

Hebrews: Chapter 1

Heb 1:1 God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

- The first of the patriarchs/ancestors that God spoke to was Adam after his creation and when He told him that he could eat of all the trees of the garden, “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it” (*Gen 2:16-17*). Thus, when Adam sinned against the ordinance and did not protect Eve from the tree that she also knew was off limits, God revealed His ultimate plan to save mankind (*Gen 3:15*). No longer would they have a One on one relationship (*Gen 3:8*) and soon God’s message would come through His spokesmen, the prophets. Here, the writer inserts a reminder of that plan which had been instituted some three decades before this epistle was penned.

- sundry times and in diverse manners- Throughout the *many portions* of O.T. time God spoke in various forms as ways to reveal Himself. Through a burning bush (*Ex 3:4-6*), dreams (*Gen 37:5-11, 40:8; Dan 2:19*), a “low whisper” (*1 King 19:13*) and in various other ways.

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Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds;

- these- specifically between Pentecost and 70 AD, but also last- Gk.2018- *farthest, final* (of place or time), days- Gk.2250- figuratively a *period* (always defined more or less clearly by the context), thus these (*from the time of the writing forward*)- reveals the context as being during the Gospel Dispensation (*a.k.a. the “thousand years” of Christian rule which coincides with Satan’s binding- Rev 20*), which began after the resurrection with the coming of “holy city New Jerusalem” (*Rev 21*), i.e., the church on the day of Pentecost (*Act 2*). But “when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son” Who was born “under the Law” (*Gal 4:4*) and from that point forward He began speaking to man through Him. Christ became our High Priest via His initiation into that office (*see His baptism in Matthew 3*) while living under the Old Covenant. No longer were the Jews to rely on Moses and the prophets for instruction since Christ’s crucifixion cancelled “the record of debt that stood against [them] with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross” (*Col 2:14*). Ever since His being transfigured before Peter, James and John, along with Moses and Elijah (*the two that represented the Law and prophets and the two witnesses of Rev 11:3*), God commanded obedience to His “beloved Son” (*Mk 9:7, see also Mat 5:17-19*).

- appointed Heir of all things- According to Gary Hampton, “Christ did not assume authority until after His resurrection”. Christ Himself declared such while commissioning His disciples when He said “All authority” was “**given**” to Him (*Mat 28:18*). Before He assumed such, “He learned obedience through what He suffered” (*Heb 5:8*) through the “body... prepared for [Him]” (*10:5*). Such authority was given Him “because He is the Son of Man” (*Jn 5:27*), i.e., He, at that point, was able to be “tempted as we are, yet without sin” (*4:15*). And His temptation did not occur until after His baptism (*Mat 3*). (*emp. added*)

Rom 1:3 concerning His Son, Who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was **declared to be** the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness **by His resurrection** from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, (*emp. added*)
(See also Rom 8:16)

- by Whom-

Gen 1:26 Then God (Heb.430- *gods* in the ordinary sense; but specifically used [in the plural thus, especially with the article] of the supreme *God*) said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, after **Our** likeness." (*emp. added*)

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was **with God**, and the Word **was God**. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were **made through Him**, and without Him was not any-thing made that was made. (*emp. added*)

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Heb 1:3 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 on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

- Christ resembles a camera's *off flash* of His Father's *dignity, glory, honor, praise and worship*, the exact *copy* or [figuratively] *representation* of the Father's spiritual *essence* or substance, but for a while in a physical form.

Joh 14:8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know Me, Philip? Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

- Christ is said to *bear* the "responsibility for the 'providential government' of the universe" (*Gary Hampton*) by the word of His power- which, according to Rom 1:16, refers to the Gospel as God's "power" through which alone He can save all of mankind. According to Rom 8:22 "we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in pains of childbirth until now". The natural forces of the earth (*between childbirth and "thorns and thistles"*- Gen 3:18) began a downward spiral of decay once man sinned and was cast from Eden, having introduced separation from God into reality. Nature has been hostile to man ever since, which is God's will, as a reminder of the destructive consequences of sin (*Gen 6:5-7*). All this hostility will end with the final resurrection and "the redemption of our bodies" (*Rom 8:23*), but in the meantime the Gospel has the only power by which "Death is swallowed up in victory" (*1 Cor 15:54*).

- purged our sins- After Christ became our High Priest (*Mat 3*) "He exercised His priestly office in offering His own blood in sacrifice for our sins" (*Gary Hampton*). By that blood, those who lived under the Roman oppression "conquered [the dragon] ... for they loved not their lives even unto death" and only through "the blood of the Lamb" (*Rev 12:11*) did the whole process of redemption of man and nature begin to take place. (*Rom 9:11-12; Dan 2:45*)

- There is no more powerful a position than being on the right hand of the Majesty on High. Christ said He "will grant [those who conquer] to sit with [Him] on [His] throne, as [He] also conquered and sat down with [His] Father on His throne" (*Rev*

3:21). He was there from the beginning, but it was after His Passion and return that such a position took on a whole new role with “all authority” having been given to Him. It is from that position, as our N.T. High Priest, He has promised to return for His bride the church to “transform” her “to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him to subject all things to Himself” (*Php 3:21*).

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Heb 1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

- being made- Jesus left the authority He had in Heaven to accomplish the Father’s will on earth to redeem man back to Him. He became lower than the angels “because of the suffering of death” (2:9) since angels cannot die. The only way Christ as Deity could die was to appear in human form so that the “body” that was “prepared” for Him could die, thus allowing Christ to “taste (*Gk.1089- experience*) death for everyone” (2:9). After His Passion and ascension, that authority (*and more*) was returned to Him.

Php 2:5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but **made Himself nothing**, taking the form of a servant, being born in the **likeness of men**. 8 And being **found in human form**, He humbled Himself by **becoming obedient to the point of death**, even death on a cross. (*emp. added*)

- name- *Gk.3686- authority*. Christ “inherited” (*was “given”*) His authority (*ultimate but imminent*) “to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man” (*Jn 5:27*), i.e., “He had to be made like (*Gk.3666- assimilate*) His brothers in every respect... to make propitiation (*Gk.2433- atone for*) for the sins of the people” (2:17). That and the fact that no angel could have done for man what the Messiah could. He is the *essence* of God, not a created being as are the angels, and only such perfection would God accept as a final offering for man’s sin, as “a lamb without blemish or spot” (*Ex 12:1-13; 1 Pet 1:19*).

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Heb 1:5 For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?

- Nowhere in scripture has God said that angels were to be worshipped. When the Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy for telling the paralytic his sins were forgiven saying “who can forgive sins but God alone?” (*Mk 2:7*), they were ascribing Deity to Him which has never been ascribed to angels.

- begotten- *Gk.4416*- From 4413 (*foremost [in time, place, order or importance]*) and 5088 (*to produce: -bear, be born*). In John 1:14 Jesus is called “the only begotten (*Gk.3439- only born, that is, sole: - [child]*) of the Father” (*KJV*) but in Revelation 1:5, Jesus is called “the first begotten (*Gk.4416*) of the dead” (*KJV*).

As Thompson writes, “In the Old Testament, the *firstborn* son was the recipient of special favors and privileges (*cf. Gen 48:18; Gen 43:33*). Thus, the term came to apply to one who is specially favored (*cf. Heb 12:23*). In Psa 89:27 the king is referred to as God’s *firstborn*. Thus, when Jesus is called the firstborn, the author is referring to His pre-eminence as One Who has a unique and favored relationship to God.”

Gary Hampton

In Hebrews 2:12 Jesus refers to the faithful saints as “My brothers” (*see also Jn 3:1-6 as to where we become Christ’s brethren through the re-birth process in obedience to the ordinance of baptism*), thus showing Him at first to be the “only begotten” when He initially came to earth and then after His Resurrection to be known as the “first begotten” (*first denoting others were to follow- Col 2:12; 1 Thes 4:14*). When the Father said this day as the day of Christ being begotten, what day was God referring to? This could refer to Christ’s introduction by the Father at His baptism but more than likely in the context it refers to the day of His resurrection as the “firstborn of the dead” (*Rev 1:5*).

- will be/shall be- These short phrases are somewhat perplexing. Jesus said in His prayer to the Father before His Passion in the presence of His disciples “And now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You **before** the world existed.” (*Jn 17:5*) That Father/Son relationship has always existed throughout eternity so why here could it be misunderstood to be on the contrary? It must have to do with the new (*all- Mat 28:18*) authority that Jesus received before He ascended back to the “right hand of the Majesty on High” (*1:3*), authority, as noted above, that He didn’t possess before that time. So, even though their relationship is eternal, at Christ’s return to Heaven it resumed at a higher level. But before that, Jesus “was made **lower** than the angels” and “crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death” (*2:9*). So, for a while He was separated from the Father only to return to Him after “He learned obedience” (*5:8*) while “being found in human form [when] He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (*Php 2:8*). He “was declared (*Gk.3724- to appoint, decree, specify*) to be the Son of God in power (*Gk.1411- force; specifically, miraculous power [usually by implication of a miracle itself]*) according to the Spirit of holiness **by** His resurrection from the dead” (*Rom 1:4*). (*emp. added*)

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Heb 1:6 And again, when He bringeth in the Firstbegotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.

- worship- *Gk.4352- prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore)*. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem “a multitude of the heavenly host” appeared to “shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night” and said, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased” (*Lk 2*). Even Satan noted how the angels would take care of Him telling Jesus to throw Himself off “the pinnacle of the temple” quoting *Psa 91:11-12* how the angels would “guard” Him and would “bear [Him] up, lest [He] strike [His] foot against a stone”. After Christ suffered Satan’s temptations (*Heb 2:18*) “the devil left Him... [*and*] angels came and were ministering to Him” (*Mat 4:11*). Also, in the garden after He asked the Father to “remove this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done. And there appeared to Him an angel from Heaven, strengthening Him” (*Lk 22:42-43*).

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Heb 1:7 And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

- This is in reference to one such incident found in 2 Kings where Elisha was able to know what the king of Syria was going to do and thus warn the king of Israel. Once

the king of Syria found out how his plans were being known he sent to seize Elisha which startled Elisha's servant.

2Ki 6:15 When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of **horses and chariots of fire** all around Elisha. (*emp. added*)

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Heb 1:8 But unto the Son *He saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of Thy kingdom.

- throne- Gk.2362- *power*. It is from this throne that Christ "makes intercession for the transgressors" (*Isa 53:12*) as only Deity can and from where He also rules the nations "with a rod of iron" (*Rev 19:15*).

- forever and ever-

Dan 2:44 And in the days of those kings (*Caesars*) the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom (*the church*) that shall **never be destroyed**, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall **stand forever**, (*emp. added*)

- Christ's kingdom is the eternal church (*The Eternal Kingdom- F.W. Mattox*). And in her dwells the "will" of God, or rule (*scepter of uprightness*), as per the model prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray ("*Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven*"- *Mat 6:10*).

Gen 49:10 The **scepter shall not depart from Judah**, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Tribute (*Heb.7886- tranquil; Shiloh, an epithet of the Messiah*) comes to him; and to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (*emp. added*) (*See also 1 Chr 29:23; Heb 7:14; 6:19*)

- Ultimately it was God's throne that David and those after him ruled from. The rule belonged to God and was thus returned to its rightful owner when the O.T. became "obsolete" (*8:13*) once it was nailed to the cross (*Col 2:14*). Christ's resurrection from the dead to "never die again" (*Rom 6:9*) gave Him "all authority in Heaven and on earth" (*rod of iron- Rev 2:27*) to sit on "the throne of the Lord".

Act 2:30 Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that He would set one of his descendants **on his throne**, 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. (*emp. added*)

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Heb 1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

- Because of His nature, Christ loved righteousness and hated iniquity and thus He "knew no sin" (*2 Cor 5:21*), therefore He was anointed (*Gk.5548- to consecrate to an*

office or religious service) into the office of N.T. High Priest. God (*the Father*) calling God (Himself) Your (Christ's) God in this context indicates Christ's relationship with the Father as doing "nothing on [His] own authority, but [speaking] just as the Father taught [Him]" (*Jn 8:28*). In this case, Christ, having earned it, was consecrated to hold the office of High Priest as Intercessor between God and man, with the olive oil (*Gk.1637*) of (*Gk.20*) exultation. Kings (*1 Sam 15:1*) and prophets (*1 King 19:16*) and priests (*Exo 40:13*) of the O.T. were anointed. Christ is all three.

- fellows- Thayer: "*partner* (in work, office, dignity)". Throughout the O.T. Christ appeared as "the Angel of the Lord" (*as in Ex 23:20-23*) where that phrase is so often mentioned. Angels were messengers from God and as "The" Angel of the Lord (*Christ pre-incarnate*), Christ's position was definitely above that of His fellow, yet lower ranking, fellows.

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Heb 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands:

Heb 1:11 They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

Heb 1:12 And as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.

- Staying with the focus being on Christ (*v. 8*), God the Father continues to show the difference between the angels and Christ. Christ was there in the beginning as part of the Godhead when God created the physical heavens and earth (*Gen 1:26; Jn 1:1-3*), before which He created the angels (*Job 38:6-7*). And since Christ is Spiritual Deity, His nature is eternal, but things created can be destroyed and will be since God "has given Him the authority to execute judgment" (*Jn 5:27*). (*See also 12:27*)

Psa 102:25 Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. 26 They will perish, but You will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, 27 but You are the same, and Your years have no end.

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Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?

- Sin "brings forth death" (*Jas 1:15*) and since Jesus never sinned but gave Himself to die for other's sins (*Gal 1:4*), He has conquered death through the resurrection. That gave Him the right to sit "with [His] Father on His throne" (*Rev 3:21*). As stated above, angels are created 'spiritual' beings (*not physical thus without what the Law required for the remission of sins; blood- 9:22*) and the only sacrifice God would accept for the final offering for sins (*10:12*) had to be of the ultimate source of perfection; Deity (*thus the body prepared for Deity to inhabit*). And even though He conquered death, death still exists as His enemy since it separates His creation from Him through sin. (*See also Psa 110:1; Mat 22:41-46; Act 2:34-36*.)

1Co 15:24 Then comes the end, when He (*Christ*) delivers the kingdom (*His bride the church*) to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. (*Rev 20:14*) 27 For "God has put all things in subjection under His feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that He is excepted Who put all things in subjection under Him. 28 When all

things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to Him Who put all things in subjection under Him, that God may be all in all.

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Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

- One such ministration is found in Luke 16:22 with the death of Lazarus when he “was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side” (*Paradise*). Another role they played had to do with the delivery of God’s message to His people (2:2; *Act 7:53*; *Gal 3:19*). And because of that, they undoubtedly play a role in attending to them who shall be heirs of salvation (*i.e., faithful saints*).

Rom 8:14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by Whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Worksheet

Hebrews: Introduction & Chapter 1

1. Who is most thought to have authored the letter to the Hebrews?
2. Name the first patriarch that God spoke to.
3. After speaking through the patriarchs, who was the next group that God spoke through?
4. After speaking through the prophets, Who was God’s final Spokesperson?
5. What do “these last days” refer to in the context of verse 2 and when did they begin?
6. Through what does Christ “uphold the universe”?
7. Explain the significance of Christ’s “name” as compared to the angels.
8. If Christ is eternal, explain why God said “today I have begotten You” in verse 5.
9. What individuals were anointed in the O.T. and how does that relate to Christ?
10. From verses 10-12, explain the importance of the eternal nature of Christ.
11. As “ministering spirits” what are two of the many functions angels serve?

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