

Hebrews

The Exalted Incarnate Son

Interpreting the Text:

1. Professors Attridge and Bartlett say that, while this letter is sometimes attributed to Paul and considered an Epistle of his, it is unlikely to have been written by Paul. The opening of this letter, or perhaps a sermon, reads very differently than any of Paul's other writing. What are some immediate comparisons you can make between the opening of Hebrews and the opening of other Pauline epistles?
2. The author's use of Hebrew scriptures may suggest that the recipients of this letter were familiar with these texts (hence, the letter to the Hebrews). How does this use of scripture work to bolster the author's argument that Jesus is the divine fulfillment of these prophecies?
3. We are told that this letter was likely meant to be heard rather than read. Try reading it aloud, either to a friend or yourself. What stands out from the text when heard? How might the original audience have received it?

Applying the Text:

1. The author suggests that Jesus, having been made "lower than the angels" sees each of us as his brother and sister, his siblings. How does this make you feel? In your prayer life, do you ever address petitions to Jesus, your brother?
2. Hebrews draws on texts that evoke "royal" imagery to support the claim that Jesus is king. How do kingship metaphors or depictions of Jesus feel to you in a contemporary time? Is royal imagery as powerful as it was when this letter was written?