update* (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995). Ps 97:7, marginal note.

To end your discussion, you might ask the questions at the end of the lesson.

Have you learned more about Jesus this week?

How can what you have learned affect your relationship with Him?

GOD SPOKE

<p>long ago <u>to the fathers</u> in / by the prophets in many portions (ESV—at many times) ways</p> <p>Old Testament</p>	<p>in these last days <u>to us</u> in / by His Son Creator radiance of His glory exact nature right hand of Majesty on high better than / superior to the angels firstborn God</p> <p>New Testament</p>
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HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 5

Lesson emphasis

- Angels

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember about the overall context of Hebrews.

It's a letter of exhortation written to Jewish believers who had endured suffering to a degree. They were exhorted to endure and hold fast with confidence to the end.

The letter's main character is Jesus, our high priest. The recipients of this letter are encouraged to draw near because of His ministry as high priest.

They were also warned about those who don't listen and are not obedient. Those who fall away face God's judgment.

What are the main segments in Hebrews?

Hebrews 1–2

God spoke in His Son

Pay attention, don't drift away / neglect salvation

Hebrews 3–10

Consider Jesus, Apostle and High Priest

Hear His voice, don't harden your heart

disobedience=unbelief

Hold fast and draw near

Press on to maturity

willful sin=judgment

Hebrews 11–13

Jesus, author and perfecter of faith

Don't refuse Him who is speaking

Show gratitude—offer service to God

What is chapter 1 about?

The Son has a more excellent name than the angels. He is much better / superior than they are.

They're ministering spirits, but He is God—the one who will rule all.

You might ask why the author of Hebrews began his letter of exhortation with a contrast between Jesus and angels. This is a question directly from the lesson at the beginning of Day Two and Day Three. Ask your group how the information given helps to answer the question.

There was a temptation for the Jews of that time to elevate the position of angels.

ANGELS, DESCRIPTION

Ask your group to specifically review what Hebrews 1 says about angels.

Use the charts in Day One of the lesson as visual aids for this part of your discussion. You might also briefly list what they say as on the sample at the end of this guide.

6—all the angels are to worship the Son since they aren't His equal

7—winds, ministers, a flame of fire

14—ministering spirits, sent out to serve for the sake of those who will inherit salvation

Next you might ask about the definition of the Hebrew and Greek words translated “angel.”

Old Testament, Hebrew

mal'ak—“messenger,” “from an unused root meaning to dispatch someone as a deputy”¹

That definition fits perfectly with the description of angels in Hebrews 1.

New Testament, Greek

aggelos—“messenger, one sent to announce or proclaim”²

The definition is basically the same as for the Hebrew word.

Ask what they learned from the other passages they studied about angels.
List on your visual aid as your group discusses.

Angels were created as living beings by God, Colossians 1:16.
According to Job 38:6-7, it seems He created them before He laid the earth's foundations.

Luke 20:36 says they don't die.

¹ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1994), H4397.

² Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G32.

Mark 12:25 says they don't marry. But every time an angel appeared in the Bible he was in a masculine human form. They looked like men.

They are mighty, powerful, invisible spiritual beings, Psalm 103:19-21.

Angels are called "stars" and "sons of God." The immediate context of a passage gives the interpretation.

There are two divisions of angels—those who serve God, good angels, and those who fell with Satan and serve him, demons.

GOOD ANGELS

Ask what your group learned about these.

Psalm 103:19-21

They perform God's Word. Hebrews 1:7 says they're God's ministers.

Hebrews 1:14 indicates that He sends them out to do His will in serving those who will be saved.

Hebrews 13:2

People don't always know when angels are present.

Let your group discuss how knowing what Hebrews 1 and 13 say might affect them.

Matthew 18:10

They minister to little children.

Matthew 4:11

Angels came to minister to Jesus after the devil tempted Him.

Revelation 1:16, 20; 22:6, 8-9, 16

The churches have angels, or messengers, and Jesus is in their midst.

Jesus sent His angel to tell the church what will take place in the future.

Angels are not to be worshiped by believers since they are fellow servants.

Psalm 78:49

Angels even do God's will when it comes to destruction. He sent a band / company of destroying angels on Egypt.

Matthew 13:41-42 and 25:31

Angels will come with Jesus when He returns to earth at His 2nd coming.

They will also gather all stumbling blocks and lawless ones to throw them into the fire.

Ask what your group learned about the angel of the Lord.

He ministered to Hagar in the wilderness. She called him, "Lord."
The Lord who sees—El Roi

He was also called "the Lord" when he prevented Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.
The Lord will provide—Jehovah Jireh.

The angel of the Lord called Gideon to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Gideon recognized Him as being the Lord and sacrificed to Him.
The Lord is peace—Jehovah Shalom.

The angel of the Lord prevented destruction when an angel came to Jerusalem from God to destroy it in David's day. Satan had enticed David to take a census out of pride.

An angel of the Lord, Gabriel, also appeared with a message to Zacharias, father of John the Baptist. When the angel of the Lord appeared to men, they were understandably fearful and in awe.

An angel also brought the news of Jesus' birth to the shepherds in the Bethlehem fields.

An angel of the Lord told Philip the evangelist where to go minister the gospel.

EVIL ANGELS, DEMONS

Ask your group what they learned about these angelic beings.

Revelation 12:3-4, 6-9

At some point, the devil took 1/3 of the angels of heaven with him.

There will be a war in heaven between the good angels led by Michael and the demonic ones led by the devil.

The result will be that the devil and his angels are not strong enough to win the battle, and they'll be thrown down.

Matthew 25:41

The lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels.

2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6

This is about angels who sinned by not keeping their proper abode / dwelling. They're kept in eternal bonds / chains until the day of judgment. They're in hell in pits of darkness until that time.

So some of the evil angels are bound now, but some aren't.

Galatians 1:8

This says an angel might preach a gospel contrary to the truth.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 and 1 John 4:1-5

Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

We need to beware of his servants, false apostles and deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ, servants of righteousness.

Evil spirits, the spirit of antichrist, are in the world and influence false prophets. But greater is the Holy Spirit in believers than those spirits.

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 says that believers will judge angels.

To end this discussion, you might ask your group how they are to live in light of what they've learned.

ANGELS		
Description	Good angels	Bad Angels—Demons
messengers ministers created spiritual beings masculine in form don't marry don't die sons of God	serve God worship God do God's will Michael and Gabriel spoke God's Word Angel of the Lord	1/3 of angels Satan some in bonds / chains disguise themselves

HEBREWS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 6

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 2

REVIEW

Ask your group what they remember about the overall context of Hebrews.

To whom—Jewish believers who had endured suffering to a degree

What—a word of exhortation

About Whom—Jesus, our high priest

Repeated elements

Better than

Exhortations

Warnings

Let us . . . draw near . . . confidence, assurance

What is the first main segment in Hebrews? What is it about?

Hebrews 1–2 is about the Son, Jesus, and angels

What is chapter 1 about?

Verses 1-2 God spoke to us in / by His Son in these last days.

Verses 3-4 His Son is better than / superior to the angels.

Verses 5-14 “For,” explanation or teaching about God’s Son better than angels.

HEBREWS 2:1-4

You might begin this by asking the question from the lesson, “Does the thought flow” from 1:14 to 2:5?

Why are verses 1-4 in the text?

The thought about the Son being better than / superior to the angels continues from chapter 1 through 2:5-18.

2:1-4 is a warning about listening to what God spoke in / by His Son, 1:1.

Ask what they learned about this warning. What is it? To whom? How might it apply to them? Is it similar to the rest of the warnings in Hebrews?

NOTE: These kinds of questions will help your group think about what they've studied. Give them time to think about the answers, and then they can "reason the Scriptures" with each other.

"For this reason / Therefore"—that God spoke to us in / by His Son,
not like He spoke to the fathers long ago in / by the prophets.
And not like He spoke through the angels to the prophets to the fathers.

"we must pay much closer attention"—"pay attention" is "to hold to, turn to, attend to"¹;
"to hold the mind or the ear toward someone"²

Pay attention to the word spoken in / by His Son, not just to the word spoken through angels to the prophets, Old Testament.

The recipients were Jews who had been raised on the Old Testament Law and Prophets. They knew and practiced it by habit from childhood.

"drift away"—"to find oneself 'flowing' or 'passing by,' without giving due heed to a thing"³; "suggesting a gradual and almost unnoticed movement past a certain point...deviate from something, such as the truth...used in an absolute sense"⁴

The author called them to turn their minds and ears toward what God spoke in / by His Son, the truth about salvation—so they didn't flow past it or deviate from it.

How does verse 2 explain?

The word spoken through angels

Acts 7:38, 51-53; Galatians 3:19; Deuteronomy 33:2
Stephen quoted Israel's history from the Old Testament when he was giving his defense before the Jewish council in Jerusalem. This was several years before Hebrews was written.

The angel spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and gave him the Law. They received the Law, ordained by angels, but refused what God spoke in His Son to them. Although they received the Law, they didn't even obey that.

¹Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G4337.

²Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G4337.

³W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:180.

⁴Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G3901.

The Old Testament Law was unalterable.
In it were stated penalties for transgressions against it.

Disobedience received a just recompense or punishment.
There was no negotiation for disobedience—the penalty was clearly stated and carried out. Leviticus 20, 24, and 26 illustrate this statement from Hebrews 2:2.

What's the comparison in verse 3?

The recipients knew the penalty for disobedience of the Law. Therefore, the author reminded them that neglecting, disregard⁵, be careless of⁶, salvation also has a just penalty from which there is no escape.

He warned them about missing salvation.

Help your group to realize that these warnings in Hebrews might apply to some of them. This might be the study which leads them to salvation. Or it might be the time when they realize that some they know are not truly saved and how they can be used of the Lord to witness to them.

NOTE: In almost every book in the New Testament there is at least one warning like this to those who say they are saved, but really are not. It's a warning churches and individuals within them need to take seriously.

Compare with Hebrews 10:28-29.

This is another similar warning to the recipients of Hebrews. Anyone who set aside the Law, through neglect or willful sinning, died without mercy.

Those who neglect or willfully reject the gospel of Jesus Christ will receive a much severer punishment.

At this point, you might draw stick figures of how the Old Testament came to the fathers and how the word of the Lord came to us, according to verses 3-4.

What does it seem is the purpose of signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Spirit?

God testified to confirm what He spoke.

Romans 15 and 2 Corinthians 12
These things accompanied the preaching of the gospel.

⁵James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). GGK288.

⁶James Strong, *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996). G272.

HEBREWS 2:5-18

Ask your group what they observed about the rest of chapter 2. What was the flow of thought from Hebrews 1? Who is this about?

Verses 5-9

The world was subjected to man, not angels. But man is lower than angels.

For a little while Jesus—this is the first time His name is in Hebrews—was made lower than the angels so He might taste death for everyone.

Relate this to verse 3. Salvation came because of Jesus' death. It's nothing to neglect.

Verses 10-13

What are these verses about? How does the thought continue?

Jesus' suffering is mentioned in verses 9 and 10.
Salvation came through His suffering.

These verses say Jesus called God's sons His brothers.

Verses 14-18

Why are the two "Therefore" there?

Since He called God's children brothers, Jesus became flesh and blood like them so that through His death He might free them. Free them from the fear of death. Free them from slavery.

He also rendered the devil powerless (ESV—destroyed).

Verse 16 mentions angels again. They're not helped by Jesus. He only gives help to the descendant / offspring of Abraham. That's people, not angels.

The second "Therefore" is that Jesus was made like His brethren to become their merciful and faithful high priest—to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Three important things about the so great salvation are in these verses.

- Through His death, He freed people from death and slavery.
- Through His priesthood, He made propitiation for their sins.
- Through His temptation, He helps those who are tempted.

To end your discussion, you might ask your group what they learned about God the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in these two chapters. Remind them that God told "us" these things so that we know them, not neglect them.

Hebrews 1	Hebrews 2
<p>God spoke in His Son</p> <p>Son, better than / superior to angels</p>	<p>Pay attention to what we heard</p> <p>so not drift away no escape if we neglect salvation</p> <p>1st spoken through the Lord confirmed by those who heard to us</p>

HEBREWS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 7

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 2:5-18
- Relationship of angels, man, and Jesus to the world

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you can ask your group why Hebrews was written and to whom.

This is a letter of exhortation written to Jewish believers who needed to be exhorted with the truth. There is encouragement and warning in this letter.

They were told to pay close attention to what they heard about salvation. This letter is also about salvation and for all believers. Therefore, we also need to pay close attention to it.

Encourage your group that this study is the solid food of the Word, Hebrews 5:12-14, which will help them press on to maturity. It will give them confidence and assurance to draw near to their merciful and faithful High Priest Jesus.

Ask what the first two chapters are about.

This is a contrast between angels and the Son of God.

Jesus is better than / superior to the angels. They're ministers of God, and He is God.

God spoke through both the angels and His Son. We need to listen to what He said.

Ask your group to look at the page in their lesson on which they listed the flow of thought in Hebrews 1:14 through 2:18. Ask them what the main points are and how the logic flows.

Angels are ministering spirits sent out by God to serve those who will inherit salvation.

The world to come was not subjected to angels, but it was subjected to man.

Man is lower than the angels.

 crowned with glory and honor.

 appointed over the works of God's hands / everything subject under his feet.

But all things are not yet subject to him.

Jesus, for a little while, was also made lower than the angels to taste death for everyone, and now is crowned with glory and honor.

God is bringing many sons to glory.
Man is freed from slavery through Jesus' death.

Jesus, our high priest, helps when we're tempted.

HEBREWS 2:5-8

Ask your group what they learned from their study of these verses.
Tell them to look at the chart at the end of the lesson as a visual aid.

God didn't subject, arrange under¹, the inhabited world to angels, but to man.

From the beginning that was God's design—for man to rule over His creation.

At the present time, all things are not yet subject to him, verse 8, but it will happen in the future as it was at creation.

First, you might ask your group what they learned about the use of "son of man," and if they think that verses 6-8 refer to mankind or Jesus.

Psalm 8

This used the term "son of man" as is quoted in these verses in Hebrews 2.
It speaks of God's creation and man and the son of man.
Genesis 1:26-28 are clear that God told man—Adam and Eve—to rule over His creation.

Ezekiel 2 and Daniel 8

Both refer to the author of the book as "son of man."

Jeremiah 49

This passage speaks of any man as "a son of man."

Daniel 7

Here the expression is used to describe the form which "One like a Son of Man" took.
This speaks of Jesus—the Son of Man.

Since the term "son of man" is used of men in general and of Jesus as the perfect Son of God and Man, then the immediate context is the interpreting factor of a text.

¹James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996). G5293.

For sure, in verse 9, Jesus is the subject. But verses 6-8 refer to mankind.

NOTE: Don't let this cause a debate in your discussion.

Ask your group what will happen in the future regarding man ruling over God's creation. Tell them to look at the chart "God's Plan of the Ages" for this part of your discussion.

Matthew 25:31

When the Son of Man, Jesus, comes the 2nd time to earth, He'll sit on His throne.

Daniel 7:27

This describes the kingdom of the Highest One as an everlasting one.

Revelation 2:25-29; 5:9-10 and 20:6

These speak of the time when Jesus rules over the nations.
Those who overcome will rule with Him.

What about believers now? What is the present situation?

All things are not yet subject in the inhabited earth.

But according to Ephesians 1 and 2 believers are raised with Christ and seated with Him in the heavenlies. All things are under His feet now.

So, believers are to keep their eyes on the eternal things, not the temporal, 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

Ask your group if it helps to know this when they're tested or persecuted.

God is concerned—inspect, to look upon in order to help, have care for²--about man, especially believers who are His children.

HEBREWS 2:9-18

What do these verses teach about Jesus?

He became man.

Hebrews 1 tells of Jesus being God, the Son of God.
Chapter 2 tells of His becoming man, His humanity.

²James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996). G1980.

Why did He become a man?

The only way He could sanctify, free, make propitiation for man was to become one and offer His body as the perfect sacrifice.
He died for all mankind.

His death rendered the devil powerless, as he had the power of death over men.

The wages of sin is death—death entered the world when sin did.
There was no death until there was sin.
The devil's power over man is sin.

Ask your group what they learned about the devil's sin in Ezekiel and how that relates to his temptations in the garden with Eve. How did this affect all mankind?

Pride led the devil to sin. He was perfect in creation, but then became corrupt.

He tempted Eve with wanting to be like God, also.

What were the consequences to sin?

Adam and Eve suffered the results of their sin, and all mankind since then have too.

Man lost the rule over all of God's creation.
When sin entered into the world, death entered also. The wages of sin is death.

Ephesians 2 says unsaved men live according to the course of this world, led by the prince of the power of the air. The unsaved are the sons of disobedience.

All who sin are slaves of sin, according to Jesus' statement in John 8:34.

But what man lost, Jesus came and died to regain.

So He became a man to remedy that situation of sin and death for mankind.

Ask if your group noticed the use of "help" and "aid" in verses 16-18.

Jesus does not give help to angels—they don't need it.

He gives help to Abraham's descendant / offspring, men who believe like Abraham did.
This help refers to salvation.

In verse 18, He gives aid when believers are tempted.

What does this say about Jesus and men?

He's the merciful and faithful high priest.

Let your group think about His mercy toward them in bringing them to salvation, and then helping them when they're tempted to sin. The devil tempts now just like he did Eve, but Jesus can help.

HEBREWS PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 8

Lesson emphasis

- Jesus' death, victory over sin

REVIEW

Ask your group what Hebrews is about.

A word of exhortation to Jewish believers about Jesus the perfect high priest

Then ask what they learned about Jesus from Hebrews 1 and 2.

He's the Son of God and God Himself.

God spoke to us in Him.

He's Creator and Sustainer of all things.

He'll rule over God's kingdom forever.

He's the same and does not change.

The Son is better than the angels.

Jesus became flesh and blood, a man, to die for all mankind.

For a little while He was made lower than the angels.

The Lord spoke God's word . . . salvation.

Jesus is the one who sanctifies.

He rendered the devil powerless / destroyed.

He helps the descendant / offspring of Abraham—believers.

He made propitiation for sins.

He helps to those who are tempted.

JESUS BECAME MAN

Ask your group what they learned from the Scripture passages they studied in this lesson about Jesus becoming a man.

You might use a simple drawing of stick figures to illustrate the truths of this lesson on a visual aid. Begin with Jesus as God in heaven, then draw Him as a man.

Luke 1:26-35

The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would have a son whom she was to name “Jesus.” Gabriel also told her that her son would be called the Son of the Most High.

When she asked how she was to have a child as she was a virgin, she was told that He would come from the Holy Spirit of God. Therefore, He was also called the Son of God.

Luke 2:4-12

Mary gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem.
Joseph, Mary’s husband, was of King David’s line.

An angel told some nearby shepherds that a Savior, Christ the Lord, was born in the city of David.

Matthew 13:55-56

Mary and Joseph had other children; Jesus had earthly brothers and sisters.

Luke 2:21-24 and 51-52

Joseph and Mary kept God’s laws written by Moses; laws of purification and going to the appointed feasts in Jerusalem at the temple.

Jesus lived in an earthly family. But He was the Son of God Most High, the future King forever, the Savior, Christ the Lord.

You might ask how He was treated while here on earth.

Luke 2:50-52

His parents didn’t always understand what He did, even though they knew the truth of Who He was. He subjected Himself to them as His parents.

John 7:2-7

Even His earthly brothers didn’t believe in Him as the Savior, Christ, until later.

John 1:10-11

He was rejected by His own—for whom He came. Many think that this is a reference to the Jews.

Isaiah 53:2-3

He didn't look special and was not esteemed. Men despised and forsook Him. He was acquainted with sorrows and grief.

Mark 3:21-22

Jesus was even accused of losing His mind and being demon-possessed.

Compare Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 22:39-44; and Matthew 26:36-44.

Ask your group what they learned about Jesus as a man from these verses.

Matthew 4:1-11

After fasting for 40 days and nights, He was hungry—just like any human would be. So at that physically weak point, the devil tempted Him.

The devil repeated, “If you are the Son of God . . .” You might ask your group if they are ever tempted by the devil's questioning who they really are.

Luke 22:39-44 and Matthew 26:36-44

As a man Jesus needed to pray. His flesh was weak as any man's is.

But His spirit—the Spirit believers have dwelling within them—was strong enough to overcome the flesh.

He was in agony—Jesus had feelings as any human. But He trusted His Father perfectly.

What does Philippians 2:5-11 add to the study of Jesus being a man?

It's a shortened form of Hebrews 1 and 2.

Jesus is God, but took the form of a man.

He humbled Himself to become obedient—to the point of death on a cross.

God exalted Him highly and gave Him the name above all names.
Everyone will bow before Him and confess Him as Lord.

In Hebrews 1 it says that He has a more excellent name than the angels.

Even they are to worship Him.

JESUS' DEATH

Ask your group what they learned about His death.

On the stick figure drawing you can add a cross.

The wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23.
So Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the Law, Galatians 3:13.
He's the Lamb of God, the Passover Lamb—who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus became a curse for us as His blood redeemed us.

He became sin so that we can become righteous.

Let your group discuss what it meant for Jesus to taste death for them based on the description in Psalm 22.

Ask what the results of His death are for us.
It will be good if you can add to your stick figures one dying with Christ and being raised.

Romans 8:1, 11, 38-39

There is no condemnation for those who believe in Christ Jesus.
He was condemned, but we are not.

His Spirit gives us life and lives in us. He suffered death for us to have life.

Nothing can separate us from His love.
He was separated from the Father on our behalf so that we don't ever have to be.

Galatians 2:20

We are crucified with Him, and He lives in us.

It's a life of faith—like He lived here on earth.

Romans 6:4-5, 8-10

We are united with Him in His death and resurrection.

We're raised from being dead in sin to walk in new life.

We'll not die again.

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 and John 11:25-26

Even if we die physically, we'll not die spiritually.

We'll be at home with the Lord Jesus when we die.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Whether believers die physically or not, we'll all be changed to have immortal and imperishable bodies. Can you add this to your stick figure drawing?

We'll all be together with the Lord forever.

Therefore, comfort one another with these words.

You might end this discussion by asking the question Jesus asked in John 11:26, "Do you believe this?"

HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 9

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 3–4
- Jesus, Moses and Israel

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you might ask your group what they remember about the recipients of this letter called “Hebrews.”

Jewish believers who were being persecuted to a degree, and maybe facing persecution to a greater degree. At least, they knew of others who were persecuted to a greater degree than they were. This persecution seemed to be against their faith in Jesus. Perhaps it might have been from unbelieving Jews.

NOTE: Hebrews was written only a few years (maybe only one) before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Romans. The Jews, especially in Jerusalem, rebelled against the Romans to cause them to come against Jerusalem and the temple. To say the least there was unrest among the Jews during the approximately forty years between Jesus’ resurrection and A.D. 70. This information is not for you to introduce into the discussion, but as a background reference for you, the discussion leader.

You might even ask what your group learned about this from Acts 7:1-53.

Stephen was stoned to death by Jews in Jerusalem.
He presented the truth of his faith from the Old Testament and confronted their unbelief.

NOTE: This might have happened about a year or two after Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Other questions you might ask your group are: What is the purpose statement in Hebrews? What is Hebrews about? Why did the author write to these recipients?

Hebrews 13:22—he called them to listen to this brief word of exhortation.

It’s filled with exhortation about Jesus their High Priest.
But it’s also filled with warnings about missing true salvation.

Believers in persecution need exhortation.

They need to be encouraged to focus on Jesus rather than their circumstances.

They need to be encouraged to persevere in the faith.

Next you might ask what Hebrews 1–2 are about.

Both chapters compare Jesus the Son of God with the angels, which the Jews at that time held in high esteem.

God spoke to the fathers through the prophets, through angels as mediators, but spoke in these last days in His Son, Who is God Himself.

The author called the recipients to listen to the Word spoken in the Son or neglect salvation.

There is just judgment for disobedience.

HEBREWS 3–4

What are these two chapters about?

This is a comparison of Jesus with Moses and the recipients with Israel of Moses' time.

These chapters are about entering His rest.

The author calls the recipients to hold fast until the end.

Some repeated words and phrases are:

hear His voice

don't harden your hearts

faith and unbelief

disobedience

confidence or assurance

What is the train of thought in these two chapters? What are the main points?
You might direct your group to look at their lists in the lesson on Day One.

Consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession

He was faithful—as Moses was faithful.

We are His house if we hold fast until the end.

Therefore, if you hear His voice, don't harden your heart—as they did.

Because of unbelief, disobedience, they didn't enter His rest, they died.

Therefore, let us fear . . . any one of you come short of entering His rest.

Good news preached, listen, unite with faith, enter His rest

Therefore, be diligent / strive to enter that rest—no one fall through disobedience as they did.

Therefore / Since, let us hold fast...high priest who sympathizes with our weakness, tempted.

Therefore / then, draw near and find grace to help in time of need.

These chapters give another warning as chapters 1 and 2 did.

God spoke in His Son—listen to Him.
If not, miss salvation and face the just penalty.

If you hear the Son's voice, don't harden your heart with unbelief as Israel did.
They died in the wilderness because of their disobedience.
They faced God's wrath, His anger.

Tell your group to look at the chart in the lesson on Day Two and Day Three comparing Moses and Jesus. Ask what that comparison is in Hebrews 3.

They were both faithful to God who appointed them over His house.

God built the house.

But Jesus has more glory than Moses, whom most Jews considered the ultimate example.

Moses was a faithful servant in God's house.

Jesus is the faithful Son over His house.

Now ask what they learned from Acts 7 about Moses. How was he a faithful servant?

Moses was born in Egypt, educated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, a prince.
He lived in Egypt until he was 40 years old.

He knew that he was Hebrew and that God would deliver his people from Egypt through him. But his people rejected him as their ruler and judge at that time.

After spending another 40 years in Midian, the Lord appeared to him and sent him back to Egypt to deliver His people. He led them out of Egypt doing wonders and signs for 40 more years, even in the wilderness. Compare with Hebrews 2:4.

Moses was obedient to what the Lord called him to do—deliver His people from Egypt. But he was also faithful to lead them in the wilderness for 40 years even though they were disobedient and unfaithful.

The men Stephen spoke to could see the results of Moses' faithfulness. God gave him the pattern for the tabernacle, and then Solomon built the temple. They trusted in the temple and the sacrifices, not in God who spoke in His Son. They were like the fathers who were stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart.

They hardened their hearts by unbelief, disobedience.

Hebrews 3 and 4 use unbelief and disobedience almost synonymously.

Moses told the people that God would raise up for them a prophet like him—a deliverer. Stephen told those Jews listening to him that the One God raised up like Moses was Jesus, whom they had murdered.

Ask what happened in Exodus 17:1-7?

As Moses faithfully led Israel in the wilderness, they rebelled against him and against God. They quarreled with him because there was no water to drink when they came to Rephidim.

They grumbled, and Moses said that they were testing the Lord.

He went to the Lord with the problem and obeyed what God said to do.

The Lord brought water from the rock for them to drink even though they tested Him. He is faithful.

What happened in Numbers 20:1-13?

This was another incident of the people of Israel, God's people, contending / quarreled with Moses about no water in the wilderness of Zin.

In reality they were contending / quarreled with God. Moses called them rebels.

They knew that God brought water from a rock for them to drink, yet they contended / quarreled with Him and didn't believe that He would do it again.

Even though Moses had been a faithful servant, he lost his temper and struck the rock instead of speaking to it like the Lord told him to do. Because of that, he was not allowed to bring Israel into the land of promise. Joshua did that, Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8.

Compare these two incidents with the circumstances of the people Hebrews was written for.

Hard times, trying circumstances

Israel didn't believe God; they disobeyed more than on these two occasions.

The author wrote to the recipients of Hebrews so that they would not be like “the fathers” who did not believe. He wrote to exhort them to hold fast until the end.

Ask your group what they learned from Psalm 95 as quoted in Hebrews 3 and 4.

Hebrews 3:6 says we are God’s house if we hold fast . . . until the end.
Then verse 14 says we are partakers / sharers of Him if we hold fast . . . until the end.

Psalm 95:7-11 is quoted between these two exhortations to hold fast.

This Psalm begins with a focus on joy and thanksgiving because the Lord is great and a King above all. Compare with Hebrews 1:8—He’s King.

Then the Psalm speaks of Him as creator, Maker, and shepherd. Compare with Hebrews 1:2 and 10.

But in verses 7-11 the Psalm turns to a warning.

If you hear His voice
don’t harden your hearts
as at Meribah and Massah
when your fathers tested, tried Me.

They erred in their hearts by not believing God.

This warning is quoted 3 times in Hebrews 3 and 4. Hebrews 3:12 describes it as an evil and unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Ask your group what “hearing His voice” and the “word of God” have to do with one’s heart.

If you hear His voice, His Word, don’t harden your heart toward what He says.
His Word pierces to the soul and spirit.
It’s able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Therefore, let us hold fast . . . let us draw near . . . to find grace to help in the time of need.

Ask your group how this word of exhortation applies to them. Give them time to share to end this discussion.

HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 10

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 3–4
- Jesus, faithful High Priest over His house
- Partakers of Christ

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you might ask your students what they remember about the recipients of this letter called “Hebrews.”

Jewish believers who were being persecuted

What is the purpose statement in Hebrews?

Hebrews 13:22—he called them to listen to this brief word of exhortation.

What is it about?

It’s filled with exhortation about Jesus their High Priest.

But it’s also filled with warnings about missing true salvation.

Why did the author write to these recipients?

Believers in persecution need exhortation.

They need to be encouraged to focus on Jesus rather than their circumstances.

They need to be encouraged to persevere in the faith.

Next you might ask what Hebrews 1–2 are about.

Both chapters compare Jesus the Son of God with the angels, which the Jews at that time held in high esteem.

God spoke to the fathers through the prophets, through angels as mediators, but spoke in these last days in / by His Son, who is God Himself.

The author called the recipients to listen to the Word spoken in the Son or neglect salvation.

There is just judgment for disobedience.

What are chapters 3 and 4 about?

This is a comparison of Jesus with Moses and the recipients with Israel of Moses' time.

These chapters are about entering His rest.

The author calls the recipients to hold fast until the end.

What is the train of thought in these two chapters? What are the main points?

Consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession

He was faithful—as Moses was faithful.

We are His house if we hold fast until the end.

Therefore, if you hear His voice, don't harden your heart—as they did.

Because of unbelief, disobedience, they didn't enter His rest, they died.

Therefore, let us fear . . . any one of you come short of entering His rest.

Good news preached, listen, unite with faith, enter His rest

Therefore, be diligent / strive to enter that rest—no one fall through disobedience as they did.

Therefore / Since, let us hold fast . . . high priest sympathizes with our weakness, tempted.

Therefore / then, draw near and find grace to help in time of need.

These chapters give another warning as chapters 1 and 2 did.

God spoke in His Son—listen to Him.

If not, miss salvation and face the just penalty.

If you hear the Son's voice, don't harden your heart with unbelief as Israel did.

They died in the wilderness because of their disobedience.

They faced God's wrath, His anger.

GOD'S HOUSE

Ask your group what they learned about “God’s house” from Hebrews 3 and the other passages they studied in this lesson.

As a visual aid, you might draw a house and add to it as the discussion progresses.

Hebrews 3 says Moses was a faithful servant in God’s house.

It also says Jesus is the faithful Son over God’s house.

Verse 5 tells that Moses and the house were a testimony of the things to be spoken later—the things spoken in the Son in these last days, things about the Son over His house.

All through Hebrews there is a contrast / comparison between the Old Testament and the New Testament. This is stated in several different ways.

Christ’s house is paralleled with being partakers / sharers of Him in verse 14.

His house is made up of believers who hold fast until the end.

Ephesians 2:11-22

Paul wrote this letter to explain the mystery of the church, Jew and Gentile in one body.

Christ Jesus is the cornerstone of His house.

The apostles and New Testament prophets are the foundation.

They preached and explained the good news of the gospel.

They wrote the part of the Word of God which He spoke in His Son.

God’s household here is described as Jew and Gentile believers who are one body in Him.

Christ’s body is growing into a holy temple, a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

On your drawing you might make Jesus the cornerstone, the apostles and prophets are the foundation at the bottom and put the Holy Spirit in the house. Then note somewhere that the house is Jew and Gentile believers.

1 Peter 2:4-5 and 4:17

Peter wrote to believers in Jesus who had been scattered to areas in modern Turkey.

He said Jesus is the living stone, and believers are living stones being built as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood. Compare this with Hebrews.

The household of God in 4:17 is contrasted with those who don't obey the gospel.

Romans 16:5 and Colossians 4:15

Paul also wrote both of these letters. At that time believers met in house churches.

Ask your group to summarize or “bottom-line” what they think the house of God is in Hebrews 3.

It's the church.

You might add a steeple to your drawing of the house.

PARTAKERS / SHARERS OF CHRIST

Ask your group what they learned about this from their study in this lesson.

According to Hebrews 3:6 and 14, it seems that the Son's house is the same as those who are partakers / sharers of Him—believers, the church, the body of Christ.

John 6:48-51

Jesus said that He is the bread of life. Whoever eats this bread shall live forever. Those who believe in Him partake of Him as the bread of eternal life.

John 14:16-20, 23-24 and Romans 8:9-11

John and Paul wrote that all believers have the Holy Spirit of God indwelling, living within, them. The Spirit of Christ lives in all true Christians. Relate this to God's house being the dwelling of the Spirit.

Jesus also said that if anyone truly loves Him, that one will keep His Word. Compare with Hebrews 3.

Colossians 1:24-27

Christ in you, the hope of glory—a partaker / sharer of Him

Ephesians 5:25-32

The church is Christ's body. Individuals are members of His body—partakers / sharers of Him by His Spirit.

He loved and gave Himself for the church.

He sanctifies the church and cleanses her by washing her with the water of the Word.

So you might ask your group the three questions near the end of Day Two in the lesson.

How would you define the house of God?

What does it mean to be a partaker / sharer of Christ?

At this point, how would you explain Hebrews 3:6, 14?

Give them time to think about how they would explain each of the above to someone else.

The house of God is the church.

Partakers / sharers of Christ are believers.

Hebrews 3:6 and 14 say true believers are the ones who hold fast until the end.

They persevere and don't harden their hearts.

They pay attention and don't neglect salvation to drift away.

They are obedient.

They enter His rest through faith, belief.

JESUS' PRIESTHOOD

Ask your group what they learned about Jesus' priesthood and what it has to do with their perseverance.

He's merciful and faithful and able to come to the aid of those tempted because He was tempted.

He lived in a flesh and blood body and understands the temptations of the flesh.

He's the great high priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses.

Therefore, believers should hold fast and draw near for help in the time of need, the time of temptation.

Hold fast and draw near instead of drifting away, neglecting, hardening, and disobeying.

Holding fast and drawing near prove one's faith is true.

1 John 2:19 and John 8:31

Those who remain are the true believers.

Those who abide—live, remain, continue—in Jesus' word are truly His disciples, followers.

Each book in the New Testament says it a little differently, but they teach about true salvation that there is perseverance and proof.

If there is time, you might ask your group how “entering His rest” relates to holding fast our confession.

Hebrews 4:3 is clear as it says that those who believe enter that rest. Those who don’t believe don’t enter it.

Therefore, it’s a rest that is connected with salvation.

Verse 8 says Joshua didn’t give Israel that rest. He’s the one who brought them into the promised land.

From the Old Testament references studied on Day Four and Day Five how were they to enter that rest and what was it?

They were to believe what God said—that He would take them to the land of Canaan. He would defeat their enemies living in the land, even the giants.

They didn’t believe Him and, therefore, didn’t enter.

Even though they had seen the signs and wonders God brought in Egypt and the wilderness, they still didn’t believe Him when they were tested.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 relates this to now.

Take heed, as the warnings in Hebrews say, God was not pleased with them, and they died in the wilderness. Endurance in temptation is for every believer.

Don’t try the Lord.

Pay close attention and hold fast.

You might close by telling your group that there will be more study on the “rest” of Hebrews 3 and 4 in the last lesson in this course.

HEBREWS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 11

Lesson emphasis

- Entering His rest

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you might ask your group what they remember about the recipients of this letter.

Jewish believers who needed to press on to maturity even though they were facing trials.

What is the purpose statement in Hebrews?

Hebrews 13:22—they needed to listen to this word of exhortation.

What is it about?

It's filled with exhortation about Jesus their High Priest.

As Jews, they knew well the position and intercession performed by the high priest.

But it's also filled with warnings about missing true salvation.

Maybe some of them were turning back to Jewish customs of the Old Testament and not going on with true salvation as they saw it brought persecution.

Why did the author write to these recipients?

Believers in persecution need exhortation.

They need to be encouraged to focus on Jesus rather than their circumstances.

They need to be encouraged to persevere in the faith.

Next you might ask what Hebrews 1–2 are about.

Both chapters compare Jesus the Son of God with the angels, which the Jews at that time held in high esteem.

God spoke to the fathers through the prophets, through angels as mediators, but spoke in these last days in / by His Son, who is God Himself.

The author called the recipients to listen to the Word spoken in the Son or neglect salvation. There is just judgment for disobedience.

What are chapters 3 and 4 about?

This is a comparison of Jesus with Moses and the recipients with Israel of Moses' time.

These chapters are about entering His rest.

The author calls the recipients to hold fast until the end.

What is the train of thought in these two chapters? What are the main points?

Consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession

He was faithful—as Moses was faithful.

We are His house if we hold fast until the end.

Therefore, if you hear His voice, don't harden your heart—as they did.

Because of unbelief (disobedience) they didn't enter His rest, they died.

Therefore, let us fear . . . any one of you come short of entering His rest.

Good news preached, listen, unite with faith, enter His rest

Therefore, be diligent / strive to enter—no one fall through disobedience as they did.

Therefore / Since, let us hold fast . . . high priest sympathizes with our weakness, tempted.

Therefore / then, draw near and find grace to help in time of need.

These chapters give another warning as chapters 1 and 2 did.

God spoke in His Son—listen to Him.

If not, miss salvation and face the just penalty.

If you hear the Son's voice, don't harden your heart with unbelief as Israel did.

They died in the wilderness because of their disobedience.

They faced God's wrath, His anger.

The exhortation to believers, part of God’s house and partakers / sharers of Christ, is to hold fast to the end.

Those who harden their hearts and disobey are proven to be unbelievers.

HIS REST

To begin this discussion, you might ask what your group learned from Hebrews 3 and 4 about “entering His rest” and their word studies. Direct them to their list in the lesson on Day One. You might also list who enters and who doesn’t, as the example on the last page of this lesson’s guide.

This rest is clearly connected with salvation.

katapausis (3:11, 18; 4:1, 3, 5, 10, 11)—“ceasing from”¹

3:11—God said in His wrath that they, those with hard hearts, will not enter His rest

3:19—the disobedient were not able to enter because of unbelief

4:1—a promise remains / still stands of entering His rest

Let us fear if any one of you seem to come short of it / failed to reach it.

4:3—believers enter that rest

4:4—God rested on the 7th day

katapauo (4:4, 8, 10)—“cease from”²

4:5—again, they’ll not enter My rest

4:6—it remains for some to enter it

They failed to enter because of disobedience.

4:8—Joshua didn’t give them rest, there is another day

4:9—a Sabbath rest for God’s people remains

sabbatismos—“a rest as on the sabbath”³

¹Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker’s Greek New Testament library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 220.

²Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker’s Greek New Testament library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 220.

³Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G4520.

4:10—it's a rest from one's own works, as God rested from His works

4:11—be diligent / strive to enter so that no one fall through disobedience

Ask your group to summarize what this text says about entering His rest.

Believers enter God's rest, and it remains for some to enter it.
Unbelievers don't enter it because of disobedience.

Be diligent about it so that no one fall and not enter it.

It has something to do with salvation.

SABBATH REST

Ask your group what they learned about "the Sabbath rest."

God rested on the 7th day from His work of creation.

Exodus 20 contains the Ten Commandments, and one is that no work be done on the 7th day, the Sabbath. It's to be kept holy, separate from other days.

Exodus 31 explains that the sabbath is a sign between God and Israel that they know He is the one who sanctifies them. It's a perpetual / forever covenant between God and Israel. Anyone not keeping the sabbath is cut off from his people.

Ezekiel 20 also calls the sabbath a sign between God and Israel. God's wrath was poured out on the ones who didn't keep His sabbath in the wilderness. Then their children did the same thing, and He scattered them among the nations.

CONCLUSIONS

Ask your group what they think the rest of Hebrews 3 and 4 is, based on all their study. You might refer them to the three views listed in the lesson, and ask which one they most closely identify with.

Jesus said that He gives rest for one's soul. The question is, "When?"

1—At salvation one rests from his own work as he follows the Lord in His work.

2—There is also a time coming when Jesus will reign as King over all the earth.

This is a time when all Jews look forward to.
It's the time of restoration for the kingdom of Israel as promised in the Prophets.
The recipients of this letter would have known these promises.

In Hebrews 4, the author says that Joshua didn't give this rest to them when he led them into the promised land. So there is more to the rest than simply entering the land—it's a time of rest in the land for Israel.

The coming kingdom is also a time of rest for all who are saved—Jew and Gentile who are believers in the coming King.

3—The time of the new heaven and new earth when all things will be new is the other position held by some.

This is the time when there will be no more sin and death, a time of complete rest.

As your group discusses the views they consider the most valid, help them to base their thoughts on what the Bible says, especially the context of Hebrews. This is a way to practice good interpretation principles.

Your group does not need to have complete agreement, but they do need to understand why someone might have a different interpretation from them. This teaches them to promote unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace when they don't agree completely.

THE WORD OF GOD

The last question in the lesson had to do with Hebrews 4:12-13 in its context. Ask your group why they think these verses are in this context.

1:1-3	God spoke
2:1-3	pay close attention, not escape if neglect word of salvation
3:1	consider Jesus, the Apostle
3:7-4:7	if hear His voice, don't harden your heart
4:2-5	good news preached, unite with faith
4:12	God's word is alive . . . able to judge the heart

This is part of the warning about not listening to what God said in His Word. No one escapes the eyes of the Lord.

As you end this discussion, and this course, ask your group how verses 14-16 help them in their daily Christian walk.

Encourage them that they'll study much more about Jesus their High Priest in Hebrews Part 2.

ENTER	NOT ENTER
Promise remains / still stands Believers Joshua didn't give it From works As God rested from His works 7 th day	Hard heart Disobedient Unbelievers