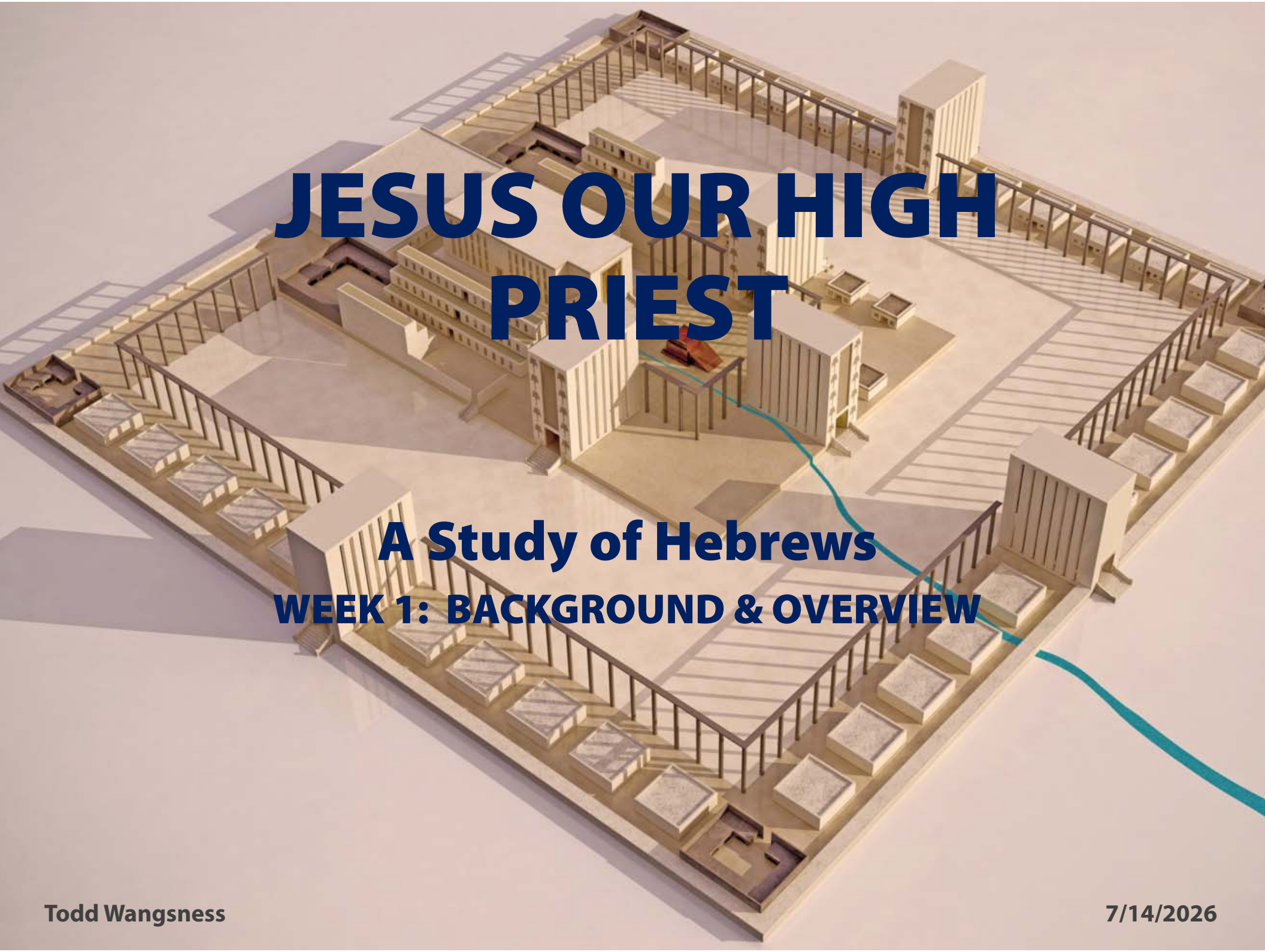


JESUS OUR HIGH PRIEST

A Study of Hebrews

WEEK 1: BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

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Hebrews: Jesus Our High Priest

Topics

• Week 1:	Theme, Background and Overview	1:1 – 1:3
• Week 2:	Superiority of the Son to Angels	1:4 – 2:18
• Week 3:	Superiority of the Son to Moses	3:1 – 3:6
• Week 4:	Warning on the Danger of Disobedience	3:7 – 4:13
• Week 5:	A 'Better' Position	4:14 – 4:16
• Week 6:	A 'Better' Priest (Part 1)	5:1 – 6:19
• Week 7:	A 'Better' Priest (Part 2)	7:1 – 7:28
• Week 8:	A 'Better' Covenant	8:1 – 8:13
• Week 9:	A 'Better' Sanctuary	9:1 – 9:10
• Week 10:	A 'Better' Sacrifice	9:11 – 10:18
• Week 11:	Exhortations – Warning – Encouragement	10:19 – 10:39
• Week 12:	Evidence of the Life of Faith	11:1 – 11:40
• Week 13:	Exhortation to Endurance of Faith	12:1 – 12:29
• Week 14:	Concluding Exhortations	13:1 – 13:25

Hebrews: Background and Overview

THEME: The Superiority of the Priesthood of Jesus

REFERENCE TEXT:

- **"Ariel's Bible Commentary – Hebrews, James, I & II Peter and Jude" by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum**

MAIN DIVISIONS: Hebrews is broken into two primary divisions

1. **Heb 1:1 – Heb 10:18 Pre-eminence of the Son in His Person and Work**
2. **Heb 10:19 – 13:25 Practical applications for the Believer**

Hebrews: Background & Overview

AUTHORSHIP

- It is not known who wrote Hebrews
- Various name have been mentioned:
  - Paul, Barnabas, Apollos, Clement of Rome, Luke, Silas, Phillip, John Mark, Aristion, Priscilla (negated by Heb 11:32 where writer used a masculine participle to describe himself)
- While we don't know <u>who</u> the writer was, we do know:
  - The author was a Jew
    - He had specific, intimate knowledge of Judaism that only a Jew would have
    - In Heb 2:3-4, the author indicates he was a 2nd generation Jewish believer (meaning he was not an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus)

Hebrews: Background & Overview

THE READERS WERE:

- 2nd generation believers (Heb 2:3-4)
- Jewish believers
  - 'Brethren' (3:1,12)
  - 'Beloved' (3:1)
  - 'Partakers of the heavenly calling' (3:14)
- Believers for a long time, and should have been teachers of the Word (5:11-14)
- Spiritually immature and had not progressed in the faith (5:11-14)
- Wavering in their faith due to persecution (10:32-38)
- Readers who knew the Author (13:19,23)

LOCATION

- Three possibilities:
  - Jerusalem: Probably not (hadn't heard Jesus speak; they were charitable…Jerusalem church was destitute; no martyrdom yet…Stephen/James martyred in Jerusalem)
  - Rome: Probably not (readers were evangelized by eyewitnesses…Rome was not; they were looking to return to sacrificial system)
  - Judea (somewhere outside of Jerusalem): Most likely (they were undergoing persecution and resided close enough to Jerusalem that they considered going back to sacrificial system)

Hebrews: Background & Overview

DATE

- Written between 64-66 AD
- Clement wrote letters in 96 AD quoting from Hebrews
- Author mentions Timothy (13:23) and Timothy became a believer in 50 AD (Act 16:1-3)
- Written before Timothy died (13:23) because Timothy is mentioned in present tense
- They were 2nd generation believers, and had been believers long enough to be teachers
- Author uses present tense when writing about the sacrificial system (<70 AD)
- Author implies it had been about 40 years since crucifixion (3:17)
- He makes statements about a 'shaking' which had already begun (revolt began in 66 AD)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Esau and Melchizedek referenced (Genesis)
- Aaron, Tabernacle and Priesthood (Exodus)
- Blood Sacrifices and Day of Atonement (Leviticus)
- Sin of Kadesh-Barnea and Moses (Numbers)

Hebrews: Background & Overview

OCCASION AND PURPOSE

- The readers of Hebrews were undergoing tremendous, severe persecution
- They were of the mind that they could temporarily 'lay aside' their salvation and go back into Judaism until the persecution subsided
- They thought that once the persecution subsided, they could then be 'saved' again later
- This 'new salvation' would erase their earlier apostasy and they could start their spiritual lives anew
- The author gives the readers a stern warning against going back into Judaism

Hebrews: Background & Overview

AUTHOR'S METHODOLOGY

- Used extensive OT quotes and references to demonstrate the superiority of the Messiah over the system of Judaism
- Contrasted 'good' vs. 'better'
- Shows that the Messiah is superior to all three pillars of Judaism:
  - Angels
  - Moses
  - Levitical Priesthood

KEY WORDS

- 'Perfection':
- 'Eternal' and 'Forever':
- 'Heavenly'
- 'Better'

Hebrews: Background & Overview

THEME VERSE: Heb 1:1-3

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"

- God spoke to the OT believers through the prophets
- He used various means and methods of communication
  - Creative acts, visions, rules, regulations, laws, types and prophecies, etc.
- 'Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son'
  - Establishes the Son as superior to the prophets and angels

Hebrews: Background & Overview

Why is the Son eligible to be the final source of revelation?

1. **He is the 'heir of all things'**
   - **Heirship entails Lordship**
2. **The Son is 'through whom also He made the world'**
   - **He is Creator**
3. **He is the 'brightness of His Glory'**
   - **He has the essence of deity (Joh 1:1-14)**
4. **He is the 'express image of His Person'**
   - **He is the perfect representation of the divine essence**
5. **He 'upholds all things by the Word of His power'**
   - **He is the 'Sustainer' and 'Governor' of the universe (Col 1:15-17)**
6. **'He had by Himself purged our sins'**
   - **He is our Redeemer, Priest and Savior through His finished work**
7. **He 'sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high'**
   - **He is the sovereign of humanity**
   - **His 'work' is finished (tetelestai)**
   - **He now lives to intercede for us (Rom 8:34)**