

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews

## *Christ Superior to Creation*

### *Hebrews 1:1-14*

- I. THE REVELATION OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST (Hebrews 1:1-3)
  - A. Historical Means of Revelation (Hebrews 1:1)
    1. The source of revelation—God
    2. The times of revelation—sundry
      - a. *Sundry* defined
        - (1) This is the only occurrence in the Bible, but the related word *asunder* is found twenty-one times.
          - a) First reference (Leviticus 1:17)
          - b) Hebrews references (Hebrews 4:12; Hebrews 11:37)
        - (2) It is taken from words which mean “separate” or “apart.”
        - (3) It refers to times of activity that are separate and distinct, perhaps separated by times of inactivity.
      - b. *Sundry* exemplified
        - (1) Times of activity
          - a) Abraham and the patriarchs
          - b) Moses and Joshua
          - c) Samuel and David
          - d) Elijah and Elisha
          - e) The prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi
          - f) Etc.
        - (2) Times of inactivity
          - a) The time of the judges (Judges 17:6; Judges 21:25; 1 Samuel 3:1)
          - b) Before the early prophets (Psalm 74:9; Hosea 4:1, 6)
          - c) The true meaning of Proverbs 29:18
          - d) Four hundred silent years
    3. The manners of revelation—divers
      - a. *Divers* defined
        - (1) The word is related to the word *diverse*.
        - (2) It suggests various or different kinds.
      - b. *Divers* manners
        - (1) Spoken words (Numbers 12:6-8)
        - (2) Visions (Ezekiel 1:1)—when awake
        - (3) Dreams (Daniel 2:28)—when asleep
        - (4) Signs (Exodus 4:9; Psalm 105:27)
        - (5) Law (Deuteronomy 4:5-8; Psalm 147:19-20)
    4. The recipients of the revelation—the fathers
    5. The messengers of the revelation—the prophets

## B. Current Means of Revelation (Hebrews 1:2-3)

1. The time of the revelation—these last days (Hebrews 1:2)
  - a. During Christ’s earthly ministry
  - b. Through the work of the Holy Ghost in the lives of the initial apostles
  - c. Through the ministry of the apostle Paul
2. The source of the revelation—his Son (Hebrews 1:2-3)
  - a. The work of the Son (Hebrews 1:2-3)
    - (1) He made the worlds (Hebrews 1:2; John 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16).
      - a) Worlds defined
        - i) Common definitions in scripture
          - (a) A period of time in which a particular physical earth exists.
          - (b) The physical earth (Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:3)
          - (c) The people who live on the earth (John 3:16)
          - (d) The evil system of this world (1 John 2:15); notice how the command of this verse contrasts with the teaching of John 3:16 until you understand how the word is being used in each verse)
        - ii) The use in our passage
          - (a) Many commentaries criticize the use of *worlds* in this verse. They often suggest that the Greek word is not equivalent to the English word *worlds*.
          - (b) Yet, God’s wisdom is seen in the use of *worlds*.
          - (c) The same Greek word is used in Hebrews 11:3 where the worlds are clearly defined as “things which are seen.”
          - (d) The word *worlds* in Hebrews 1:3 refers to the different physical worlds mentioned in scripture that mark off particular ages of time.
      - b) Worlds divided and understood
        - i) The “world that then was” (2 Peter 3:6)
          - (a) Some count this the same as “the old world.”
          - (b) Others, see it as a world that existed before the six-day creation.
        - ii) The “old world” (2 Peter 2:5)—before the flood
        - iii) This “present world” or “present evil world” (Galatians 1:4; 2 Timothy 4:10; Titus 2:12)
        - iv) The “world to come” (Hebrews 2:5; Hebrews 6:5)—the new heaven and earth (2 Peter 3:10-13)
    - (2) He upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3; Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:17).
    - (3) He purged our sins (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:12-14; Hebrews 10:10-14; John 1:29; Colossians 2:13-14) and sat

down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3, 13; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 12:2).

- b. The person or character of the Son (Hebrews 1:2-3)
  - (1) He is the heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2; Psalm 2:8; Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 21:37-38; 1 Corinthians 15:22-28).
  - (2) He is the brightness of the Father's glory (Hebrews 1:3; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Timothy 6:16; Malachi 4:2; Revelation 1:16).
  - (3) He is the express image of the Father's person (Hebrews 1:3; John 14:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15; Colossians 2:9).
    - a) The creation of Adam (Genesis 1:26-27)
    - b) The fall of Adam (Romans 5:12-14)
    - c) The birth of Seth (Genesis 5:3); only a shadow of the image was retained (1 Corinthians 11:7); but the image was lost
    - d) The image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4)
    - e) Now, we are renewed in the image of God (Romans 8:29; Colossians 3:10).

## II. CHRIST'S SUPERIORITY TO THE ANGELS (Hebrews 1:4-9, 13-14)

### A. In Name (Hebrews 1:4-5)

1. The degree of Christ's superiority—"so much better" (Hebrews 1:4)
2. The cause of Christ's superiority (Hebrews 1:4)
  - a. By inheritance Christ hath obtained a more excellent name than the angels.
  - b. This name was given due to the work of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:5-11).
  - c. At the ascension, Christ was received back into heaven as "the King of glory" (Psalm 24:7-10).
3. The confirmation of Christ's superiority (Hebrews 1:5)
  - a. The Son begotten
    - (1) The statement made—"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"
    - (2) The statement explained
      - a) The prophecy given (Psalm 2:7)
        - i) I will declare the decree.
        - ii) The LORD hath said unto me
          - (a) Thou art my Son
          - (b) This day have I begotten thee
      - b) The prophecy accomplished
        - i) The person identified (Hebrews 1:5; Hebrews 5:5)
        - ii) The event identified (Acts 13:29-33; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5)
  - b. The familial relationship (1 Chronicles 17:11-15; Romans 1:1-4)
    - (1) I will be to Him a Father.
    - (2) He shall be to me a Son.

4. The contrast
  - a. The angels are sons of God, but not a one of them is the Son of God.
  - b. All that the angels are, they are by creation, but the Son “hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name.”

B. In Worship (Hebrews 1:6)

1. A problem presented
  - a. The text: “And let all the angels of God worship him.”
  - b. Said by some to be a quote in the Septuagint (Deuteronomy 32:43)
    - (1) KJB text: “Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people.”
    - (2) Septuagint: “And let all the sons of God worship him.”
  - c. Although God can quote Himself however He pleases:
    - (1) The Septuagint is an obviously corrupt text.
    - (2) Modern scholars claim that many of the Old Testament quotes in the Greek New Testament come from the Septuagint.
  - d. Therefore, to accept this at face value would minimize the authority of the Biblical text and give credence to Bible correctors.
  - e. Note: Special notes on the Septuagint
    - (1) An ancient translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek
    - (2) A legend teaches that the translation was made in Alexandria about 300 years before Christ by seventy (or seventy-two) Jewish scholars in seventy (or seventy-two) days.
    - (3) Septuagint means “seventy.” It is also designated as the LXX.
    - (4) The actual translation:
      - a) Strong evidence points to the Pentateuch being translated into Greek before the time of Christ.
      - b) Evidence for the rest of the Old Testament being translated by this time is spotty, but we will admit that it is possible. However, there are no ancient copies of the LXX to prove its existence before about 300AD.
    - (5) In the first two centuries after Christ, other Greek translations of the Old Testament were made by different men.
    - (6) In the first half of the third century, Origen made his *Hexapla* which was the Old Testament scriptures in six columns:
      - a) Hebrew text
      - b) Hebrew text in Greek letters
      - c) Aquila’s translation
      - d) Symmachus’ translation
      - e) The Septuagint altered by Origen
      - f) Theodotion’s translation
    - (7) Except for some fragments, Origen’s *Hexapla* is lost. Origen’s fifth column was copied with his changes left in. Therefore, the LXX became for most purposes Origen’s revision.
    - (8) Some have suggested that there are many places in the New Testament where the LXX is quoted. However, the oldest

copies of the LXX (except for a handful of papyrus fragments) come from the 4<sup>th</sup> century after Christ and later.

- (9) Scholars assume that where the Greek New Testament and the LXX agree, that the apostles must have quoted from the LXX. However, there is a more sensible possibility—the LXX readings were altered to read like the Greek New Testament.

2. A solution presented

- a. Likely quoted from Psalm 97:7—“worship him, all ye gods”
- b. Compare contexts
  - (1) Of Hebrews 1:6
    - a) The title, firstbegotten, refers to the resurrected and exalted Christ.
    - b) That being said, Hebrews 1:6 likely refers to the Second Coming of Christ.
  - (2) Of Psalm 97
    - a) Psalm 97:1—“The LORD reigneth”
    - b) Psalm 97:3—“A fire...burneth up his enemies”
    - c) Psalm 97:5—“the presence of the LORD”
    - d) Psalm 97:6—“all the people see his glory”
    - e) Psalm 97:9—“thou, LORD...art exalted far above all gods”
  - (3) The biblical use of “gods”
    - a) As a general term to those in high positions (Exodus 22:28; Psalm 82:6; 1 Corinthians 8:5)
    - b) In reference to devils (Deuteronomy 32:17)
    - c) In reference to false gods (Genesis 35:2)
    - d) The angels of God (Psalm 82:1; Psalm 138:1)

3. The contrast

- a. Angels are never to be worshipped.
- b. Christ is worthy of all worship, even from the angels.

C. In His Throne (Hebrews 1:7-9)

1. The ministry of the angels (Hebrews 1:7; Psalm 104:4)

- a. Their nature
  - (1) They are spirit beings (Hebrews 1:7, 14; Psalm 104:4).
  - (2) They are immortal (Luke 20:36).
  - (3) They do not marry in their heavenly state (Matthew 22:30).
  - (4) They are higher than man (Psalm 8:4-5).
- b. Their work
  - (1) A ministry of worship (Psalm 148:1-2; Revelation 5:8-13)
  - (2) A ministry of the word—In delivering God’s word to mankind (Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2; Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 68:17 with Psalm 89:5-7)
  - (3) A ministry to the saints (Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:13-14)
- c. Note: Consider the work of the angels in the age of grace
  - (1) The decreased emphasis on angels in the age of grace
    - a) As seen by their less frequent mention



- b) Paul warned of worshipping angels (Colossians 2:18).
  - c) Angels were often connected with the signs and wonders given to the Jews (Revelation 15:1).
  - d) Although the visibility of angels has greatly decreased and some duties have changed, the connection between angels and God's work on earth continues.
- (2) The definite work of angels in the age of grace (this does not exclude other ministries mentioned in other parts of the Bible)
- a) Our observation by angels (1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Corinthians 11:10; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12)
  - b) Our danger from evil angels (Romans 8:38-39; Galatians 1:8; Ephesians 6:12); Note: If we must wrestle against evil principalities and powers of the spiritual realm, surely we must be given aid of good angels. However, we should never exalt angels above scriptural limits (Colossians 2:18).
2. The exaltation of the Son (Hebrews 1:8-9; see Psalm 45:6-7)
- a. The nature of His exaltation (Hebrews 1:8)
    - (1) His throne—"is for ever and ever"
    - (2) His identity—"the Son..., O God"
    - (3) His scepter—"a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom"
  - b. The cause of His exaltation (Hebrews 1:9)
    - (1) The cause
      - a) Thou hast loved righteousness.
      - b) Thou hast hated iniquity.
    - (2) The result
      - a) God hath anointed thee
      - b) Above thy fellows
3. The contrast
- (1) Both the Son and the angels serve the Father and are therefore seen as "fellows."
  - (2) Yet, the angels are no more than ministers. The Son, however, is God and as God has a kingdom and a righteous sceptre.
- D. In Position (Hebrews 1:13-14; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:41-45; Acts 2:34-36)
- 1. The position of Christ—"Sit on my right hand" (Hebrews 1:13)
  - 2. The power of Christ—"until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Hebrews 1:13; see Isaiah 63:3-6; 1 Corinthians 15:25-26)
  - 3. The purpose of angels (Hebrews 1:14)
    - a. They are ministering spirits.
    - b. They are sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation.
  - 4. The contrast
    - a. In a sense, the Father serves the Son in bringing His enemies under His feet.
    - b. The angels serve only as ministers to aid this ultimate work.



### III. CHRIST'S SUPERIORITY TO THE HEAVENS AND EARTH (Hebrews 1:10-12; see Psalm 102:25-27)

#### A. The Creation of the Heavens and Earth (Hebrews 1:10)

1. The timeframe
  - a. "In the beginning" (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 1:10)
  - b. "Of old" (Psalm 102:25)
2. The person
  - a. Thou, Lord
  - b. By way of the continuation of pronounces, it becomes obvious this is speaking of none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The work (John 1:1-3; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16-17; Revelation 4:11)
  - a. Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth.
  - b. The heavens are the works of thine hands (Psalm 8:3-4; Psalm 19:1).

#### B. The Coming Change (Hebrews 1:11-12)

1. The natural change (Hebrews 1:11)
  - a. They shall perish.
  - b. They all shall wax old as doth a garment.
  - c. Note: It seems awkward for people to promote the idea of evolution and yet fear the dangers of climate change, pollution, and extinction of animals.
2. The intervening change (Hebrews 1:12)
  - a. As a vesture, Christ will fold them up.
  - b. They shall be changed.
  - c. The passing of the present heaven and earth are here explained as the removal of old, worn out garments and replacing them with that which is new, unused, and unaffected by the wear and tear that harmed the old.
  - d. Simon Peter explained this process in more violent terms (2 Peter 3:7-12).
    - (1) The heavens and earth are reserved unto fire (2 Peter 3:7).
    - (2) The heavens shall pass away with a great noise (2 Peter 3:10).
    - (3) The elements shall melt with fervent heat (2 Peter 3:10).
    - (4) The earth and works therein shall be burned up (2 Peter 3:10).
    - (5) All these things shall be dissolved (2 Peter 3:11).
    - (6) The heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat (2 Peter 3:12).

#### C. The Unchangeable Christ (Hebrews 1:11-12)

1. Thou remainest (Hebrews 1:11).
2. Thou art the same (Hebrews 1:12).
3. Thy years shall not fail (Hebrews 1:12).