

Christ Is Superior to the Prophets

“His Son”

Hebrews 1:1-3

Verse one and the first part of verse two serve as an introduction to this prologue of the book.

The text begins with “God,” and fittingly so. Considering the key word, as we saw in the overview of the book, is the word “better,” there is no one who could make anything “better” than God, and it is through His Son and the price He paid for our sins that we have a “better” relationship with Him.

Taking that thought of “better” into mind, we need to be careful we don’t think that the book of Hebrews is saying that the Old Testament, the old covenant, was of little or no value because there was a better one coming. That’s not what the term “better” indicates. The Greek word for “better” (κρείσσων) comes from a root word (κράτος) which means “stronger.” With that thought in mind, when Hebrews speaks of a “better” way, it’s saying that the price Jesus paid for our sins was better in that it was stronger, held more authority and power than the blood of animal sacrifice.

The contrast in these verses is between the way God spoke in the Old Testament and how He speaks now, especially and particularly as it relates to the revelation of the plan for man’s redemption. Then, it was “at sundry times and in divers manners.” The revelations of the Old Testament were varied over the span of time in which they were given (“at sundry times”) and were varied nature (“in divers manners”) – dreams, visions, sometimes directly from Jehovah, etc. They varied in form – historical

records, prophecy, poetry, etc. The revelations in the New Testament center and are based upon the redeeming work of God the Son. He is the "full revelation of God" found throughout. What the Old Testament prophesied is now fulfilled in the New. Jesus Himself said He came to fulfill the law, and His life and sacrificial death did just that – He has spoken finally and completely. There is no more revelation to come.

"They were various in nature and in form: fragments of the whole truth, presented in manifold forms, in shifting hues of separated colour: Christ is the full revelation of God, Himself the pure light, uniting in His one Person the whole spectrum" (Alford).

God spoke "unto the fathers" – this is one of several references throughout the book that indicates to whom it was written, and why it is called "The Epistle to the Hebrews." The "fathers" is a term used for the ancestors of the Jewish people found in several verses in the New Testament (John 7:22; Rom. 9:5; 15:8). "By the prophets" isn't just referring to the prophetic books or prophetic utterances but is referencing the writers of the Old Testament as a whole.

The last days spoken of is the time in which we live that began with the earthly ministry of Christ and the message of the gospel, that culminated in the start of the church age. The world has been in "the last days" for almost 2,000 years.

"The prophets" were men to whom God revealed the truth of the coming Messiah. They knew they were inferior in every way to the Saviour – they were the voice through whom God spoke. When Jesus came, however, God no longer spoke through man about the Messiah, He spoke directly through the Messiah

to man, both verbally and through His work and now His Word. That's what is meant by the title of this section: Christ is superior to the prophets.

I. HE IS SUPERIOR IN POSITION

A. "*Whom He hath appointed heir of all things*" – vs. 2

1. One of the more difficult things for us to fully comprehend is the truth that Jesus Christ was both God and man at the same time while on earth, and as man, He put Himself under subjection to the will of God the Father, and that is seen throughout the book of Hebrews (and the entirety of the New Testament for that matter).
2. Jesus Christ was appointed heir because He was the Son of God. It's a term that every Israelite would have been very familiar with, and they would have immediately understood its implications. Taking into account the fact that God owns everything there is, the Son of God would be heir of all there is.

A wonderful truth to interject here is that because we are sons of God in Christ, we also inherit all things with Christ, which is why the terminology is how it is on the Son of God being heir to what is already His as God.

Romans 8:16–17

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer

with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Revelation 21:7

⁷ He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

B. "Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" – vs. 3

1. "Sat down" – this is a term that points to a formal and dignified act, and indicates work being completed. The work, of course, is that of redemption – that work is finished and His work as intercessor is now in place, seen in the book of Hebrews as that of our Great High Priest.
2. "On the right hand" – position historically of one of authority. In the New Testament, it is seen as a position of exaltation (Acts 2:33) and one of intercession (Rom. 8:34).

Acts 2:33

³³ Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Romans 8:34

³⁴ Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

This position is one that is seen lasting until all enemies (the final being death, 1 Cor. 15:26-28) have been subdued unto Him. Once the work that Jesus Christ came

to do is ultimately and finally finished, He will lay aside that part of His nature that made Him man and resume His role as co-equal in the Godhead (“that God may be all in all”). This is not to say that when Jesus was on earth that He was not God, nor that He was any less God – it’s to recognize the submission He displayed to the Father while here as fully man.

3. “Of the Majesty on high” – a name for God the Father.

II. HE IS SUPERIOR IN POWER

A. *“By whom also he made the worlds” – vs. 2*

This doesn’t need much explanation. The Genesis account of creation clearly states that “God created” the worlds. This is another reference to show that Jesus Christ was God.

[Isaiah 45:12](#)

¹² I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

[Isaiah 45:18](#)

¹⁸ For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.

[John 1:1-3](#)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² The same was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Colossians 1:16-17

¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

B. "Upholding all things by the word of his power" – vs. 3

He didn't just create all things and then let "nature take over," as some teach (a principle of theistic evolution), but He is still in control of all of creation. Nothing happens by accident, and nothing takes Him by surprise. The verse just mentioned above in Colossians 3:17 points to this as well.

III. HE IS SUPERIOR IN PERSON

A. "Who being the brightness of his glory"

1. "Who being" – while He was here on earth
2. "The brightness" – Christ was the radiance that beams from the "Majesty on high," that face of God that was described as so bright that Moses had to be hid from it lest he be consumed. As man, our Saviour is the one by whom we perceive God, "or by which God is made known to us in his real perfections" (Barnes).
3. "Of his glory" – by "His glory" is meant the expression of the divine attributes collectively. "It is the unfolded fullness of the divine perfections" (Vincent).

B. "The express image of his person"

1. "The express image" – χαρακτήρ – transliterated in the English word "character" as in a printed letter or symbol. It was a term used in ancient times for an impression made by a mold, an exact copy in every detail of the thing engraved.

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2. "Of his person" – Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the very image, the exact impression of God in bodily form. This is another time where the Bible shows that Jesus is God. If He wasn't, He could not be "the express image of his (the Father's) person."

IV. HE IS SUPERIOR IN PURIFICATION

"WHEN HE BY HIMSELF PURGED OUR SINS"

A. "When he" (himself and no other) – Jesus Christ the Son of God

B. "By himself" – as is stated later in the book of Hebrews, it wasn't through the blood of animal sacrifice that we are cleansed from sin, but through His own blood, and His alone.

Hebrews 9:12

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but

by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

1. This phrase hearkens back to Genesis 22:8, in the biblical account of Abraham's willingness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, where Abraham answered Isaac's question as to where the lamb for the sacrifice was, and Abraham replied, "God will provide himself a lamb..." This is put in such a way to say that He Himself is the Lamb.
2. Unfortunately, most commentators have removed the phrase "by himself" from their comments because they say it is from a rejected reading, and the only Bibles that have this phrase in them are those taken from the Textus Receptus.

C. "Purged our sins" – purified us from the stain and penalty of sin and made us pure in God's eyes. We know this was done by the shedding of His blood for the sins of all mankind for all time.

[John 1:29](#)

²⁹ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

[1 John 1:7](#)

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

[Hebrews 9:13-14](#)

¹³ For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean,

sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: ¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 9:26

²⁶ For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The truth of purging our sins comes up again in chapter 10 and we will address it in further detail there, as well as other areas of the book where the principle is taught.

Hebrews 10:1-2

¹ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

Conclusion: Some of the most wonderful truths of our Saviour are found in these first few verses of the book of Hebrews. They outline for us the magnificence of Christ and the wonder of who He is. This prologue is essential for an understanding of the importance of the book of Hebrews and serve as a motivating factor in any study of it.

To the artist He is the One Altogether Lovely.

To the architect He is the Chief Cornerstone.

To the astronomer He is the Sun of Righteousness.
To the baker He is the Living Bread.
To the banker He is the Hidden Treasure.
To the biologist He is the Life.
To the carpenter He is the Sure Foundation.
To the doctor He is the Great Physician.
To the educator He is the Great Teacher.
To the farmer He is the Sower and Lord of the Harvest.
To the florist He is the Lily of the Valley.
To the geologist He is the Rock of Ages.
To the horticulturist He is the True Vine.
To the judge He is the Righteous One.
To the juror He is the True Witness.
To the jeweler He is the Pearl of Great Price.
To the editor He is the Good Tidings of Great Joy.
To the oculist He is the Light of the Eyes.
To the philosopher He is Wisdom.
To the Printer He is the True Type.
To the servant He is the Good Master.
To the student He is the Incarnate Truth.
To the toiler He is the Giver of Rest.
To the Sinner He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.
To the Christian, He is the Son of the Living God, the Savior, the Redeemer and Lord!

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