

# The Book of Hebrews

## 1. The Supremacy of Christ



### Hebrews Chapter 1

*The Superiority of Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2)*

**1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,**

Hebrews 1:1 and 1:2 contrast the Old and New Covenants. The Old Covenant came from God through prophets. The New Covenant from Jesus Christ.

**Various times:** The inspired Hebrew Scriptures (Old Covenant) spans a 1000- year period. From the books Moses 1450 BC, to the last book, Malachi 425 BC, the time span of revelation was 1000 years, not including Job, which is dated to the patriarchal period.

**Various ways:** God walked with Adam, but following Adam's sin God's communication with man was distant and sporadic. God would communicate with man, through representatives, who would make his will known. Abraham, Moses, and Joshua saw God appear in Human form. Daniel received messages through Gabriel, by dreams and visions. The method of revelation varied, some more direct than others.

On Mt. Sinai, at the request of the children of Israel, God choose to speak through prophets, rather than direct to the people. Man's sin broke the relationship between man and (Isaiah 59:1-4) God. A sacrificial system was put in place to atone for sins, and to point to the ultimate fulfillment of sacrifice, the death of Messiah (Daniel 9:26, Isaiah 53)

16 "according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.'

17 "And the Lord said to me: 'What they have spoken is good.

18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. Deuteronomy 18:16-17

2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear. Isaiah 59:2

**Prophets:** Prophets were individuals who communicated God's word to the people; Priests were individuals who communicated man's request to God.

**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;**

Just who is Jesus Christ? Is he Liar, Lord or Lunatic? Hebrews Chapter 1 defines Jesus for the Jewish believer in the first century and for believers today. Verse 2 clearly declares, Jesus the person is beyond anything the world could imagine. Jesus separates the Old and New Covenants. In the Old, God communicated through men to man, in the New God communicates directly with man dwelling in human flesh.

The 59<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah is the Gospel revealed in the Old Testament. The first 15 verses paint the hopeless situation of man, but in verse 16 God in Heaven enters Humanity, as the "Arm of the Lord". The title of the suffering Messiah of Isaiah 52:12-53:13.

16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him. Isaiah 59:16

1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Isaiah 53:1

**These last days:** The coming of Messiah is seen as event at the “End of Days” (Daniel 12;13). From the time of Christ moving forward, God is wrapping up the standard mode of sin. God is now communicating direct with man through “His Son”. Israel’s failure to recognize Messiah, allowed the promises of Messiah’s kingdom to be transferred to the “Church” on a temporary basis until the “fullness of the Gentiles” (Romans 11; 25), at which point Israel relationship will be restored.

**By His Son:** In contrast to past communication, God would communicate through “His Son”. The two titles most used by Jesus in his ministry years were “Son of God” and “Son of Man”. The Messiah would be fully God and fully man. The identity of Messiah is “Son” of the Father, Psalm 2:7, 12 and 2 Samuel 7:14.

**Appointed heir of all things:** When Adam fell he lost man’s inheritance, for this reason Satan could offer Jesus all the kingdoms of the Earth if he would just worship him.(Luke 4;5-6). Christ redeemed what Adam lost, and so in redemption he became heir as “Son of Man”(Psalm 2:8). But Jesus was more than a man, he was “Son of God” and “Son of Man” which made heir of all things. (Romans 8:17)

**Through whom also He made the worlds;** The writer of Hebrews wants the Jewish nation to fully understand just who it is they have committed their salvation too. Jesus Christ is the source of creation. Through Jesus, the Universe came into being. The Greek word used is “Aionas”<sup>1</sup> which means “ages”. Meaning Jesus is not just responsible for the creation of matter, but for the creation of matter, space and time. (John 1;1-3, Colossians 1:16,17, Ephesians 3:9, Isaiah 44:24, Isaiah 45:12,18)

#### *The Preeminence of Christ (Hebrews 1:3)*

**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,**

In addition to Christ being “Creator” and “Heir” of all things, Christ is the visible presence of God in the Universe. Through Christ’s all things exist. The writer of Hebrews want his readers to understand, the person called Jesus Christ, is God manifested in Humanity.

**the brightness of His glory;** Jesus is the visible manifestation of God in the World. He manifested God in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Greek word for brightness is *Apaugasma* which means to “Send for light”. In Ezekiel and Exodus Jesus is called the “Glory of the Lord”, who appeared as the manifestation of God’s Glory.

10 Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. Exodus 16:10

26 And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it.

27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around.

28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking. Ezekiel 1:26-28

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. I Corinthians 10:4

**express image of his person;** Jesus is God Manifest in every way. Phillip asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus replied, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say,

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<sup>1</sup> **aijwn** *Aion* (ahee-ohn’); Word Origin: Greek, Noun Masculine, Strong #: 165

'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9). The Greek word for express image is *carakthḗr Charakter*, which means the exact expression of any person or thing. Jesus is the "Arm of Lord" (Isaiah 53:1, 59:16) who came into the earth

**upholding all things**; Jesus Christ, is the source of existence. Without Him the universe would fall apart and cease to exist. "Aions" Eons ago Jesus spoke the world into existence, and He upholds its existence by His word alone.

11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." Revelation 4:11

**by Himself purged our sins**: Jesus was the fulfillment of the picture of the "Passover Lamb" (Revelation 5:6, Exodus 12) who was killed and its blood placed on the door lintels. The Lamb was a "type" which would ultimately be fulfilled when the "Arm of the Lord" was crucified by the Romans.

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all  
Isaiah 53:5-6

Jesus is the only hope of redemption for mankind.

24 "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." John 8:24

**sat down at the right hand**: The rejection of Messiah and his returning to the Father are foreshadowed in the book of Daniel. In Daniel we see "One like the Son of Man", the title Jesus used for Himself. "Son of Man" means descendent of mankind, indicating his incarnation, "Coming with the clouds" indicates his future return. "He came to the Ancient of Days" foreshadows his return to the Father's right hand. This same "Son of Man" is then given an eternal kingdom where He will be served or worshiped by all mankind.

13 "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7:13-14

Jesus **sat down** because his job was finished. In the earthly Temple there are no seats for the Priest because their job was never complete, there were always more sacrifices, for more sins.

#### *Jesus Christ Superior to the Angels (Hebrews 1:4-14)*

The writer to the Hebrews wants to make sure, his readers have not fallen into a false doctrine, equating Jesus as a powerful angel. In the first three verses, the writer defines Jesus, the superiority of his Covenant and his ministry. In this section, he contrasts Jesus to the angels, to remove the option, from those who would make Jesus a created being.

Angels are spirit beings with bodies, not having flesh and bone, capable of appearing in human form (Hebrews 13:2). Angels are intelligent and have free-will (Ezekiel 28:14). Angels have emotions, they rejoice when a sinner is saved (Luke 15:10). They are inquisitive and not all knowing (Daniel 12:5). Angels are not subject to death, one third of the angels rebelled with Lucifer against God (Revelation 12:4, Matthew 25:41). Fallen angels are known as demons who along with Satan oppose God's kingdom (Ephesians 6:12). Angels are divided into ranks, with Michael being the archangel (Chief angel) (Jude 1:9). Angels cannot procreate, but were all created at once, they are an unknown number (Daniel 7:10).

**4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?**

**having Become:** Translated by the KJV as “Being made”, this verse is often used by cults to teach that Jesus was a created being, and not God incarnate. The Greek word is *nomai Ginomai*, which means “to become” is the word used in this verse, the word for “made” is “poieo”. Jesus was incarnated into the body of man, being made lower than the angels but as a faithful and obedient “Son” he was elevated above the angels. Christ did not become the “Son” until his incarnation.

**You are my Son** This is a quote from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Psalm, written 1000 BC by David, foretelling the nature and person of the Messiah. The Messiah would be the, “Son of God”. He did not become Son until a specific time. Prior to his incarnation, he was God in Heaven, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the trinity (Phil. 2:6).

**Today I have begotten You:** The “Sonship” of Messiah began at a certain point in time, at the incarnation, Jesus was begotten. The Greek word for begotten is **gennaw Gennao**, which means to be born. In the Gospel of John (John 1;18), Jesus is called the “Only” begotten **monogenhō Monogenes** distinguishing Him from any other .

**“I will be to Him a Father”:** This quote is taken from 2 Samuel 7:14, describing the relationship between the Messiah, “Son of David” and God. Jesus asked in the Temple how could David, call the Messiah his Lord, when the Messiah was his descendent.

35 Then Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, "How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?"  
36 "For David himself said by the Holy Spirit: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."'  
37 "Therefore David himself calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?" And the common people heard Him gladly. Mark 12:35-37

**6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." 7 And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire." 8 But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.**

The writer of Hebrews, continues in his definition of who Christ is by showing that after his incarnation the Son continued to be God, he was fully God and fully man.

**Firstborn:** ( See also Colossians 1;18) Jehovah Witnesses and other cults try to make Jesus into a created being, using the word “Firstborn, they attempt to argue Jesus is like the rest of us, He came into being at a point in time. The Greek word for Firstborn is **πρωτοτοκος Protokos** which does not refer to time but position. Esau was the first-born but lost his position because of sin and Jacob the second born became “Firstborn. This also happened to Reuben, the son born first to Jacob (Genesis 49:3). The firstborn was the one held the right of inheritance. Adam was born first but lost his right of inheritance, Jesus came to redeem what Adam lost and became first-born. The 89<sup>th</sup> Psalm foretold of the Messiah being placed in the position of “Firstborn’

27 Also I will make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth. Psalm 89:27

**“Let all the angels of God worship Him”:** Jesus prior to his incarnation was God and after his incarnation was still God. For this reason, Angels were commanded to worship Jesus following his incarnation. Again, we see the angels and all of Heaven worshipping the Lamb, Jesus Christ, who is in the midst of the Throne (Revelation 5:6).

13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"  
14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever. Revelation 5;13-14

If Jesus were not God, then the Angels would be breaking the 3<sup>rd</sup> command, to not worship false Gods. (Exodus 20:5)

**“Your throne, O God”:** We saw the angles proclaim the deity of Jesus who was incarnated, now the Father in Heaven, proclaims the “Son” is fully God. (Psalm 45:6-7)

**9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions." 10 And: "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail." 13 But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?**

**You have loved righteousness:** (Psalm 45:7) The Messiah came to redeem what man had lost. In order for redemption to place, He had to become our “Kinsman” redeemer. Jesus was fully man, and fully God, He was tempted in every way like us but he did not sin (Hebrews 4:15, Luke 4:2). His righteousness as sinless man justified his position elevation following the resurrection. (Ephesians 1;20-21).

**Therefore God, Your God;** Again Christ is contrasted to the angels who are called “Companions”, the Father calls the Son, God. The Son who humbled Himself and was found in the form of a servant. (Phil. 2:6).

**You Lord, in the beginning:** (Psalm 102:25-27) Jesus is God, who is eternal. He created the world, and He will exist when the finite universe melts away.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.  
2 Peter 3:10

**Ministering Spirits:** Angels are created beings, who minister to the heirs of salvation, those who have trusted in Jesus Christ. Angels are fellow servants, who along with the saints, work for the Kingdom of God. When John in the book of Revelation had seen the incredible things to come, he was overwhelmed and fell in worship at the feet of an angel who accompanied him. The angel rebuked John and said,

"See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10

The angel was a fellow servant. Jesus is contrasted to the angels, but the saved will one day be like the angles, Jesus described the position of man in the world to come;

30 "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.  
Matthew 22:30

Man in fact will be involved in the judgment of Angels at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.

3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?  
1 Cor. 6:3

The writer of Hebrews, want his Jewish audience to understand, Jesus Christ is God incarnate. Jesus is not an angel, but God. His Covenant is far superior to the earlier Mosaic Covenant revealed through men. This New-Covenant came by God Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ.