

Hebrews

Access to God

Marilyn Kunz & Catherine Schell

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CONTENTS

GETTING STARTED

How to Use this Discussion Guide	5
What Is a Q Place?	6
Q Place Guidelines	6
Q Place Discussion Tips	7
Tools for Studying the Bible in a Q Place	7
When You Are the Question-Asker	8

HEBREWS: Access to God

Introduction	9
How to Use the Key Verses	11
1. Hebrews 1	
God Speaks to Us by a Son	13
2. Hebrews 2	
Such a Great Salvation	19
3. Hebrews 3	
Harden Not Your Hearts	25
4. Hebrews 4	
Rest Is Still Available	31
5. Hebrews 5	
Qualifications for High Priest	37
6. Hebrews 6	
The Need for Spiritual Maturity	43
7. Hebrews 7	
Melchizidek	51
8. Hebrews 8	
The Real Sanctuary and the Better Covenant	59

9. Hebrews 9	
The Blood of the Covenant	65
10. Hebrews 10	
Christ's Perfect Sacrifice	71
11. Hebrews 11	
The Superiority of Faith	79
12. Hebrews 12	
Perseverance	87
13. Hebrews 13	
Practical Christian Living	95
Chart of the Letter to the Hebrews.....	102
Comparisons in the Letter to the Hebrews	104

1

Hebrews 1

— God Speaks to Us by a Son

When we find accident victims lying unconscious, our first impulse is to get them to speak, since we can tell a lot more about their condition if they say something to us. Under normal conditions, our power of speech identifies us. New parents eagerly await their child's first words. Speech makes meaningful communication possible. Speech enhances human relationships.

The letter to the Hebrews begins with an astounding statement: **God spoke.** The Christian faith rests on the conviction that God is knowable as a person and speaks to us. This is called God's self-revelation; and He spoke finally and completely by his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1 sets forth the unique nature of the Son of God. His superiority to the ancient Jewish religion occupies most of this letter. Because angels were considered intermediaries between God and man, the author makes a special point of describing them in relation to the Son.

KEY VERSE (See page 11)

Hebrews 1:1-3

Read Hebrews 1:1-4

1. According to Hebrews 1:1-2 and 3:1, what do you learn about those to whom this letter is written?

2. What does the writer say about God having spoken through the Old Testament prophets?

Note: The Hebrews to whom this letter was written were Christian believers in danger of being attracted back into Judaism. Therefore, the writer sets out to demonstrate how Jesus, the Son of God, surpasses all the messengers and leaders of the old covenant.

3. List eight things these verses tell us about Jesus Christ.

4. What benefits come to us through Christ?

5. It has been said that this paragraph superbly expresses the most important idea of history. What do you think of that statement?

Read Hebrews 1:5-14

6. Follow the line of argument through this section. (Noting the connecting words such as *for*, *or*, and *but* will help you do this.) What does the writer intend to prove about Jesus Christ's position in relation to angels?

7. The writer quotes God, not man, in verse 5. What do the question and quote in verse 5 reveal about Jesus?

8. How is Jesus different from, and superior to, both the prophets and the angels?

9. What is your concept of angels? Compare it with what the writer says about the duties and position of angels in verses 6-7 and 14.

10. What contrast does *but* at the beginning of verse 8 introduce?

11. What responsibilities and authority does the Son have (verses 8-9)?

12. The writer has shown Jesus as superior in rank and in power to the prophets and to angels. What is the comparison with the creation meant to reveal about the Son in verses 10-12?

13. List the words that describe the creation and those that describe the Son.

14. What thoughts do verses 13 and 14 add to the contrasting functions of angels and the Son?

15. What locations are suggested (verses 13-14) for the present activities of the Son and of angels?

16. What relationship do angels have with human beings?

SUMMARY

1. In what ways is the Son superior to:

– the prophets?

– the angels?

– all creation?

2. What is the work of:

– the Son?

– God the Father?

– the prophets?

– the angels?

3. Using your answer to summary question 2 as background, what clues do you see about how God wants you to respond to him?

For a richer experience with this letter, spend time each week meditating on the key verses in Hebrews highlighted in each discussion. (See page 11 for how to do this.)

Since Hebrews 1:1-3 is also a key passage for the entire book of Hebrews, take the challenge of memorizing these verses throughout the study.

Read the Key Verses together

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 1:1-3

PRAYER

Thank you, God, for speaking to us through your Son. Through him you made the universe, and by his word, you hold it together. We honor you, Jesus, Son of God, for perfectly revealing God's very being and glory. Thank you for providing cleansing for our sins. Amen.