

WEEK ONE

HEBREWS 1

DAY ONE

Read *Hebrews 1* through twice. The first time through the chapter, simply read the text. Do not write any notes regarding the chapter at this time. The second time through the chapter, circle or underline key words or phrases and write down any questions or thoughts the chapter leaves you with in the margin. If the verses bring any related Scriptures to mind, please write them in the margin.

HEBREWS 1

¹*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.*

⁵*For to which of the angels did God ever say,
"You are my Son; today I have become your Father" ?
Or again, "I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son" ?*

⁶*And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,
"Let all God's angels worship him."*

⁷*In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds,
his servants flames of fire."*

⁸*But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,
and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.*

⁹*You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy."*

¹⁰*He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.*

¹¹*They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment.*

¹²*You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed.
But you remain the same, and your years will never end."*

¹³*To which of the angels did God ever say, "Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet" ?*

¹⁴*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*

DAY TWO

Read *Hebrews 1:1-4*

Using these verses, describe the Son as completely as possible. Who is he?
(You will find nine truths about the Son listed here.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

How does Colossians 1:15-20 describe the Son? What similarities do you find between these two passages? Any differences?

How do these truths add to or change your understanding of who the Son is?

DAY THREE

Read *Hebrews 1:4-14*

Throughout the chapter the Son is compared with the angels. How is the Son different from the angels? How is he superior to the angels?

What is the angels' opinion of the Son? How do they regard him? How do they regard themselves in comparison to the Son?

Luke 1:26-33

Luke 2:8-14

Revelation 5:11-12

Revelation 19:9-10

Revelation 22:8-9

WEEK ONE

HEBREWS 1

The apostle Paul mentions an unusual fact about the saints' relations with the angels in the future. What is it? *1 Corinthians 6:3*

DAY FOUR

Read *Hebrews 1:5-14*

In verses five through 14 the author quotes God himself seven different times. In these verses how does God describe the Son?

What are the titles he uses for the Son?

How would you answer someone who said that the Bible never teaches that Jesus is God? Use the following verses, along with the verses in Hebrews 1, to formulate your answer.

Hebrews 1 (multiple verses)

Matthew 1:20-23

John 1:1,18

John 8:48-59 (see Exodus 3:13-14 in connection with this passage)

John 10:30

John 14:6-10

Romans 9:5

Why is this truth significant?

Why might Satan hate this truth?

DAY FIVE

Read *Hebrews 1*

The author, in this chapter, does not use the name “Jesus” when referring to Jesus. Why do you think the author uses the names and titles he uses in this chapter instead of “Jesus”?

How do the titles he uses for Jesus add to your understanding of who he is?

What verse was especially meaningful to you in this lesson and why?

DAY SIX

Read the study notes.

HEBREWS 1

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. John 1:10

If you have ever known someone for a time before you realized who he or she really was – perhaps a person you thought of as “an ordinary neighbor” before someone told you that this person was a famous war hero, sports hero or the inventor of some famous machine or product – you have something of an idea of how the Hebrew Christians felt about Jesus. They knew him, but at the same time, they did not know him.

Their lack of knowledge of the Son of God had led to a lack of interest in the Son of God that led to drifting away from the Son of God. The remedy to this problem is simple. The Hebrew Christians' attention must be turned toward the Son. They must see him as he is. That is why, from the very first sentence, the author focuses all his attention on convincing his readers of the absolute supremacy of God's Son.

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. Hebrews 1:1-2

The author begins by noting the great difference between “the past” and “these last days”. The past is the time before Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. At that point, everything changed. Jesus ushered in a new age described by the author as “these last days”.

One difference between these two time periods is how God has spoken. In the past, God spoke through the prophets “at many times and in various ways”. Notice, *God* spoke to the forefathers through the prophets. The prophets' words were not their own. They spoke God's words.

But what did God speak to the prophets about? He primarily spoke to them about Jesus. Jesus is the central theme of prophecy.¹

“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10

Why would God speak to the prophets about Jesus? Because God loves people and wants to have a relationship with them (John 3:16). However, no one can come to God except through Jesus (John 14:6). This is why God spoke to the prophets; that the people might be drawn to Jesus and, through Jesus, come to himself.

But this testimony about Jesus from the lips and pens of the prophets was not enough. For as much as the prophets knew about God's Son, there was much they did not know.

The Old Testament had been given in pieces. To Noah was revealed the quarter of the world from which Messiah would come. To Micah, the town where He would be born. To Daniel, the time of His birth. To Malachi, the forerunner who would come before Him. To Jonah, His resurrection was typified. Every one of those pieces of revelation was true and accurate; and each one related to the others in some way or another. And each one in some way or another pointed to the Messiah, the Christ. But only in Jesus Christ Himself was everything brought together and made whole. In Him the revelation was full and complete.²

Like John the Baptist, the prophets came “to testify concerning that light” (John 1:7), however, they were not the light themselves. That is why, “in these last days”, God has spoken to us by the Son. He is the “true light that gives light to every man” (John 1:9). Jesus so perfectly brings forth God's truth, he is called “the Word” (John 1:1). Jesus is God's last Word to mankind.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

But the Son is far more than just God's chosen spokesman for these last days. In the next three verses, the author goes on to list eight additional truths about the Son. This is not an academic study of the Son. A proper understanding of these truths was essential for the Hebrew Christians to live victorious lives. We are no different from the Hebrews. A proper understanding of these truths is absolutely essential for the Christian today to live a victorious life.

TRUTH #1

THE SON HAS BEEN APPOINTED BY GOD AS HEIR OF ALL THINGS.

... but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things ... Hebrews 1:2

Jesus is not God the Father's firstborn in the sense that God birthed him. The Son is eternal. He is his “firstborn” in the sense that he is God the Father's heir, with all the rights and privileges of a firstborn son. He is the heir of all God possesses, which is everything. It is his. The prophet Daniel saw a vision of Jesus coming into his inheritance.

¹ Jesus himself said that the Scriptures testified about him. See Luke 24:27; Luke 24:44-47; John 5:39.

² John MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Hebrews* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1983), pp. 6-7.

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.” Daniel 7:13-14

As heir, Jesus has been given “authority, glory and sovereign power”. Jesus said this in Matthew 28:18, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been give to me”. This authority is total and it is permanent. As Daniel notes in verse 14, his dominion “will not pass away”. Dominion is, among other things, the “Power to direct, control, use and dispose of at pleasure”.³

How did Jesus attain this position as heir? According to verse two God appointed him heir. This truth echoes throughout the Bible.

“God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” 1 Corinthians 15:27 ESV

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. John 3:35 ESV

“Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.” Psalm 2:8-9

“All that belongs to the Father is mine ...” John 16:15

Perhaps you haven’t seen the Son as heir. You have seen him as Savior, which he is, but have not recognized him as heir. As heir, Jesus has a right to every last inch of ground on this planet for it is his possession. He has a right to every last person on this planet, for they are his. No man may keep him from his inheritance. No government may shut him out. The one who owned nothing while he was on earth has been given full and rightful ownership of everything, and he will soon take full possession and control of everything, for it is rightfully his.⁴ What a glorious day that will be!

TRUTH #2 THE UNIVERSE WAS MADE BY GOD THROUGH THE SON.

Jesus is far more than just the heir. As the eternal Son, he played a central role in the creation of the inheritance itself.

... and through whom he made the universe. Hebrews 1:2

This verse sheds light on Genesis 1. When God created the universe, he didn’t act alone. He created the universe *through* the Son.⁵ This same truth appears throughout the Bible.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. John 1:3

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own,⁶ and his own people did not receive him.

John 1:10-11 ESV

...yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 1 Corinthians 8:6

Thus far, we have seen the Son as heir and as the one whom God created everything through. Both of these truths are summarized in *Colossians 1:15-16*.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:15-16 ESV

Notice, everything was created not only through him, but also for him. Why was the universe created? It was created for Jesus! As the one whom everything was created through, he is the first. As heir, he is the last. He is before all things and he is behind all things. He takes precedence in everything. Notice how God himself describes Jesus in Hebrews 1:10-12.

3 Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828.

4 As Christians, we are co-heirs with Christ. We are partakers in his inheritance! See Romans 8:17.

5 Through is a most significant word. It is repeatedly used in connection with our Lord Jesus Christ (see John 10:9; John 14:6; Romans 5; Ephesians 2:18).

6 The note on John 1:11 in the English Standard Version Bible indicates that the literal Greek reads that he came “to his own things.” When Jesus came to earth, he was coming to, as the note in the ESV goes on to say, “his own domain, or to his own people.” Again, we see that he is both heir and creator. English Standard Version Bible (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2001).

WEEK ONE

HEBREWS 1

“In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.”

Jesus summarizes this truth about himself in the book of Revelation.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”
Revelation 22:13

TRUTH #3

THE SON IS THE RADIANCE OF GOD’S GLORY.

This next verse takes us into the very person of the Son. This is who he is.

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory ... Hebrews 1:3

A distinction is made here between God’s glory, which is his goodness – his very essence,⁷ and the radiance of God’s glory. The distinction may be compared to the difference between the sun and the sun’s light, or between a diamond and the diamond’s sparkle. They are different, yet they are impossible to separate.

God’s glory is perfectly expressed through the Son. He is the radiance of God. We will see this truth lived out for us when one day, as believers in the Lord Jesus, we inhabit the New Jerusalem. Carefully read the following verses to see how the city receives its light.

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. Revelation 21:23-24

The Father gives the New Jerusalem light, but the Lamb, that is, Jesus, is the lamp. The light comes through the lamp. In other words, God’s light is always expressed through Jesus.

Just as the rays of the sun light and warm the earth, so Jesus Christ is the glorious light of God shining into the hearts of men. Just as the sun was never without and cannot be separated from its brightness, so God was never without and cannot be separated from the glory of Christ. Never was God without Him or He without God, and never in any way can He be separated from God. Yet the brightness of the sun is not the sun. Neither is Christ God in that sense. He is fully and absolutely God, yet is a distinct Person.⁸

Jesus is the radiance of God’s light. If the world is to receive God’s light, it must also receive Jesus, for God’s light can only be seen in him.

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

TRUTH #4

THE SON IS THE EXACT IMPRINT OF GOD’S NATURE.

The Son is so like the Father he is described as the exact imprint of his nature.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. Hebrews 1:3 ESV

While the Father and Son are different, at the same time, there is no difference between the two. When you have seen Jesus, you have seen the Father. Jesus’ disciples greatly desired to see the Father. What they didn’t know was that they had already seen the Father – in Jesus.

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” John 14:9

Do you want to know what the Father is like? Look at Jesus and you will have found your answer. Whatever Jesus did in the gospels, God the Father was also doing. Whatever Jesus said, God the Father was also saying. Jesus is the exact imprint of his nature. Those who know Jesus also know the Father.

⁷ See Exodus 33:18 – Exodus 34:8 for an excellent passage on God’s glory.

⁸ John MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Hebrews* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1983), p. 15.

TRUTH #5**THE SON UPHOLDS THE UNIVERSE BY “THE WORD OF HIS POWER”.**

Nothing would exist without the Son. Everything was created through him. More than that, nothing would continue without the Son. He sustains all things by his powerful word.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. Hebrews 1:3 ESV

What is the “word of his power”? It is the word he applies to anything. For instance, in the beginning, the Son spoke a word regarding the light.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. Genesis 1:3

That word was enough to bring light into existence *and to keep it in existence*. Until the moment comes when the Son changes his word regarding the light, light will continue to shine. His powerful word is sustaining the light. Do you recognize the power Jesus holds? The entire universe is literally hanging on his every word.

TRUTH #6**THE SON SUCCESSFULLY PROVIDED PURIFICATION FOR SINS.**

Fortunately for mankind, the one with this incredible power, the Son, is no tyrant, for he is deeply in love with his Father and deeply in love with mankind. That is why he came to earth. That is why he died on the cross.

After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Hebrews 1:3

The Son died so that you might live. His death on the cross speaks of humility, but it also speaks of great power. For what other man could, by his death, purchase life for untold millions? Jesus provided purification for sins. The fact that he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high indicates that he was successful in this task. There is power in the blood of Jesus!

TRUTH #7**THE SON IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE “MAJESTY IN HEAVEN”.**

By his deeds, we know the Son holds a power that is beyond compare. We also know it by his position - he is seated at the right hand of the “Majesty in heaven”. This is the seat of power. He took this position “after he had provided purification for sins”.

After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Hebrews 1:3

Was the Son somehow inferior before this time? No. But there came a moment in time when he physically took his seat next to his Father in heaven. His work was done. He had humbled himself during his life here on earth, but his humiliation is now history. Christ is, at this very moment, seated at the right hand of God the Father.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:5-11

TRUTH #8

WHEN THE SON SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE “MAJESTY IN HEAVEN” HE BECAME “AS MUCH SUPERIOR TO THE ANGELS AS THE NAME HE HAS INHERITED IS SUPERIOR TO THEIRS”.

The Son has always been superior to the angels, of course, yet, when he was living on earth as a man, he was, for a few brief years, made lower than the angels.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. Hebrews 2:9

However, after “he had provided purification for sins”, Christ’s humiliation ended forever. When Christ sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven he became “as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs” (verse 4).

Notice, the Son is superior to the angels in two ways:

1. He is superior in person.
2. The name he inherited is superior.

Why does the writer turn to the subject of angels at this point? It appears that he is attempting to prove the clear superiority of the Son over all those whom the readers would hold in high honor, even, perhaps, higher honor than the Lord Jesus. He has already proved the superiority of the Son over the prophets (verses 1-2). He now turns to the superiority of the Son over the angels.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son; today I have become your Father”?

Or again,

“I will be his Father, and he will be my Son”? Hebrews 1:5

Did God ever say to an angel, “You are my Son” (verse 5)? No, he did not. Angels are servants (verse 7), but nowhere are they called God’s Son. The Son and the angels are incomparable. The Son is so vastly superior to the angels that God commands the angels to worship him.

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.” Hebrews 1:6

For those who wonder whether Jesus is God, this verse provides the answer. God the Father commands the angels to worship the Son. According to the first and second of the Ten Commandments,⁹ worship is reserved for God alone, yet here we find God himself commanding his angels to worship the Son.

Angels, while remarkably powerful, are still nothing more than God’s servants. They are not God’s heir, not the radiance of his glory, and not worthy of worship. Indeed, when the Apostle John attempted to worship an angel (see Revelation 19:10 and 22:8-9), he was stopped and told to worship God. Jesus, on the other hand, never stopped anyone from worshiping himself (see John 9:38).

God is infinite in knowledge. His understanding of the Son is unlimited. What does he say about his Son? The next six verses are God’s own words about the Son.

But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” Hebrews 1:8-9 ESV

These verses, which were written by “the Sons of Korah”, may be found in Psalm 45:6-7. The words are a maskil, which is probably a song of some sort. This is God’s song of praise about Jesus!

Notice the name God gives to the Son in this song. God calls him “God” (verse 8)! The Son is God himself! His throne will last forever and ever.¹⁰ This is good news for all his subjects, for unlike the dictators on earth who reign by unrighteousness, “uprightness” is the scepter of Jesus’ kingdom. His rule is noted for its righteousness. Jesus loved righteousness and hated wickedness, and because of this hatred of evil and love of the right, God anointed Jesus with the oil of gladness.

9 See Exodus 20:3-6.

10 John 12:41 reads, “Isaiah ... saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.” Exactly what Isaiah saw in regard to Jesus’ glory is recorded in Isaiah 6:1-5.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a thorne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

Isaiah called Jesus “Lord” in verse one. The seraphs called him “LORD Almighty” in verse three. Isaiah called him “the King, the LORD Almighty” in verse five. When “LORD” appears in the Old Testament spelled out with all capital letters, it refers to “Yahweh”. According to Isaiah, “Yahweh” and “Jesus” are one and the same!

If you have ever wondered what Jesus is like, you now know. He is supernaturally glad. It is a dominant characteristic of his. Does this thought ever cross your mind? Do you ever imagine Jesus with a smile on his face? Or is he eternally upset at you, forever wishing you were somehow “better”? Make no mistake about it, he hates wickedness, but this is not what his subjects will notice as the predominant characteristic when they see him. We will see his gladness. He will be known for it.

Before we move on to verses ten through 12, read verse nine again, for in it we learn a secret about the trinity.

“You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” ESV

Notice the phrase “God, your God”. Jesus is God: that fact is unmistakably clear. In these verses, God himself calls Jesus God. But here we learn that God the Father is the God of Jesus. How can this be? I cannot pretend to understand all the mysteries of the Trinity, yet it is clear that Jesus is God, God the Father is God and the Holy Spirit is God. As God, Jesus is not less than the Father in character, that is to say, in his essential makeup. Jesus is God. As God, there can be none superior. The same may be said for the Holy Spirit. Yet, in terms of function, place and job description, God the Father is greater than all.

1 Corinthians 15 provides a picture of how Jesus, even though he is God, willingly submits himself to God the Father.

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Undoubtedly, we will know and understand far more about this when we are with the Lord himself. Today I see “but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully” (1 Corinthians 13:12). It is enough to know that Jesus is God, yet even he, as he made so clear while he was on this earth, is subjected to God the Father.

In verses ten through 12 we find God speaking more truth about the Son.

“In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.”

This quotation, taken from Psalm 102:25-27, provides more insight into the truth about the Son.

Notice, God calls the Son, “Lord” (verse 10). He is more than the Son. He is the Lord. As Lord, he “laid the foundations of the earth” (verse 10). As Lord, he will roll up the heavens and the earth at the end of this age. The earth and heavens will change, but he never will. He is the same, and his years will never end.

The Lord Jesus has scores of enemies. Many hate him. But these enemies are powerless to stand against him. All his enemies will become a footstool for his feet.

To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”? Hebrews 1:13

Jesus came in humility at his first coming. He will not do so again. At his second coming he will be “revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus”. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). All his enemies will become his footstool.

But what about his followers; what will we do at his coming? On that day he will “be marveled at among all those who have believed” (2 Thessalonians 1:10).

If we will marvel on that day, we should marvel on this day. This is why the author has focused all

