

1. We do not know for sure who penned the book of Hebrews, but we do know that it was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
2. It is interesting to note the author's use of the Old Testament.
3. In addition to approximately 38 quotations in Hebrews, there are many allusions—perhaps as many as 55—and echoes of Old Testament passages.
4. There are 11 quotations from the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the O.T.) and only one from the historical books. There is one quotation from Proverbs and seven from the prophetic books, with three from Jeremiah. Also, the author quotes from the Psalms 18 times.
5. We also need to understand that the New Testament is the reality of which the First Testament was the type.
6. It was not a matter of choosing between Judaism and Christianity - but between the type and the reality, between the Levitical sacrifices and the substitutionary atonement of the Lord Jesus.
7. These Jews were under the stress of persecution, and in danger of renouncing their profession and returning to the past sacrifices of the Levitical system. The temple was still standing when this book was written, and all the priestly ceremonies were still being performed.
8. The letter to the Hebrews contrasts the Old Testament system of Law with the New Testament ministry of grace - making it clear that the Jewish religious system was temporary and that it could not bring in the eternal "better things" that are found in Jesus Christ.
9. Instead of this letter beginning with the name of Paul or Peter it begins with "God."
(verses 1-4)
10. The main idea in the opening verses of the letter is not that God just spoke - but that it was at sundry times and in divers manners that He spoke. God has now, after the preliminary revelations, given a final word in the revelation of His Son.
11. The revelations of the first testament truth were given "at sundry times" meaning "by many portions." It was given also "in divers manners" meaning "manner" or "fashion," thus, "different manners," or "many ways."
12. The revelation of the first testament was progressive. It could not be revealed all at once - because it could not all be understood at once. Thus the revelation was given in many parts.
13. In addition to this, it was given in different modes. It was given in the form of law, prophecy, history, psalm, sign, type, and parables.
14. The words "in time past" speak of something "old in point of use, worn out, or ready to be displaced by something new."

15. For the Hebrews - the God - of whom the writer speaks, is the same God whom the Hebrew addressees of the letter profess to worship.
16. He spoke to Israel “by the prophets.” God spoke exclusively through them and through no other men, so far as the written revelation is concerned.
17. In verse 2 the “last days” are days of fulfillment. In the O.T. the Jew saw the last days as the time when all the promises would be fulfilled.
18. However, they were looking for the coming of a Messiah, a Kingdom, salvation, and Israel would no longer be in bondage. Promises would stop and fulfillments would begin.
19. And that is exactly what Jesus came to do. He came to fulfill the promises. (Matthew 5-7)
20. It was powerful enough that God should speak through the prophets, but now comes an extraordinary truth: God has spoken to “us” in one who is by His very character and nature a Son.
21. The cumulative effect of verse 2 - is to show why God’s revelation through the Son is the highest, fullest, and most complete he can give.
22. God’s final address comes not through prophets but “through His Son.” Everything that exists will find its true meaning only when it comes under the final control of Jesus Christ.
23. Many rejected God as He revealed Himself in the Old Testament. Now God has perfectly revealed Himself in the New Testament of His Son – and people still reject Him.
24. The first phrase of v. 3 describes the Son’s relation to the Father, demonstrating his qualifications to function as the mediator of revelation.
25. The Son is “the brightness (radiance) of God’s glory and the exact image (likeness) of His being.” Each word pulsates with deity.
26. “Express image” carries the idea of “the exact imprint.” Our English word character comes from the Greek word translated “image.” Literally, Jesus Christ is “the exact representation of the very substance of God.” (John 1:14, 14:9; Colossians 1:15, 2:9)
27. After describing the Son’s relationship to God, we see the Son’s relationship to all of creation. The Son sustains all things by His powerful word.
28. Jesus Christ also has a ministry as “Priest”, and this reveals His greatness. By Himself He “purged our sins.”
29. Finally, Jesus Christ reigns as King. He has sat down, for His work is finished; and He has sat down “on the right hand of the Majesty on high,” the place of honor.

30. Creator, Prophet, Priest, and King—Jesus Christ is superior to all of the prophets, servants, and angels of God who have ever appeared on the sacred pages of the Scriptures.
31. It is no wonder that the Father said, at the hour of Christ's transfiguration, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear you Him" (Matt. 17:5).
32. Finally in verse 4 we see that Jesus Christ has a more excellent name than any angelic being. And what is this "more excellent name?" His "Son!"