

# THE STAND

## PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE HEBREWS CHAPTER 1



### Chapter 1 Commentary

Hebrews opens by giving us an overview of the person of Jesus. Addressing these claims is critical in affirming that Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament and that Jesus is the Messiah the Jews had been expecting. Not only was it important for these Messianic Jews to have a correct understanding of Christ, it is important to us today. If we can begin to grasp the very essence of Christ, we can begin to live more freely in Him.

God has spoken to His people throughout history. Jews believed that God had spoken through Abraham, Moses, the prophets and even through angels, but the writer claims that Jesus is the final revelation of God. The writer takes special effort to show this is a final revelation and the fulfillment of the things that have already been told. He doesn't want his audience to see Christ as an alternative way, but the completion of the way God had planned since the beginning of time. For this reason, the writer acknowledges that God did, in fact, speak to the people in all these ways. Now, in the last days, God has broken the silence and has revealed Himself completely through Jesus. Christ was coming to complete their broken systems. Christ was not simply a "new way", but has been "the Way" since the beginning of time. The writer will show throughout his message that Christ was the fulfillment of God's revelations.

The writer also claims Christ to be the Son of God and heir of all things (v2). This claim would be packed full of meaning to a first century Jew and should not be taken lightly. Too often we fail to give the title of Son its rightful honor. In Jewish culture, the firstborn was the heir to the father's wealth he was the honored member of the family and was obligated to carry on the family name. This claim of Sonship was the very reason that Christ was crucified (Luke 22:70). No one at that time understood the Messiah would be the Son of God. It might have been easy for a Jew to believe Jesus was the Messiah, but may have been hard to accept this claim.

Christ's Sonship is reaffirmed by the claim that He is heir of all things (v2). The world, God's people, and all of creation belongs to Christ. It was hard for the Jews to believe that a man was worthy enough to inherit such a glorious position. Genesis 1:28 tells

us that God originally made the earth for man to inherit and rule. He gave man the earth and all the creatures in it, but because of the fall, everything God gave us was cursed (Gen. 3:14-19). It would take the perfect Man to reclaim creation and the world for mankind. As the Son of God, Christ accomplished this task and reclaimed the world for mankind. As believers we share in His inheritance.

Not only is Christ the Heir of all things, He took part in creation itself. This claim could only mean one thing Christ was also God Himself. Here the writer supports the claims of John (John 1), that Jesus was 100% God and 100% man. Jesus is the radiance of God's glory, the exact representation of His nature. Jews knew that no one could see the face of God, but Christ is now the visible representation of the invisible God. The word nature in Greek, 'hupostasis', actually translates "guarantee" or "proof." The original audience would have understood this to mean that Christ is proof that God exists.

The claims end with the idea that Christ holds everything together. To a first century Jew, this claim would have been a claim of authority. The Jews expected their Messiah to be a great king, but Jesus didn't seem to meet these expectations. The writer brings this up to remind his audience that Christ's Kingdom is not of the world and that He is holding all things together. Christ still has control over His creation. We see in verse 3 that Christ made purification of sins and now He is on a throne of higher honor, a heavenly throne.

Atonement and purification of sins was a big deal to the Jewish community. Their lives revolved around making sure they offered the right sacrifices and participated in the right cleansing ceremonies in order to be presentable before of God. Now, a single man comes on the scene and claims to have made eternal atonement for all men. This means their old way of purification is unnecessary. The rituals and ceremonies that had been part of their history for

### Luke 22:70

They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?"

He replied, "You are right in saying I am."



### Hupostasis nature

The English word "nature" translates from the Greek word "hupostasis". Hupostasis actually means guarantee or proof.

thousands of years were no longer needed. This would have been hard for a Jew to accept. The writer will show, throughout Hebrews, how Christ was not abolishing the system, but how Christ completed it. The fact that Christ “sat down” after making purification of sins indicates that everything He did was sufficient and no new revelations would be necessary.

After such claims, the audience would have had many questions. So, the writer immediately begins to address these questions and starts with angels. Why start with angels? Angels were held in very high regard in Jewish culture and Christ shared some similar qualities to these angels. Christ was a messenger and His home was in heaven, so the writer wants to take time to put each in their proper place. We see angels throughout Scripture as the link between the patriarchs and God. Angels accompanied the Lord to visit Abraham and confirm their covenant. Angels took part in judging Sodom and Gomorrah. An angel was sent to stop the sacrifice of Isaac and an angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush. There are numerous accounts of angels carrying out God’s work and communicating on God’s behalf. In fact, angels were even involved in foretelling Jesus’ birth. For these Jews, one of the biggest reasons angels might need to be discussed is that they were believed to have brought Moses the Law, the Jewish way of life. (Heb. 2:2). The writers’ task was to show that while Christ had similar functions and origins as the angels, He was higher than the angels. In fact, at the end of the chapter the true purpose of angels is revealed.

Scripture itself shows how Christ is better than angels. The writer uses the Old Testament writings they were familiar with to prove the claims of Christ. He does this by revisiting all the characteristics of God described in the first two verses and shows how the angels are not worthy of such glory.

Hebrews 1:5 quotes Psalm 2 where the Psalmist speaks of God’s Anointed One (the Messiah) being called the Son. He quotes other Old Testament scripture that calls the angels to worship the Messiah. In verses 8-9, Psalm 45 is quoted providing a picture of Christ as heir forever. Again, the writer is attempting to impress on his audience that Scripture has always point to Jesus. In this case, how the Messiah has always been greater than the messengers who speak of Him. He goes on to show how the Scripture say the Christ (the Lord) was present at creation and has been unchanging since the beginning. The same word used for Lord in Psalm 102 is the same word used for Christ as Lord.

## Names of God



Psalm 110:1 starts of with “The LORD said to my Lord”. This Old Testament writing actually points to Jesus. The first occurrence of the word is “Yahweh.” This is one of the Old Testament names for God. The second occurrence is “Adonai”, which is the divine human King of Israel (Christ). David already had hope of God’s great deliverance through the Messiah as he penned this prophetic Psalm.

The chapter ends by revealing the true purpose of angels and their place in the heavenly hierarchy. In verse 13 the writer quotes Psalm 110:1 to show how God had set aside the right hand for His Son. The angels have never been given the honor of the right hand, only Christ. In fact, we find in verse 14 that the purpose of the angels is to minister to those who will inherit salvation. How astonishing to this audience to hear that angels were created to serve the cause of Christ, and specifically to serve man, in hopes that he would follow Christ.

Angels are the first of many misconceptions about Christ the writer will attempt to clarify throughout the book. The groundwork laid out here is very important as we move forward in the study of Hebrews. We must realize the supremacy of Christ and the reality of who He is in order to clarify the misconceptions we may have about Christ. We will never be able to take rest in the reality of our salvation if we do not understand the Savior.

We must not rest at understanding who Christ is, but we must begin to live in response to who He is.

## The Old Testament

The Old Testament was the first revelation of God to His people. We must not assume that the Old Testament is irrelevant now that Christ has come and we have His revelation. Studying scripture holistically gives us a greater picture of Christ as the Old Testament continually points to Him. Stories of Noah and Moses simply give a first glimpse at God’s redemptive love that will be manifest in Christ.



# Personal Study Questions

The purpose of these study questions is to help you get into God's Word. We hope that through a personal encounter with God's Word, He will reveal His Truth and allow you to understand His story first hand.

1. God has spoken to His people throughout history. He spoke in various ways, through many different mediums. Look at these passages and see how God has spoken to people throughout the ages. List these ways here.

*Numbers 12:6*  
*Genesis 40*  
*Hosea 1:2*  
*Numbers 22:31-35*  
*1 Kings 19:11-13*

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2. What are some of the attributes or accolades of Christ mentioned in the first chapter?

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3. What was Christ's final achievement before sitting down at the right hand of God? What do you think the significance of "sitting" might be?

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4. History has continually prophesied the coming of Christ, even Psalms (or songs) of David spoke of Christ. Take a look at some of the passages and see how they point to the Messiah.

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*Psalms 2*  
*Psalms 45*  
*Psalms 110*

