

The Superiority of Christ

Title: "Better than the Prophets"

Hebrews 1:1-3

Introduction

Today we will continue our study on the Superiority of Christ with the first declaration of Christ's majesty that He is "Better than the Prophets."

The Book of Hebrews does not begin with the typical greeting you find in most New Testament epistles. Instead, the writer of the Hebrews begins with a statement about God. The writer, without any greeting, begins with a declaration of God and His work.

He uses the word, God, in an emphatic sense, to express His majestic power, authority, and unity. Any self-respecting Jew knew that Jehovah was the Eternal and only One True God. Israel believed that this great mono-theistic God entrusted them with His Divine message for the world. They also believed that they were supremely blessed and had a special covenant relationship with God. Because of the Abrahamic Covenant, Israel believed they were God's blessing and means through which God would bless all the people of the earth.

In Galatians 3:16, Paul says that when God told Abraham that through his seed, all the nations of the world would be blessed, He was referring to a single seed – Jesus! Unfortunately, the elitist view that evolved in Judaism over the years ultimately became a stumbling block for them when Christ came, preventing them from receiving Jesus Christ as God's Messiah. Sadly, the Jews rejected Jesus as the Christ and rejected Christianity as part of God's plan.

The teaching of the Trinity confuses and threatens many Jews and how they view God. Many Jews could not accept that the one true God could express himself in three distinct personalities yet still be one in unity and essence.

The writer of Hebrews uses this background to lead the reader to discover that Jesus is, in fact, God.

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 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; 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," ([Hebrews 1:1-3 NKJV](#))

Before Jesus came, God spoke through the Old Testament prophets many times and in various ways. But in these last days, God has spoken to us through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

God is not the least bit nervous or anxious about current world affairs. God is not overwhelmed by the recent earthquakes in Indonesia, Japan, or Chile. He is not trembling or wringing his hands over Covid19 or Delta or Omicron or the 46 other current mutations of Covid. God does not wonder how the dollar will do against the yen or the euro! He's not worried about how big tech Microsoft, Amazon, Facebook, and others are planning a world takeover. But He is deeply concerned about His covenant people!

We are the covenant people today – because Paul says that those who receive Christ are blessed with faithful Abraham. God has promised we will have everything we need to be a faithful witness for Him as long as we are in this world. God doesn't want a single soul to perish without knowing there is eternal life available to every individual, no matter how sinful, arrogant or brutal this world becomes. Jesus died on the cross to provide us with eternal life and resurrection power.

The God who spoke one way in the past now speaks to us in another way. The Bible is the progressive revelation of God to humanity. What has come to us in the past is now revealed differently because we are in a different age. A Divine Revelation is when God puts His thoughts into words so that we can comprehend them in this current setting. The Old Testament describes how Jehovah revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the people of that era. The New Testament reveals that Jehovah has come down to earth in the person of Jesus Christ to reveal himself to us in these last days!

The phrase "the fathers" describes not only the Patriarchs but all of the spiritual leaders of the Old Testament. The term "prophets" refers to the great seers (like Elijah and Elisha). But it also refers to those God used as His instruments to communicate his will and divine truth, especially to the people of the Old Testament period.

The message and the messenger are an essential part of God's revelation in every age. God not only wants you to know what he thinks, but He also wants you to know who He is! He wants us to know Him! He also wants us to share His eternal plan with others. Through the power of His Word and the strengthening of the Holy Spirit, we can have an effective and dynamic ministry in these last days. Why? Because Jesus, who is better than the prophets, lives within us.

Jesus not only brings the message of God to us, He is that message! God has spoken to us through His Son in these last days. God has given a new, and perfect, and final revelation of Himself by sending Jesus Christ to us!

Jesus is what makes Christianity superior to Judaism. Judaism was an introduction and revelation of God, while Christianity is a relationship with God. The one true God spoke to Israel through the prophets in the past, but He has spoken to all people in these last days through His Son.

The glory of the Son excels the glory of the prophet, and the revelation God made through Christ is much greater and more powerful than any revelation He made under Judaism. In the Old Testament, God became known through the Law, *its* requirements, claims, and holy demands. But, in the New Testament, God manifests His love and desire for a relationship with His people.

How do you prevent the Hebrews from concluding that Christ was nothing more than just another prophet God used to speak to the people? The Holy Spirit has that covered. The Hebrew writer focuses on Jesus' unique relationship with the Father in the next few verses.

The writer claims that God has appointed Jesus the Heir of all things. There are three great truths about Christ mentioned. First, the fact of Christ's unique relationship to God. Second, His appointment and inheritance. Third, the scope of His inheritance.

I. Jesus - The Rightful Heir

God has declared Jesus to be His Heir, according to verse two. (God) "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;" ([Hebrews 1:2 NKJV](#))

Peter echoes this in Acts 2:36, on the day of Pentecost, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." ([Acts 2:36 NKJV](#))

In Galatians 4:1, Paul writes, "Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." ([Galatians 4:1-7 NKJV](#))

The Hebrew writer's point in verse 2 is that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the Father's heir. The word "heir" suggests two things: dignity and dominion. It also gives that person legal title to the inheritance. An 'heir' is a successor to his father in all his father has.

The New Testament teaches the Father and the Son both enjoy supreme sovereignty. The supreme sovereignty of the Father in no way infringes upon the supreme sovereignty of the Son.

In John Chapter 5, Jesus heals a man at the pool of Bethesda. He didn't know who Jesus was. So when he was questioned about who healed him on the Sabbath day,

he couldn't come up with a name. But later, Jesus finds him and reveals himself to him.

Verse 15, it says, "The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. For this reason, the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, **"My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."** Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, **"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."** (John 5: 15-24 NKJV)

The Father does all that He does by the Son, and the Son does all that He does from the Father." As the Son of God, Jesus is "Heir" to all that the Father possesses, and He has the right to share the riches of God anyone He chooses.

Jesus has chosen to share His riches with us! Jesus has given us access to all the benefits and blessings of heaven. The Apostle Paul says in Romans Chapter 8, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8:14-17 NKJV)

II. Jesus - Appointed By God

The inheritance given to Christ is by appointment. It didn't require a vote. It was God's to give, and He gave it to Jesus. Jesus makes these riches and blessings of heaven available to all those who follow Him.

Jesus is the mediator of a New Covenant, through which all the blessings and benefits of God are now distributed. The Godhead made this appointment in eternity before time. This appointment guarantees its certainty and valid title. God chose the Mediator of the Covenant to be "Heir of all things."

The inheritance of Jesus is absolute and guaranteed. Isaiah 14:27 says, "For the LORD of hosts has purposed, And who will annul *it*? His hand *is* stretched out, And who will turn it back?" (Isaiah 14:27 NKJV)

In 46:10 he writes, "Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' (Isaiah 46:10 NKJV)

The Apostle Paul tells the Colossian believers that, "He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 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. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father that* in Him all the fullness should dwell." (Colossians 1:15-19 NKJV)

Sending Jesus was not an afterthought of the Godhead. Jesus was always God's plan to bring salvation to the world. Before anything was created, God appointed Jesus, the Heir to all things. One writer says, "It was the predestined *reward* of His voluntary humiliation; He who had nowhere to lay His head, is now the lawful Possessor of the universe.

King David wrote about this appointment in Psalm 89:27, "Also I will make him *My* firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth." (Psalms 89:27 NKJV)

Jesus as the "Heir" is what assures us an eternal inheritance. Jesus Christ gives us this "blessed hope." Our eternal destiny depends on Jesus' work on the Cross as our Savior and his appointment as heir of all things.

III. Jesus - Ruler Of All Things.

Finally, let's look at the extent of the inheritance. God appointed Jesus the Heir of all things. He made this appointment in eternity before time, but fulfillment is yet future. However, it was confirmed in Matthew 28:18 when "Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." (Matthew 28:18 NKJV)

Soon, "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats." (Matthew 25:31-32 NKJV)

Jesus will dispose of all evil at the great white throne judgment. Heaven and earth will pass away, but the Eternal Living Word of God will never pass away. At that moment, His eternal Heirship will be fully and eternally displayed: and according to Revelation 22:1 on the new earth shall be "the throne of God and of the Lamb"!

The tormented, despised, and rejected Savior has become heir over all things. What does that mean for us? That's a great question!

Jesus understands the difficulties and struggles that we face in life. He knows what you're going through. And He has the power to do something about it! He can give you the peace and strength you need to face and overcome even the most difficult moments of your life!

Romans 8:16 says, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together." ([Romans 8:16-17 NKJV](#))

We will never be "joint-lords," but His grace *has* made us "joint-heirs." Jesus has passed the blessing of His inheritance on to us! In John Chapter 17, Jesus tells the Father, "the glory which You gave Me I have given to them."

Conclusion

It all begins with Jesus. "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 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;" ([Hebrews 1:1-2 NKJV](#))

- Jesus is the brightness of all of God's glory.
- He is the express image of God.
- He is the Living Word through whom God upholds all things.
- And by Himself, he purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High.

Jesus is better than all other prophets. No prophet has ever held a higher place.