



# Central **WOMEN**

## **BETTER: Hebrews**

## **WEEK 2 NOTES**

*Okay leaders, you will notice that this bible study is set up quite different than others. There is not a lot of commentary. I am not sure if this makes the study easier, or harder. But it certainly forces us to dig in and study the word of God, and not the words of the bible study author. There are discussion questions provided after each session of homework/before each video, to help you guide discussion if you find them helpful. Jen does a great job wrapping everything up in the videos- so things will be clearer after the video.*

- *For those of you in weekly studies, you may just want to work through the homework question by question when it is a Day1-3 session. If you are not sure of an answer, don't worry- just dwell in the "I don't know" as Jen encouraged you to do in the first video.*
- *For those of you in every other week studies, you may want to first watch the video together as a group and then discuss the video. Jen's videos stick very close to the homework, so by discussing the video, you will be discussing the homework.*

*In the introduction video, we learned that the audience of Hebrews consists of... Hebrews. So, as they read the letter, encourage your ladies to read it like a first century Hebrew. A first century Hebrew would have been brought up in the Jewish tradition. A first century Hebrew would be familiar with all of these things:*

- *Moses and the story of the Exodus*
- *The 40 years of wandering in the desert, due to the bad report of the spies.*
- *The need for a system of sacrifices, a priest and the Day of Atonement*
- *The establishment of the nation of Israel*
- *The exile due to the apostasy of Israel*
- *And most importantly, a Hebrew would understand looking forward to the promised Messiah.*

*The big idea of Hebrews is to reiterate that Jesus IS the Messiah that they are looking for. That it is right to transfer their confidence and hope to Jesus, rather than the system of sacrifices that they historically held as the method of their salvation. The original audience is not weighing whether to be an atheist or a Christian, as a modern-day reader may be. The original audience already believed in God and is seeking assurance from the author that Jesus is all they need to be right with God.*

### **Day 1**

At the start of each session together, you could read the section of Scripture that will be covered that week. For instance, you could have someone in your group read Hebrews 1:1- 2:18 aloud as an overview.

The whole book of Hebrews is about Jesus and how He fulfills everything that the Hebrews were looking for. Each week, we identify something that Jesus is “better” than- that is where the title of the bible study comes from.

The three offices of Jesus (prophet, priest and king) are highlighted by the author in the first three verses- can your group find them?

### **Day 2**

Through God’s progressive revelation to His creation, He has spoken to man in many ways:

Personal Address- God’s direct words to Adam, Cain, Moses, Abraham etc....

Prophets- OT prophets spoke to the nation of Israel on behalf of God (in Isaiah 6:1-9 and Ezekiel 2:1-7)

Jesus- His words in the gospels

Scripture- this is the primary way we hear from God

At the time of the writing of Hebrews, many could have assumed that Jesus was just another angel (angels came and delivered messages to people in the OT, so this is not as far fetched as we might think). The author of Hebrews is hammering home that Jesus was not just another angel with another message. He was God. He was the Messiah that they had been waiting for, that their Scriptures prophesied about. Jesus was the exact imprint of God the Father.

### Day 3

The many OT passages in chapter 1 can be intimidating and hard to understand, but Jen will clarify a lot in the video. For the discussion before you see the video, here are some suggestions:

- identify the OT cross references- ladies could write them in their bibles
- read them aloud- read a little before and after in the OT to get the context
- talk about what the OT reference means, and how it is emphasizing the point the author is making about Jesus.

To help, in case you are struggling to understand the point of the OT references, here is a little help: Jesus is better than angels because Jesus was called a son. Jesus was worshipped by angels. Jesus rules. Jesus created. Jesus exists outside of time. Jesus will conquer.

The author will reference so much OT scripture- it is a great illustration of how well he knows the Scriptures, and how he assumed the audience would also know it so well!

Here is a little blurb on the phrase "begotten" from [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org)

The phrase "only begotten" translates the Greek word *monogenes*. This word is variously translated into English as "only," "one and only," and "only begotten." It's this last phrase ("only begotten" used in the KJV, NASB and the NKJV) that causes problems. False teachers have latched onto this phrase to try to prove their false teaching that Jesus Christ isn't God; i.e., that Jesus isn't equal in essence to God as the Second Person of the Trinity. They see the word "begotten" and say that Jesus is a created being because only someone who had a beginning in time can be "begotten." What this fails to note is that "begotten" is an English translation of a Greek word. As such, we have to look at the original meaning of the Greek word, not transfer English meanings into the text.

So what does *monogenes* mean? According to the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BAGD, 3rd Edition), *monogenes* has two primary definitions. The first definition is "pertaining to being the only one of its kind within a specific relationship." This is its meaning in Hebrews 11:17 when the writer refers to Isaac as Abraham's "only begotten son" (KJV). Abraham had more than one son, but Isaac was the only son he had by Sarah and the only son of the covenant. Therefore, it is the uniqueness of Isaac among the other sons that allows for the use of *monogenes* in that context.

The second definition is "pertaining to being the only one of its kind or class, unique in kind." This is the meaning that is implied in John 3:16 (see also John 1:14, 18; 3:18; 1 John 4:9). John was primarily concerned with demonstrating that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20:31), and he uses *monogenes* to highlight Jesus as uniquely God's Son—sharing the same divine nature as God—as opposed to believers who are God's sons and daughters by adoption (Ephesians 1:5). Jesus is God's "one and only" Son.

The bottom line is that terms such as "Father" and "Son," descriptive of God and Jesus, are human terms that help us understand the relationship between the different Persons of the Trinity. If you can understand the relationship between a human father and a human son, then you can understand, in part, the relationship between the First and Second Persons of the Trinity. The analogy breaks down if you try to take it too far and teach, as some pseudo-Christian cults (such as the Jehovah's Witnesses), that Jesus was literally "begotten" as in "produced" or "created" by God the Father.

#### **Day 4**

We hit the first warning in the beginning of chapter 2: "Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it."

Something important to note here, "drifting away" would not equate to losing one's salvation, (because remember we are talking about Hebrews- who had faith in a coming Messiah) rather "drifting away" would mean returning back to what they knew (self-reliance, system of sacrifice) and not anchoring themselves in the peace and hope obtained through Christ. It is the equivalent of being a believer but choosing to wander off the Torah Road, as we learned in our sermon series on 2 Peter.

Have you, or any of the ladies in your group ever felt like you have drifted away from the truth? What were the warning signs? How did it impact you? What got your attention to get yourself anchored back to the path of God? What keeps you from drifting?

## **Day 5**

Day five may be challenging to someone new to the Bible. Some of these questions were hard. Some of the words and definitions are hard. Encourage any newcomers to hang in there, and not be overwhelmed- you have to start somewhere. If you see a newcomer getting bogged down, encourage her to focus on the main things. We can always start by focusing on the main things, which are the plain things, and then build from there.

I think the progression of thought goes something like this:

Don't neglect what you have heard.

God has a plan for mankind.

It is a different plan, even than that of angels.

Man was meant to rule over earth, just as God rules over all of creation.

God wants mankind to be adopted into His family- called children of God, brothers to Jesus

Jesus made propitiation for the sins of man- Jesus did not do that for the angels.