

## Communion

### Hebrews 1

Good morning and thank you for joining us! This morning, we kick off our study in the incredible book of Hebrews, so would you please turn to Hebrews 1?

This book is not an epistle like we see throughout the NT. In those we see Paul, James or Peter that would write and name themselves at the beginning and speak to a particular problem.

Hebrews is different. It's a treatise, a statement on the superiority of Christ and the new covenant to the Old Covenant.

Now we can't say the exact date it's written, but we know it's written before 70 AD because there's a series of present tense statements about the sacrifices still being offered and the priesthood still functioning. So this is written before Titus Vespasian levels the city in 70 AD.

Now for centuries, there's been a lot of debate over who wrote the book of Hebrews. Some say it was Paul, some say Apollos.

Sir Robert Anderson worked at Scotland Yard for years. He said in his study Paul the Apostle is the likely author because as he examines the evidence and that was his specialty as the head of Scotland Yard, he said just the greater amount of evidence leans toward Paul.

And if Paul wrote it, I understand that he wouldn't sign it because he had been in the school of Gamaliel. He had been part of the Sanhedrin. But since coming to Christ Paul was viewed as a traitor, his Jewish persecutors travelled to find Paul and harass and persecute him. If Paul had signed his name to this book, no Hebrew would have read the letter.

Whoever the human author is, the Holy Spirit has an urgency on His heart as He speaks to these Hebrews telling them don't be tempted to turn back from God's grace to the law. Don't be tempted to turn back from the blood of Jesus to the blood of bulls and goats. Don't be tempted to turn back from a superior priesthood to the priesthood of Aaron.

There's 154 words used in Hebrews you'll find nowhere else in the New Testament. There's 10 words that are not used anywhere in classical Greek until after Hebrews is written

We have the word better 12 times in 13 chapters. Describing how Jesus provides a better sacrifice, a better priesthood, a better covenant.

So I want you to imagine what it must've been like 2000 years ago, a young Jewish man or a young Jewish woman, perhaps their father is a priest or a rabbi or a Levite. But they've turned to Christ and persecution has begun in the family.

You know, today if an Orthodox Jew turns to Jesus, their family **SHOW PIC** will sit Shiva for them, a week long mourning for a

relative. Actually have a funeral for them and consider them dead, and that's today. Imagine 2,000 years ago. **CLOSE PIC**

Now we're told back in John 9 that the Sanhedrin had passed an edict that anybody who had anything to do with Jesus would be excommunicated from Judaism.

**John 9:22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.**

That means you're cut off from your tribe, your family, your business, your inheritance cut off. There was an incredible price to pay for following Christ.

**SHOW PIC** So imagine a Jewish person standing in the temple courts, watching the incense rise, watching the smoke from the sacrifices rise. And they're watching all of that, thinking, Lord, this is my heritage. This is what I've known since I've kept the dietary laws.

Lord, we had the prophets, we had the angles, had Moses and Joshua and Aaron and the priesthood.

And these sacrifices, Lord, and the temple and the feasts and the Day of Atonement, all of this, Lord, was ordained by you. Those are all of no value now, Lord? **CLOSE PIC**

And now Lord my family's cut me off because I believe some Carpenter from Galilee that got beat to a pulp and was hung on a

tree is the Messiah of Israel. Have I lost my mind? What am I doing?

And the temptation would be to go back to Judaism, to go back to religion.

I'm sure there's people here who came to Christ out of a religious family, you've been born again and they think you've lost your mind

What do you mean you're sitting up there with those Bible thumpers. What about the family? You know, the pressure can still come.

We're gonna study verses 1-3, and the title of this mornings message is WHO JESUS IS  
Let's pray

Because we're doing such a deep dive in these 3 verses, lets read v1-3 without interruption then we're gonna dissect them.

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 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; 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<sup>[fn]</sup> purged our<sup>[fn]</sup> sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Verse 1 begins

**1 God, who at various times** Hebrews begins by telling us that God spoke. 61 times through the book, we're told that God speaks. I pray you know that God desires to communicate with His creation

What v1 is explaining is how when God spoke it was in different times and ways. You study the OT, you see God spoke to Abraham. Then there was an 18 year period where God didn't say a word to Abraham. Then God would speak to Abraham again.

There were times when God wouldn't speak for long periods of time. There were times when God was speaking fairly regularly.

There was a time where God didn't speak from Malachi, from the end of the Old Testament till John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, which means God didn't speak for 400 years.

**...1 and in various ways** God also spoke in various ways. He spoke with a pillar of a cloud, and a pillar of fire. God spoke with a burning bush. He spoke with the parting of a sea. God spoke as a teenage boy who put a stone in the forehead of a giant and brought him down.

**...1 spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,**

When it says in time past, the word can mean worn out, it's ready to be replaced by something new. God no longer relies upon the prophets and Abraham Isaac and Jacob to speak to His people.

We'll read all of v2 then dissect it.

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;

2 has in these last days last days is where we get our word eschatology from.

And that word here last is in contrast to times past. The last days are the last in time or place.

...2 spoken to us by His Son This should give everyone of us a reason to put a giant smile on our face. God has spoken, not to the fathers, to us. And how did God do this? By Jesus.

And now, the reason we're doing such a deep dive, is we're now told 7 things about Jesus that we must never forget, why He is greater than the OC.

...2 whom He has appointed heir of all things, **SHOW SLIDE**

Here's #1 why Jesus is superior to the OC. Jesus is the heir of all things. **CLOSE SLIDE**

Being the heir of all things would mean everything to the Jew. The first born in any family got the double portion. But it says of Christ, He's the heir of all things, Jesus has dominion. No prophet could claim that. No priest, no Levite could claim that.

And never forget, we're told in Romans 8 that you and I are joint heirs with Christ!

Jesus the heir of all things. Of everything of time and eternity in existence, it's all His.

...2 through whom also He made the worlds; **SHOW SLIDE #2**  
Jesus is the creator. And He didn't just create the worlds, he created the ages that exceed the world. **CLOSE SLIDE**

**John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.**

So reasons why Jesus is greater than the OC

- 1) He's the heir of all things
- 2) He created all things

We'll read all of v3 then dissect it...

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,  
Reason #3 is at the beginning of v3

3 who being the brightness of His glory #3 **SHOW SLIDE** The very radiance of God's glory is Jesus Christ. **CLOSE SLIDE**

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus is the light that gives light. He is the glory of God. He is the light. Which means if any person comes to Jesus, they'll never walk in darkness.

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Here's the 4th reason and we'll spend some time on this one

...3 and the express image of His person,

#4 express image in Greek is the word Character. It's the only time it's used in the Bible

The express image describes something that an engraver did. It was when coins were made, an impression was put on the coins.

**SHOW SLIDE** Jesus is the very image, the very character of God.  
**CLOSE SLIDE**

Remember, John 14:9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

And of course, this was the issue that stumbled the Jews. You're telling us this Carpenter from Nazareth is the messiah, that He is God? He looks so ordinary. He heals on Sabbath-you're saying this guy is the Messiah?

You remember Jesus sitting at the table with harlots and tax collectors, and sinners. And the Pharisees, the Sadducees were there, trying to find fault with Him.

You remember what happened? The religious leaders looked at Jesus saying, you know, if you knew what God was really like, you wouldn't be here. And if you knew what these people were like and the holiness of God, you wouldn't be sitting here with these people.

And try to picture this in your mind. Jesus at dinner with this big group of people, these religious ones saying all of that. Jesus looks up at them with crumbs in his beard and grease from the oil from which they would dip their bread on His hands.

Jehovah God in human skin, replies to the religious leaders and says no, actually you don't know what God is like, because that's the very reason I am sitting with these sinners at this table.

He said.

Luke 15:4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he

comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' 7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

Jesus continues Luke 15 8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins,[fn] if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

That's the heart of God.

It's after this that Jesus then shares the story of how there was a father who had two sons. One of them behaved. He was a goody 2 sandals. And the other one said I'm tired of all this. I'm out of here, give me my inheritance.

The broken hearted father released his son, who then went into a far country, and he spent all of his inheritance on harlots and alcohol, drunkenness.

And when his money ran out, as always happens, the prodigal son sat there broken. Financially broken, broken in his heart, broken in his mind. It says he came to his senses, which means when you go away from God like that, you have lost your senses.

Since he came to his senses, he said, you know, it's better to be a servant in my father's house than live like this. They have food, they have a place to live. Jesus says the prodigal starts heading home and he's practicing his speech. He's thinking he's gotta convince his dad to let him back.

But the father was watching for his son, and waiting for him every day. Because the father remembers that son as a toddler. The dad remembers his first steps. Remembers his sons laughter. Remembers when he got spanked for.

And the father every day is watching, waiting for his son to come home.

And one day the father sees a silhouette in the distance, and as he watches, he recognizes the stride, the gait. He had watched it for decades.

And as the father sees his son coming, Jesus said, he girds himself, he lifts up his robe, he ties it off, and the father starts to run. Something a father never did, never lifted up his robe because in that culture that was all below the dignity of a father.

But the dad runs. And as he runs he begins to weep. And weeping, he gets to his son and throws his arms around him and begins to kiss his son.

He changes his son's filthy clothes and gives him a robe of righteousness. And the dad puts the signet ring of the heir, back on his finger, and prepares a feast

Jesus said, that's the heart of God.  
And Jesus said

John 10:30 I and My Father are one.”

Jesus is the impress of almighty God as God stepped into time and put on human skin.

God manifests Himself so that we could see how He feels about the hungry, how He feels about the poor, how He feels about the sinner, how He feels about the hurting, how He feels about the children.

...3 and upholding all things by the word of His power, #5 **SHOW**  
**SLIDE** thing is Jesus is holding all things together. **CLOSE**  
**SLIDE**

Col 1 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist

You know when you look at a proton, it shouldn't exist because it's positive charges. And Coulomb's law of repelling positive charges tells us a proton should explode.

You take 2 positive ends of a magnet you can't push them together. You need a positive and a negative. But you look at the atomic structure, you have all these protons in a cluster the electrons are revolving around, which should suck out the middle. The negative and positive should attract each other, yet it's all sustained. Jesus is the one sustaining it all down to the minutest of details.

Which means, when they spit on Jesus, He held the spit together that came through the air and hit His face.

When He was blindfolded and the knuckles were hurtling towards His face, He held together His nerve endings that absorbed all of that pain.

When the thorns were jammed upon His brow, He held together the thorns that went into the nerve endings in his occipital and trigeminal nerves. When the spikes were hammered through His wrist and His feet, He held them together as His nerve endings exploded through pain.

Jesus exposed Himself to His own fallen creation, and held it all together.

...3 when He had by Himself[fn] purged our[fn] sins, #6 **SHOW SLIDE** Jesus hasn't just removed us from our sin, but He has obliterated the disease of sin. And it says He did that by Himself. **CLOSE SLIDE**

Remember, His disciples fled. Everyone forsook Him. When Jesus hung on the cross, he cried Eloi Eloi Lama Sabatani. My God. My God, why have you forsaken Me?

You think you've been alone? No one has been more alone than Jesus. You think you've been forsaken? No one has ever been as forsaken as Him. You think you've been betrayed. No one has ever felt betrayal that He felt as He hung on the cross. He was completely alone, and all the sin of the world came upon Him, and He was cut off from the Father.

When we get to heaven, in the middle of it all, there's a lamb with the marks of slaughter. All glory, all honor, all praise go to Jesus. We'll all worship Him and throw our crowns at His feet, no one else gets any of it. He gets it all because He did it by Himself. V3 concludes

sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, #7 **SHOW SLIDE** the final reason listed here is that Jesus finished the work. Jesus sat down, that's why He's better than the old covenant. **CLOSE SLIDE**

No Levitical priest ever sat down. There were no chairs in the Tabernacle or in the temple, because the work of the priest was never finished. It was never finished because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. So their sacrifices were never done, but Jesus' work is done, it's completed on the cross at Calvary. The issue of sin has been settled once and for all.

He doesn't have a mortgage on you. You were paid off the day He bought you. Said it is finished.

Jesus, the son of God, greater than the OC.  
Let's read v1-3 in their entirety one more time

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 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; 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<sup>[fn]</sup> purged our<sup>[fn]</sup> sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

The entire OT, the OC all looks towards and is fulfilled in Jesus. Yes, that Carpenter from Galilee. That Man who was spit on, and beaten and crucified. He is risen, He has ascended. He is at the right hand of power where he ever lives and makes intercession for the Saints, and He is coming back.

Look too many Christians walk around dissatisfied with life, and that's always the result of when we lose sight of who Jesus Christ is. How can you read and meditate on these verses and not just sit astonished at who our God is?

I understand these words don't change our circumstances we may be wrestling with, but these words should flood our hearts with hope and strength.

We're gonna take a moment as we close to partake in communion together.