

Hebrews 1:1-14

The human authorship of Hebrews is still
unsure.

In certain places, the language is like that
of Paul's, and also because of the
personal reference to Timothy in
chapter 13:23, some scholars have
attributed the letter to Paul.

However, its authorship has been debated
since post apostolic days.

So, although there is no conclusive proof as
to the human author, there is no doubt
that it is inspired, as Hebrews speaks
with divine authority.

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The Church of Jesus Christ, born on the day Pentecost, was comprised almost entirely of Jews.

Also, because the Feast of Pentecost was a Jewish holy day, there were many Jews visiting Jerusalem at that particular time from all parts of the world.

Acts 2:5 **"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven."**

As a result of the special signs accompanying Pentecost, and because of Peter's powerful sermon, many more Hebrews were added to the church.

Acts 2:38-41 **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Also in Acts 3, when the lame man was healed at the temple, again Peter preached Christ unto them, and "many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."

So there were many Hebrews added to the church in those early days.

However, the early Christians, although soundly saved, still clung to many of the Jewish traditions.

Also, as the church was added to daily, no doubt there were some, possibly quite a few, who accepted the good news of salvation in their heads only, without a real work of grace being done.

This was a serious problem, because if they lingered at the door of salvation too long without going in, they would eventually drift back into Judaism and be lost.

Reading between the lines, some Bible commentators feel that the Book of Hebrews was chiefly written to address this problem.

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Therefore, the writer begins Hebrews by showing that the Gospel dispensation is superior to the dispensation of Law. He does this by first of all showing that the dispensation of grace is superior in the manner in which God communicated himself to man.

Under the Old Testament Law, God shared His thoughts with the nation of Israel through the prophets.

V 1 begins-- **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets."**

Yes, God spoke to Israel at **"sundry times"** or in several parts.

Throughout the ages, God's revelation of the coming Redeemer had been gradual.

To Adam, by the substitution of the coats of skins, God revealed that blood was required to cover sin.

Salvation must involve a sacrifice, and it would be a sacrifice of His own providing.

To Abraham it was revealed that the Redeemer would spring from his loins, and David was told that the coming king would be of his house.

The location of the Redeemer's birth place was revealed to the prophet Micah.

Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

Isaiah prophesied that He would be born of a virgin, and so on.

So then, God revealed the good news "**at sundry times.**"

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He also revealed His thoughts to man "**in
divers manners**" or in different ways.

He spoke to the prophets by dreams and
visions, and in an audible voice.

He communicated to Israel by writing, as in
the case of the Ten Commandments.

And to that unusual man, Moses, He spoke
face to face.

And His thoughts were written down in black
and white in the Old Testament
Scriptures.

What a wonderful opportunity God's chosen
people had to know their Creator.

But there was a much more wonderful
revelation of the mind of God in store
for mankind.

It was a revelation not merely in the
written Word, but one that was revealed
by the Living Word.

Yes, in that little stable in Bethlehem,
God's ultimate communication to man
came in the person of His only begotten
Son.

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So, the dispensation of the Grace of God was
to be far more wonderful than that of
the old dispensation of Law.

Not only was the message more wonderful, but
in an unbelievable way, the messenger
was infinitely more wonderful.

V 1-3 **"God, who at sundry times and in
divers manners spake in time past unto
the fathers by the prophets,
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;
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:
4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

As you will remember, the main message of the Gospel of John was that Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, God with us. Here we have this whole wonderful truth condensed into verses 2-4 which we have just read.

V 2 "**whom he hath appointed heir of all things.**"

As God, Jesus is equal with the Father. But as the God-man and Mediator, He was

appointed by the Father to be the heir
of all things.

He is the head of the church, which is His
spiritual body.

In the millennium, He will rule over Israel
and all the nations of the earth
through them.

At one time, Satan offered Him all the
kingdoms of the world.

How foolish!

They were already His by inheritance.

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Yes, the Father has committed all things to
the Son, and when we go forth under the
leadership of Christ, we need to
remember that fact.

Matthew 28:18-21 **"And Jesus came and spake
unto them, saying, All power is given unto
me in heaven and in earth.**

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things
whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I
am with you always, even unto the end of the
world. Amen."

And lastly, let me say that when the nations
rise against God, and they will, He
will have one answer for them.

Psalm 2:3-6 " Let us break their bands
asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall
laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his
wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

(And this will be God's answer.)

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill
of Zion."

Yes, God's messenger of the covenant of grace, the One who began His sojourn among us in a stable, is no less than **"his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things."**

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Going back to V 2 of Hebrews 1, we read:

"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;"

Did you get that? ---**"by whom also he made the worlds."**

Remember John 1:3? **"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."**

As we have noted, the main message of the Gospel of John is that Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us.

And right from the opening verses of that book, we are brought face to face with the fact that Jesus is the Creator:

"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

Of course, Genesis 1:1 says that God is the Creator.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Also, in verse 2 of Genesis, we read, **"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."**

So the entire Godhead was involved in creation, which is part of the mystery of the Trinity.

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Here again in the book of Hebrews, we are immediately told that the messenger is

none other than God in the flesh, the Creator of all things.

V 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:"**

--- " **upholding all things by the word of his power."**

As the Creator, He not only created this world, but He sustains it moment by moment.

The whole weight of creation is laid upon Christ, and He supports it.

And when this world was ruined by sin and under the wrath of God, the Son of God undertook the work of redemption, and

saved a fallen world, a world that had once been His perfect creation.

V 3 " **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.**"

--- **"had by himself purged our sins"**

It was none other than **"Himself"** that was offered for our sins.

The glory of His person and nature gave to that offering the sufficiency to atone for the sins of the whole world.

Here was the perfect Lamb of God.

Here was the unspeakable Gift.

Here was **"the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."**

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Also I believe there is another meaning to the words, **"when he had by himself purged our sins."**

We should not try to add our good works to Christ's completed work of salvation. He **"purged our sins"---** **"by himself,"** and then He **"sat down"** because the work was finished.

So many religions, Christian and otherwise, insist on striving for salvation rather than resting in a finished work.

Ephesians 2:8-9 **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

There never was, nor ever will be, a sacrifice for sin like **"the Lamb of**

God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

V 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."**

Jesus is God in the flesh.

He is the Light of lights, the true Shechinah glory.

When on the mount of transfiguration **"his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."** --- it was only His true glory shining through.

He was **"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."**

As He told one of His disciples, **"Have I been so long time with you, and yet**

**hast thou not known me, Philip? he that
hath seen me hath seen the Father."**

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It was by no less a person than this that
God in these last days spoke to man.
And since the dignity of the messenger gives
authority and excellence to the
message, the dispensation of Grace must
therefore exceed, very far exceed, the
dispensation of Law.

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The writer, having proven the pre-eminence
of the Gospel over the Law, by proving
the pre-eminence of Christ over the
prophets, now shows His superiority to
the angels.

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The Jewish zealots no doubt would have made the objection that the Law was **"ordained by angels."**

In Galatians 3:19, we find that the angels were present at the giving of the law.

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

And so the writer sets forth, in verses 4 to 14, in a rather lengthy address, to show that Christ is superior to angels. Now, it is true that angels are superior to man.

Psalm 8:3 says--**"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?**

⁵ **For thou hast made him a little lower**

than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."

Therefore it could be argued that since the law was ordained by angels, it should be held in great esteem.

To this the writer counters in V 4, **"Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."**

First of all, Christ is superior to the angels because He has **"a more excellent name than they."**

Today, people's names do not seem to have any particular meaning, but in the old days, that was not true.

Originally, names conveyed a message about the person so named, and that could not be truer than in the case of Jesus Christ.

The names of Christ reveal His character and
excellence.

He is Emanuel, God with us.

He is the Messiah, the king of Israel.

He is **"the Lion of the tribe of Judah,"** and
**"the Lamb of God, which taketh away the
sin of the world."**

He is **"the bright and morning star."**

We could go on and on with the names of
Christ that describe His wonderful
character.

But the point here is---"**he hath by
inheritance obtained a more excellent
name than they.**"

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Not only does He have a more excellent name
than they, but that which is said about
the Son of God was never said about the
angels.

V 5 **"For unto which of the angels said he
(that is God) at any time, Thou art my
Son, this day have I begotten thee?"**

Here the writer is quoting Psalm 2:7: **" I
will declare the decree: the LORD hath
said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day
have I begotten thee."**

V 5 continues-- **"And again, I will be to him
a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."**

This is written in 2 Samuel 7:14 concerning
Solomon, but these words also
foreshadow God's Son, Jesus Christ.

V 6 **"And again, when he bringeth in the
firstbegotten into the world, he saith,
And let all the angels of God worship
him."**

By the commandant of God, the angels
worshipped His Son when He entered this
world in the manger at Bethlehem.

And when at the end of His earthly ministry,
He re-entered heaven to sit on God's
right hand, the angels worshipped Him.

When He comes again to judge the inhabitants
of this world, the highest created
beings, the angels will worship Him.

God will not suffer an angel to continue in
heaven that will not be in subjection
to Christ and pay homage to Him.

Even the fallen angels and wicked men will
one day confess His divine power and
authority, and fall before Him.

Philippians 2:9-11 " **Wherefore God also hath
highly exalted him, and given him a
name which is above every name:**

¹⁰ **That at the name of Jesus every knee
should bow, of things in heaven, (that's
where the angels are) and things in
earth (where man dwells), and things**

under the earth;

¹¹ And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

God said in Hebrews 1: 8, **"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:"** (but of the angels He only said) **"Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."**

So we see the inferiority of angels compared to Christ.

Yes, the angels have great power, but they are still servants to God and also to His Son.

And they are created beings, while the Son is eternal.

V 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."

Here the writer is quoting Psalm 45:6-7:

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

In these verses, we find something very significant.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God." Here God the Father calls His Son God.

So if the Father declares that Christ is God, then He truly is, for God only calls persons and things as they are.

Let those who deny that Christ is God do so
at their own peril.

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Also in this verse, we see that God declares
Christ's dominion--as having a throne,
a kingdom, and a sceptre of that
kingdom.

He has all the rights and authority to rule
over this earth, and to be a fully
adequate Mediator.

Kingdoms rise and fall.

Throughout history, we have seen the Greek
and Roman, and the more modern-day
British Commonwealth, rise and fall as
world powers.

Today, the United States of America seems to
be teetering on the edge of its reign.
But this will never be the case with
Christ's kingdom.

V 8 "-- **Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.**"

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Christ's kingdom will be a dictatorship, but a dictatorship wherein there is perfect righteousness.

V 8 "**a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.**"

The righteousness of His rule comes from the righteousness of the ruler.

For Christ has an eternal love of righteousness—V 9 "**Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.**"

And who could be Christ's fellows spoken of here?

Obviously, as the Son of God, only the Father and the Holy Spirit are His fellows.

But this verse could not be referring to the Godhead, because Christ is not above the Father and the Holy Spirit.

So it must be speaking of His manhood.

Compared to the Son of Man, there has never been a prophet, priest, or king anointed for service who was ever anointed with the oil of gladness like Christ.

None other could say with the fervour of our Lord, " **I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.**

⁹ I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest." Psalm 40:8-9

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V 10-12 " **And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:**

¹¹ **They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;**

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."**

This quotation is taken from Psalm 102:25-27.

Going back to V 8, we find that the writer is talking about the Son in verses 10-12: **"But unto the Son he saith."**

So when God said in V 10, " **And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the**

foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands,"
it was Jesus Christ that was being described as the Creator.

And since He was one of the God Head participating in creation, He could not have been part of creation as the angels were.

Again in the book of Colossians, His position as the Creator is made perfectly clear.

Colossians 1:13-17: "**Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son** (and now, speaking of the Son it says)

¹⁴ **In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:**

15 Who is the image of the invisible
God, the firstborn of every creature:

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."

V 16 " For by him were all things created,
that are in heaven." That would
include the angels, wouldn't it?
So Christ is the Creator, and they are the
created.

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Hebrews 1: 10-12: "**And, Thou, Lord, in the
beginning hast laid the foundation of**

the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

¹¹ They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

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."

And because Christ is the Creator, He is eternal -- **"thy years shall not fail."** We, and the world we lived in, are growing old, but not Christ.

And Christians are part of His body, and as such, have the promise of eternity.

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V 13-14 **"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?"**

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

In verse 13, the writer is referring to

Psalm 110: 1: **"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."**

Yes, Christ has enemies. Enemies to His sovereignty, to His cause, and to His people.

Enemies that will not have Him to reign over them.

But someday, all of Christ's enemies will be made His footstool, either by humble submission, or by utter destruction.

Christ Jesus will reign supreme.

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On the other hand, according to V 14, angels are **" ministering spirits, sent forth**

**to minister for them who shall be heirs
of salvation."**

Did you know that you have a guardian angel?

If you are one of Christ's, you surely do.

They are God's servants on our behalf, and

they also serve our Lord Jesus Christ

Who is **"better than the angels."**