

Agnes Wyman

Dr. Frank Chan

BIB 331RA Hermeneutics

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Identify various lines of evidence that support the argument that the letter to the Hebrews originated as a series of orally delivered messages.

The evidence supporting the argument that the letter to the Hebrews originated as a series of orally delivered messages includes the following:

1-The letter is written in a style of Greek, which is more like spoken than written Greek, suggesting that it was composed as a speech.

2-The letter is heavily reliant on the Old Testament and draws on ideas and images from the Jewish tradition. This suggests that it was crafted as a sermon for a Jewish audience, rather than a written document.

3-The letter is structured like a sermon, with a clear beginning and end, and with a series of arguments and points made throughout. This further suggests that it was composed as a spoken address.

4-The letter has many features in common with other ancient sermons, such as the use of rhetorical questions, the repetition of key words, phrases and use of stories and parables.

5-The letter contains several allusions to oral performance, such as the use of the phrase “word of exhortation” in Hebrews 13:22.

These pieces of evidence all point to the conclusion that the letter to the Hebrews was originally composed as a series of oral messages, rather than a written document.

Explanation:

The New Testament epistle known as “the Letter to the Hebrews” was written to a group of Jewish Christians. Since it addresses such key topics as the meaning of faith., the significance of Jesus Christ, and the connection between the Old Testament, it is a crucial text in Christian theology. Although the letter’s authorship is debated, it is generally agreed that it was written to Jewish Christians in the Roman Empire sometime in the first century C.E.

The letter to the Hebrews appears to have been as a series of speeches. The letter is written in an informal style of Greek that is closer to spoken language than written. This points to its original intended form as a spoken statement rather than a written one. This is bolstered by the letter’s reliance on the Old Testament and its use of Jewish imagery and concepts. That it was intended as a sermon for a Jewish audience rather than written a record strengthens the argument that it was written as a sermon.

The letter format also lends credence to the idea that it was originally a series of speeches . Like a sermon, the letter presents a succession of arguments and ideas before and after a clear introduction and conclusion. This indicates that the piece was written with the intention of being delivered orally. As added bonus, the letter shares many characteristics of ancient sermons, such as the use of rhetorical inquires, the repeating of significant words and phrases, and the incorporation of stories and parables. This adds to the evidence that a verbal presentation was planned.

As a final point, the text makes multiple references to oral performances, such as the term “word of exhortation” in Hebrews 13:22. This expression suggests that the letters was meant to be read aloud, as it is used frequently throughout the New Testament to describe a sermon or address.