

Hebrews

A Unique Book	Hebrews has the unique distinction in the NT of being the one book of the NT where the author is an enigma. While authorship isn't explicitly stated in other books, we can learn who the author is from external (early church history) and internal (contents of the book itself) who the authors were. Matthew and Mark are examples of this. Hebrews, however, isn't like that at all. But it doesn't mean people haven't tried to figure out the author.
The Opinions	Very early in the history of the church, views of authorship differed. Some suggested Paul because the argumentation is Paul. Others suggested Paul's secretary because the style isn't Paul. Others suggested Luke because it, like Luke and Acts, is penned in Classical, not Koine, Greek. Others suggested it was Apollos. But the best perspective about Hebrews came from the pen of Origen, the Early Church Father: "Only God knows who wrote Hebrews."
Therefore, Houston, We Have a Problem	The question, therefore, is why, then, is it included in your New Testament. Within the pages of the NT, 27 books form what scholars call the New Testament Canon. The word "canon" means "measuring stick/rod. And the 27 we have passed the test. There were many "Jesus" books floating around in the 1 st and 2 nd century, but only these 27 are included. The reasons why are: Apostolic Authority (Matthew was an apostle; as was Peter, John, Mark, etc.) Early Attestation (meaning they date early in the time period, not late) Early Church Usage (what were the earliest churches using as Scripture) Orthodoxy (right view of Jesus). While Apostolic Authority can't be attested in Hebrews, the other three can. Very early in the church, Hebrews was quoted often because of its high view of Jesus. That's why it's in your New Testament, not because, as you might read in a Study Bible note, Paul was "assumed" as the author.
The Flavor of Hebrews	Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians of the Diaspora (scattered after the temple was destroyed in 70 AD) who were being persecuted for their faith in the various regions of the Roman Empire in which they were a part. It has the feel of a Sunday Night/Wednesday Night pastoral in-depth type of book. One where the pastor walks them through the whole counsel of the Scriptures and arrives at one conclusion: Jesus is greater.
Theme	Jesus is Higher / Jesus is Greater
Key Verses	<i>Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.² This is what the ancients were commended for. (Hebrews 11:1-2)</i>
Structure	The structure of Hebrews follows from the theme. The whole book is an argument that explains why Jesus is greater and what that means for you and me. It also contains some of the most familiar verses in the New Testament.

Jesus is Higher/Greater than Angels.

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"^[a]? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? ⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." ⁷ In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire." ⁸ But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy." (1:5-9)

Therefore, Don't Worship Them (Same with "Revelations"). Worship Jesus.

Jesus is Higher/Greater than Moses

Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. ² He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. ³ Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. ⁵ "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house,"^[a] bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. ⁶ But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory. (3:1-6)

Therefore, Don't Worship Spiritual Leaders. Worship Jesus

Jesus is Higher/Greater than the Sabbath

⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;¹⁰ for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works,^[e] just as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience. (4:9-11)

Therefore, Enter That Rest Through Jesus and "Rest" in Him in the Midst of Conflict/Persecution

Jesus is Higher/Greater Than Melchizedek

¹⁵ And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, ¹⁶ one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. (7:15-17)

****Priests were descendants of Aaron, which Jesus and Melchizedek (in the OT were not). They were greater (Melchizedek is a type of Christ in the OT) because they offered sacrifices for both Jews and Gentiles.**

Jesus is Greater than the Tabernacle/Temple

¹¹ But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here,^[a] he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining^[b] eternal redemption. (9:11-12)

Therefore, We Don't Go to the Tabernacle/Temple to Make Sacrifices. "The" Tabernacle Did that and Lives Inside of Us

Jesus is Greater than the Law (i.e., 10 Commandments, Law of Moses, etc)

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship (10:1)

Therefore, Don't Trust in the Law Which Can Only Condemn You (Reveal Sin). Trust in the One Who Can Save You From It's Curse

Therefore, Walk by Faith, Not Sight.

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ² This is what the ancients were commended for. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (11:1-2, 6)

If You Admire the Heroes You Read About, Live Like They Did: By Faith!

What You Are Experiencing Now is the Discipline of God, Not His Condemnation/Judgment (Remember They Were Persecuted)

⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? ⁸ If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. (12:7-8)

Troubles/Pains Confirm Our Faith, They Don't Condemn It

Therefore, What Mountain Will You Worship On?

¹⁸ You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; ¹⁹ to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, ²⁰ because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death."^[c]²¹ The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."²² But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel (12:18-24)

Mt. Zion is a Mountain We Can Live On Now in Our Spirit

We May Live Outside the Gate, But We Are Looking for a City. Therefore, Live as Gods People Outside the Gate Until We Arrive

¹¹ The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. ¹⁴ For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. (13:11-14_)

We Live in the World. But We Are Not of the World. We Are Supposed to Be Different. Ethical. Righteous.

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:12-13)