



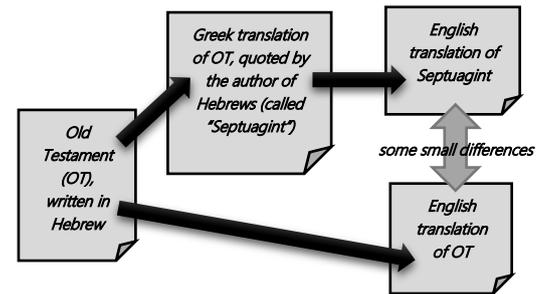
# Knowing what the Hebrews knew

Old Testament background for Hebrews 1:4-2:18



## Angels

In the author's version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint – see diagram), Deuteronomy 33:2 indicates that angels were involved when God gave the Law to Moses. It seems that this belief about angelic involvement was common at the time the New Testament was written (Acts 7:53, Galatians 3:19). Also:



Read Deuteronomy 32:36-43, the last part of Moses' final song. Note that angels are called to praise God, who is the deliverer, judge and restorer. *Verse 43 is quoted in Hebrews 1:6.*

Read Psalm 104. The Greek word translated as "messengers" in verse 4 can mean messengers in general, or angels. The Septuagint translates this as "angels". *Verse 4 is quoted in Hebrews 1:7.*

## Hoping for a king

Throughout Israel's history, the Holy Spirit inspired many songs (known as psalms) and prophecies about the king of Israel. David was regarded as the greatest king so far (eg Acts 13:21-22), but some of these songs and prophecies painted a picture of a king even more wonderful than him. Despite centuries of foreign oppression, the people of Israel maintained hope that one day their supreme king would arise. Below are some Old Testament references to the king of Israel, and in particular to that supreme king:



Read Psalm 2. *Verse 7 is quoted in Hebrews 1:5a.*  
Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17. *Verse 14 is quoted in Hebrews 1:5b.*  
Read Psalm 45. *Verses 6-7 are quoted in Hebrews 1:8-9.*  
Read Psalm 110. *Verse 1 is quoted in Hebrews 1:13.*



## Forever



Read Psalm 102. *Verses 25-27 are quoted in Hebrews 1:10-12.*

## A future for humanity

We may not be angels, and none of us is the supreme king, but God still has an extraordinary plan for us.



Read Psalm 8 for (among other things) an amazing summary of God's plan for humanity. *Verses 4-6 are quoted in Hebrews 2:6-8.*

The example/description of a righteous human who perseveres in faith, despite suffering, appears in various places in the Old Testament. Some of these passages also refer to the whānau of that righteous person.



Read Psalm 22. *Verse 22 is quoted in Hebrews 2:12.*  
Read Isaiah 8:1-18. *Verses 17 and 18 are quoted in Hebrews 2:13.*



# Engaging with the message

Questions & answers for Hebrews 1:4-2:18



## Hot spots

- 1) What's alive for you in this passage? (Things that stand out, "aha" moments, questions you have, etc)



## Digging into the passage

- 2) Note down as many links as you can find between the introduction (1:1-3) and this section (1:4-2:18).
  
- 3) When a key word is repeated a number of times in a passage, it's often an indication of the overall message. With this in mind, look for any key words that are repeated within 2:5-18. What are they, and what key ideas do you think the author may be trying to get across by repeating them?



## Connecting life and faith

- 4) The author warns the Hebrews about the danger of drifting away from the truth (2:1). Is it more likely for a person to suddenly stop following Jesus or to gradually drift away? Why?
  
- 5) The author suggests that the best guard against drifting away is to "listen very carefully to the truth we have heard" (2:1). What practical steps can you take to do this?
  
- 6) Suffering and dying are uncomfortable topics, but realities that we all encounter. What difference does this passage make for you on either topic (or both topics)?