

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

PART I

STUDY NUMBER ONE - Hebrews 1:1-14

INTRODUCTION:

**Christian growth is best described
by Chuck Swindoll
in his book, *Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Back*:**

**Growing and learning.
That's the Christian life in a nutshell, isn't it?
It seems to me, that more of us in God's family
ought to admit that there are more
"growing and learning" days than
"great and fantastic" days.**

**And that's nothing to be ashamed of.
Growing and learning are healthy,
normal experiences.
Both have to do with a process . . .
and that process is sometimes painful, often slow,
and occasionally downright awful!
It's like taking three steps forward
and two steps back.**

**Don't misunderstand. Jesus is still Lord.
God is still good. The victory is still ours. Nevertheless,
life is tough.
It's not a Disneyland. Or a rose garden.**

**Or a Cloud Nine delight complete with
loud fireworks and big-time tingles.**

**Or daily miracles that make our
checkbooks balance
and recharge our dead batteries.**

**Such expectations are not only unrealistic,
they are unbiblical.**

Listen to the apostle Paul:

**We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed;
perplexed, but not despairing;
persecuted, but not forsaken;
struck down, but not destroyed (2 Cor. 4:8,9).**

**Now that's where it's at.
And that is precisely what this book
is all about.**

**Persevering through the afflictions,
the crushings, the blasts of life . . . without despairing
and giving up.
pp. 17-18**

The Book of Hebrews is written to a group of people who are having a rough time.

And when you have a rough time, you have several cards, that you can play.

You can either give in, give out, give up, or you can go on.

And to these believers, they literally want to give in, give out, and give up, and go back to Judaism.

They are Jewish Christians who have come out of Judaism and have accepted the Messiah.

They have suffered being ostracized from their families, they have suffered persecution, they have lost employment.

And because they are in this kind of position, rather than persevere and press on, they want to quit.

They want to go back to Judaism, where it's a lot more comfortable.

You know as well as I do, if you've been a Christian very long, when you pray "God change my circumstances," most of the time He says "No, but I'll change you to suit your circumstances."

He uses, sovereignly, the events of our lives to transform us and to produce spiritual growth.

When it comes to the Book of Hebrews, the glory of Jesus Christ flows through the whole book.

It is one of the most majestic statements of the Person of Christ.

Simply because he wants to show these Jewish Christians that they can't find anything better than where they are. They have found the epitome. They have found the best in Christ.

The Book of Hebrews is a lot like the Book of Romans.

It is one of those great theological treatises in the New Testament of which Romans is one, and Hebrews is the other.

People shy away from Hebrews simply because it has so many Old Testament references in it. A lot of times the phrases, are hard to understand. That shouldn't cause us to back off from one of the greatest books in the New Testament.

There are 3 THINGS that will help us greatly in our comprehension of the message to the Book of Hebrews:

- 1. The folks who are receiving this letter are of Jewish nationality. This explains much of the content and the many references to the Old Testament and the sacrificial system throughout the book.**
- 2. The book is written to genuine [born again] believers so the message is for Christians.**
- 3. The group that is hearing and receiving the letter are contemplating leaving Christianity, and the possibility of going back to Judaism, away from Christ, because of the persecution and suffering they have experienced.**

They are going to bow out, throw in their hand, and go back to Judaism and forsake the person of Christ. That is the basic three point framework to the Book of Hebrews.

When was it written?

We have a little tiny window in 70 A.D.

Titus came into Jerusalem, destroyed Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, so the temple worship is gone.

Temple worship is functioning in the Book of Hebrews so we have to back up from there and come up with a date that is preceding 70 A.D.

So I'm suggesting a window of from 64-70 A.D. Somewhere in that timeframe, the book was written and it is written to a second generation Christian group.

I believe these are people who are not at Pentecost but they have heard the message of Christ, they have come to know Him as Savior, they have suffered persecution, and now they are thinking about going back under Judaism.

We really don't know who wrote the Book of Hebrews. It is an anonymous text.

There have been volumes and volumes written on who is the author, to the Book of Hebrews.

Basically, most likely, you have two main choices. You can say Paul or Barnabas. They are probably our two greatest candidates.

It doesn't bother me. The reason it doesn't is because it's inspired by the Holy Spirit that made the book,

and God found the credibility in the book
and it doesn't make any difference who wrote it.

When we get to heaven, we're going to find out,
who wrote the Book of Hebrews
and you're going to get to meet him.

And guess what, he's going to say?
"Have you read my book?"

Yes. You're going to say, "I sure did.
Over at _____. It was great!"

Before we start the book, the verse by verse exposition,
there are five things I want to
say to you.

These five things are the distilling of truth
in the book, that we are going to come to,
but they apply to you and me.

1. **DON'T EVEN THINK OF QUITTING**
Don't even consider the option of quitting.

2. **IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP [your]
GROWTH AND START OVER**
You can't make a rededication
to Christ today, and erase the tapes
from the time of your spiritual birth
till now.

**A lot of people try to live like that.
They come to know Christ when they are
young and then they have a bumpy time
in their lives and then they expect
that they can come back to the Lord
and erase the tapes and go on from there.**

**But you can't.
And you can't go back.**

**3. WE WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE
AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST
for our lives from the beginning
of our new birth until either, termination or the
rapture of the church.**

- 4. LIFE ABUNDANT [always] COMES
[to the person who is] COOPERATING WITH
THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN OUR LIVES, [that
are] DESIGNED BY OUR
HEAVENLY FATHER FOR GROWTH**

**Life abundant always comes to the person who
is cooperating with the circumstances
in his or her life designed by a Father
who is doing it for our growth.**

5. GROWTH INVOLVES DISCIPLINE, DESIRE, DETERMINATION AND DEDICATION **Growth involves those things.**

**You are as mature in Christ today
as you want to be.**

**By the discipline that you've exercised,
by the desire that you have, and the
determination to do what God
wants you to do, and the dedication
you have given to that,
you are what you really want to be,
as a result of your commitment
to Christ.....**

**Someone said it well, "The problem
in the garden of Eden, was not the fruit
on the tree, but the pair on the ground."**

**The bottom line is Adam and Eve,
and they created the havoc that took place. They made
the choices, and you make the choices as well.**

Are you ready?

**What the author is going to show us in these
first verses is two things.**

**We're going to see the superiority of Christ
to the prophets,
and we're going to see the superiority of Christ
to the angels.**

Verse 1

**v. 1 In many ways and in many portions, God, in former
times having spoken to the fathers by means of the
prophets,**

"IN MANY WAYS AND IN MANY PORTIONS,"

God communicated, first of all, in "MANY WAYS."

How has God spoken in the past, "in former times"?

He spoke through:

That is, by:

VISIONS,

the LAW,

the TYPES,

the PROPHECIES.

Sometimes He spoke in the earthquake.
Sometimes He spoke in the wind.
But many times, what?
It was the still small voice.
It was in the gentle whispering that God spoke.
So, in many ways He spoke.
What's the next phrase?

"IN MANY WAYS AND IN MANY PORTIONS, GOD, IN FORMER TIMES HAVING SPOKEN TO THE FATHERS BY MEANS OF THE PROPHETS,"

What does that mean?
Well, we have 39 portions in the Old Testament. Which are records of God speaking to men through inspired writers, your Old Testament.

"IN MANY WAYS AND IN MANY PORTIONS, GOD, [When?] IN FORMER TIMES HAVING SPOKEN TO THE FATHERS BY MEANS OF THE PROPHETS,"

Notice God isn't speaking this way today.
It's in "former times."

If God is going to communicate a message to you, guess what.

He's going to communicate a message to you through the written word and by the power of the Spirit, as you are still before God.

He's going to get the information to you directly, that He wants you to have.

“IN FORMER TIMES” He spoke this way “IN MANY WAYS AND IN MANY PORTIONS.”

**"HAVING SPOKEN TO THE FATHERS
[how did He do it?] BY MEANS OF THE
[instrument of the] PROPHETS."**

He used a man, a prophet.

2 Peter 1:21

For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

When you say prophet, who do you think of?

**We think of Moses as a prophet.
You think of Elijah as a prophet.
You think of Elisha.
You think of Isaiah,
Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
and then all twelve of those guys
that you can't even pronounce their names, there at the
end of the Old Testament.**

All of them, prophets, men, through whom God was speaking to his people.

And they spoke the message.

Now, that's in "former times."

Now play verse 2 against verse 1.

**v. 2 in the last of these days spoke to us in His Son,
whom He appointed heir of all things, through
whom also He made the worlds (ages),**

**In other words, God sent one more message.
After He got done with the prophets,
He had one more message to give
and that message involved His Son,
a person, not a written message. Look at it.**

In verse 1 the KEY PHRASE is:

**"in former times He spoke by means
of the prophets."**

Now in verse 2:

**"IN THE LAST OF THESE DAYS HE SPOKE
TO US IN HIS SON."**

That's His favorite title for His Son, "His Son."

He had a message “in the former times” through the prophets “in many ways and in many portions” but now He is speaking through His Son in the last.

**It is the last message to be communicated.
It is communicated through “His Son.”**

All the messages of the prophets were fragmentary and piecemeal, but the message of the Son is a complete, divine revelation.

I have never seen more theology in a verse and a half than I have seen in the last half of verse 2 and verse 3.

It is one of the most loaded portions in the whole of the New Testament.

**You are going to see seven tiny little phrases that describe the superiority of the Son over everybody else.
God Himself coming in human flesh.**

God has changed His method of communication.

Let's look at these 7 GREAT STATEMENTS that are made about the Lord Jesus Christ.

**"IN THE LAST OF THESE DAYS SPOKE TO US
IN HIS SON, WHOM HE APPOINTED
HEIR OF ALL THINGS."**

STATEMENT #1 is seen in the phrase:

"WHOM HE APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS."

**He is the heir of everything because He
created it all.**

**Because He is the Creator, it qualifies Him
to be the heir. He is the designated heir
of all things, and it should be so.**

STATEMENT #1:

**HIS APPOINTMENT AS HEIR.
Here's the Good news!**

Romans 8:16, 17

**The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit
that we are children of God, and if children, heirs
also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if
indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may
also be glorified with Him.**

**All that is His is ours now, too.
We too become joint heirs with Him.**

"THROUGH WHOM ALSO HE MADE THE WORLDS (AGES)."

STATEMENT #2:

HE IS THE CREATOR.

We know that Christ is the Creator.

In John 1 it says, "all things were made by Him, and without Him, was not anything made that was made."

Colossians 1 agrees with that.

We believe that Christ was there in the beginning and He was there as the Creator.

He is Creator in a greater degree.

He didn't just make all the planets and all the galaxies, but He also planned the whole program.

The Word is "ages."

He planned all of time from its beginning to its termination.

And guess what?

He planned in that program

His own physical death for you and me and for our eternal salvation.

He is the Master Planner.

Now to get an idea of the magnitude of that, Kent Hughes wrote a two volume commentary on the Book of Hebrews.

When he comes to this, he describes the magnitude of Christ as the Creator as saying these words:

Cambridge physicist Stephen Hawking, who has been called "the most brilliant theoretical physicist since Einstein," says in his best-selling *A Brief History of Time* that our galaxy is an average-sized spiral galaxy that looks to other galaxies like a swirl in a pastry roll and that it is over 100,000 light years across--about six hundred trillion miles. He says, "We now know that our galaxy is only one of some hundred thousand million that can be seen using modern telescopes, each galaxy itself containing some hundred thousand million stars." It is commonly held that the average distance between these hundred thousand million galaxies (each six hundred trillion miles across and containing one hundred thousand million stars) is three million light-years! On top of that, the work of Edwin Hubble, based on the Doppler effect, has shown that all red-spectrumed galaxies are moving away from us--and that nearly all are red. Thus, the universe is constantly expanding. Some estimates say that the most distant galaxy is eight billion light-years away--and racing away at two hundred million miles an hour.

p. 27

**Incredible when you realize the magnitude,
of what the Creator was involved in.**

- 1. “HEIR OF ALL THINGS” and**
- 2. He is the Creator of “THE AGES.”**

**He’s given His message through His Son,
“whom He has APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS.”**

**v. 3 who being the radiance of His glory and the exact
representation of His nature (real being), and who
is bearing up all things by the word of His power.
When He had made purification of sins, He sat
down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;**

“WHO BEING THE RADIANCE OF HIS GLORY.”

What does that mean?

You can do one or two things with light can’t you?

**You can either radiate it because it’s internal
or you can reflect it.**

**We say the moon reflects the light of the sun.
Christ does not reflect the light of the Father.
He is the Light.**

**And when He is transfigured
on the Mount of Transfiguration,
the curtain drops and the men see His glory.**

**In John 17 in the Garden of Gethsemene
what does He pray?
“Father, return My glory now that my work here
is finished.”
He literally radiates the glory.**

**Now, what do you and I do, when we
spend time in His presence?
We reflect that glory, don't we?**

**We become more and more like Him
for we see Him as He is.
Jesus Christ is a sun not the moon.
He radiates the glory of God.**

In STATEMENT #4 we will focus on His NATURE.

**"WHO [not only] BEING THE RADIANCE OF HIS
GLORY AND THE EXACT REPRESENTATION OF
HIS NATURE (REAL BEING)"**

He is God!

STATEMENT #4:

**"THE EXACT REPRESENTATION OF HIS NATURE
(REAL BEING)"**

Remember John 14:9, just as he was answering the questions of those guys, just a few hours before the Garden of Gethsemane and before the cross, that last night on earth, remember what they said?

Philip finally mustered up enough courage to ask a question, he said: "Show us the Father and it will satisfy us."

What did Jesus say? He asked another question: "Have I been so long a time with you Philip and you have not known Me?

I and the Father are one. We are one!"

"WHO BEING THE RADIANCE OF HIS GLORY AND THE EXACT REPRESENTATION OF HIS NATURE (REAL BEING), AND WHO IS BEARING UP ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER."

We see:

His GLORY [in #3],

His NATURE [in #4], and

and now we are going to look at:

His POWER [in #5].

**Can you imagine the power that is involved in keeping all of this functioning in a coherent, consistent fashion without all kinds of devastating mistakes and happenings?
He has set it in motion.**

STATEMENT #5:

"WHO IS BEARING UP ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER."

Colossians 1:17

And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

**And it runs like clockwork.
We send our space men into space because of the rules that are involved.**

**The seasons are here.
We know what's coming because we believe in a reliable God.**

*** Why are you so upset, by what God is allowing to go on in your life right now, if He has the power to run the universe and it runs so consistently and so coherently?**

*** Can't you go from the greater to the lesser and realize, that He is running your life and He is qualified to do it in the best way possible.**

*** And would you be willing to believe that He is doing it today?**

*** And the circumstances that surround you are for your own personal spiritual development and growth in Christlikeness.**

*** You see a glaring inconsistency when you gripe and complain about what God allows as the curriculum, in our individual lives at that point.**

And the Hebrew Christians need to realize that. They're having a hard time.

Do they think God turned His back on them just because they're getting persecuted and having a hard time? No.

God is developing Christlike character and they can't stand the heat, so they're getting out of the kitchen.

They want to go back to a more comfortable kind of a lifestyle, which is opposed, to what God has in mind for them.

1. His NATURE,
2. His GLORY,
3. and His POWER.

Those first five things all have to do with His Person.

And now, two things have to do with His work.

STATEMENT #6:

"WHEN HE HAD MADE PURIFICATION OF SINS"

How did He do that?

The only way He could do that, was the shedding of His blood.

1 Peter 1:18, 19

Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

1 Peter 2:24

And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

Remember what John the Baptist said, the first time he saw Him in the back of the audience?

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Purification is a priestly word.

“AND HE PURIFIED.”

As a result of His death upon the cross, the purification of sins, He made possible Eternal Salvation.

1 John 2:1, 2

My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

Last and final statement:

In STATEMENT #7:

**"HE SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND
OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH."**

**That means that He finished what He started. When he
cried "Tetalesti, it is finished" on the cross. He finished
it. He went and sat down
at the right hand of the Father.
And why is He there today?
He intercedes there for us 24 hours a day.**

**In this wonderful chapter you see Christ
as a prophet,
a priest,
and the king.**

**He is heir of all things,
He is the creator,
He is the radiance of His glory,
He is the representation of His nature,
He bears up all things by the word of His power, He has
made purification for sins
and He has sat down at the right hand
of the throne on high.**

Now does that get you excited?
Just look, one verse and a half.
You've had enough biblical truth
that we can go home right now!

v. 4 having become as much superior to the angels, as
He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Between verse 3 and verse 4 you move from,
who the Son of God is to His superiority to angels.

Why are angels brought into the argument?

If they are going to go back under the law,
in Judaism, they are going to go back
to the ministry of angels,
not the ministry of the Son.

He is superior, the key word is
“superior to the angels.”

Now, are angels real?

You don't have to read very far in the Bible,
to discover the answer.

In Acts 7:53 Stephen says that angels
were there, at the giving of the law.

Acts 7:53

You who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it."

Galatians 3:19

Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made."

Angels, the cherubim were in the Garden of Eden.

You see angelic beings embroidered in the veil that separated the Holy Place, from the Holy of Holies.

You see cherubim on the mercy seat of the arc as their wings come over to touch.

Isaiah 6:2, 3

When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, he saw the cherubim, and the seraphim.

Revelation 20:1

And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

The Book of Revelation is filled with them. Actually, these celestial beings are real.

They are mentioned 108 times in the Old Testament and 165 times in the New Testament.

John Calvin in his Institutes of Basic Religion says:

“The angels are the dispensers and administrators of the divine beneficence toward us.

They regard our safety, undertake our defense, direct our ways, and exercise a constant solicitude that no evil befall us.”

Yes, angels are ministering spirits.

It's going to be fun in heaven to find out what some angels did, when we were right on the edge of losing it all, and they intervened, in our behalf because the Father was concerned for us.

One word of caution, whenever you get the focus on the creation rather than the Creator, you have lost divine truth.

The focus of truth is always on the Person of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, not the angelic being.

He has a more excellent name than they.

We are vulnerable when we start playing around with angels, realizing that Satan is a fallen angel.

Ezekiel 28:14, 15

You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.

Isaiah 14:13-15

You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.

The FOCUS OF TRUTH, then, is upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is superior because He has a more excellent name.

He is a SON.

He is SOVEREIGN.

He is CREATOR.

He is the LORD of the Old Covenant.

In the remainder of the passage, the writer is going to quote from 7 DIFFERENT OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES, which will take us clear down to verse 13.

I want to take those Old Testament passages and just kind of summarize them for you and share why they are included in the text.

Let's read all 7 of them and then track along with me, from the Old Testament passage beginning at verse 5.

v. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him, and He shall be a Son to me"?

v. 6 And when He shall have brought again the firstborn into the inhabited earth, He is saying, "And let all the angels of God worship Him."

- v. 7 And with reference to the angels He is saying, "Who is making His angels winds, and His servants a flame of fire."**
- v. 8 But with reference to the Son He is saying, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His Kingdom."**
- v. 9 You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness: therefore God, your God, anointed you, with the oil of gladness above your companions."**
- v. 10 And "as for you, in the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands;**
- v. 11 they themselves will perish, but as for you, you are remaining; and they all will become old as a garment,**
- v. 12 and as a cloak you will roll them up; as a garment they will also be changed. But as for you, you are the same, and your years will not come to an end."**
- v. 13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Be sitting at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?"**

**The first 2 PASSAGES have to do with
RELATIONSHIP.**

QUOTATION #1: Verse 5

Psalm 2:7

**"You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.**

QUOTATION #2: Verse 5

2 Samuel 7:14

I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me.

QUOTATIONS #3 and #4 have to do with ANGELS.

QUOTATION #3: Verse 6

Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 96:7; 97:7

"And let all the angels of God worship Him."

QUOTATION #4: Verse 7

Psalm 104:4

**Who is making His angels winds,
and His ministers a flame of fire.**

QUOTATION #5: Verse 8 & 9

Has to do with the [speaks of Christ's] KINGDOM:

Psalms 45:6, 7

**Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of
His kingdom.
You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.
Therefore God, your God, anointed You with the oil
of gladness above your companions.**

QUOTATION #6: Verses 10-12

Focuses on the [He is the] ETERNAL CREATOR:

Psalms 102:25-27

**You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of
the earth,
And the heavens are the works of Your hands.
They themselves shall perish, but You are
remaining;
And they will all become old as a garment,
And as a mantle you will roll them up;
As a garment they will also be changed.
But You are the same,
And Your years will not come to an end.**

The final quotation that we have is here in verse 13, QUOTATION #7, focuses on AUTHORITY:

Psalm 110:1

**"Be sitting at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet."**

**This focuses on His authority as He sits
at the right hand of God the Father.**

**v.14 Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent
out to render service for the sake of those who are
about to be inheriting salvation?**

**They are "ministering spirits."
And "ministering spirits" to those who what? "about to
be inheriting salvation."**

F. B. Meyer says:

**In verse 14 they are spoken of as ministering spirits,
"sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall
inherit salvation" (R.V.).**

This liturgy of service is a literal fact.

**When struggling against overwhelming difficulties;
when walking the dark, wild mountain pass alone;
when in peril or urgent need--we are surrounded by
invisible forms, like those which accompanied the path
of Jesus, ministering to Him in the desert,
strengthening him in the garden, hovering around his**

cross, watching his grave, and accompanying Him to his home.

They keep pace with the swiftest trains in which we travel. They come unsoiled through the murkiest air. They smooth away the heaviest difficulties.

They garrison with light the darkest sepulchers.

They bear us up in their hands, lest we should strike our foot against a stone.

Many an escape from imminent peril; many an unexpected assistance; many a bright and holy thought whispered in the ear, we know not whence or how--is due to those bright and loving spirits.

"The good Lord forgive me," says Bishop Hall, "for that, among my other offenses, I have suffered myself so much to forget the presence of his holy angels."

But valuable as their office is, it is not to be mentioned in the same breath as Christ's, which is set down for us in this chapter.

p. 11

Close with this short story.

(Holiness by J. C. Ryle)

'Man,' said a thoughtless, ungodly English traveller, to a North American Indian convert, 'Man, what is the reason that you make so much of Christ, and talk so much about Him?

**What has this Christ done for you,
that you should make so much ado about Him?"**

The converted Indian did not answer him in words. He gathered together some dry leaves and moss and made a ring with them on the ground. He picked up a live worm and put it in the middle of the ring.

He struck a light and set the moss and leaves on fire.

The flame soon rose, and the heat scorched the worm.

It writhed in agony, and after trying in vain to escape on every side, curled itself up in the middle, as if about to die in despair.

At that moment the Indian reached forth his hand, took up the worm gently and placed it on his bosom. 'Stranger,' he said to the Englishman, 'do you see that worm?

I was that perishing creature.

I was dying in my sins, hopeless, helpless and on the brink of eternal fire.

It was Jesus Christ who put forth the arm of His power.

**It was Jesus Christ who delivered me
with the hand of His grace,
and plucked me from everlasting burnings.**

**It was Jesus Christ who placed me,
a poor sinful worm, near the heart of His love.**

**Stranger, that is the reason
why I talk of Jesus Christ,
and make much of Him.**

I am not ashamed of it, because I love Him.'

p. 245

**What are some of the lessons that we can learn from
this particular study?**

Lessons

**LESSON #1: In former times God spoke by means of the
prophets, and in these last days has spoken through His
Son.**

**LESSON #2: Jesus Christ planned the program and created
the worlds.**

**LESSON #3: Jesus Christ is God in human flesh as we have
witnessed His glory, His nature, and His power.**

LESSON #4: He is the One who holds all things together.

LESSON #5: By His death on Calvary's cross He has made purification of sins.

LESSON #6: There is no chair in the tabernacle because the priests under the old covenant never finished their work.

LESSON #7: In these verses we have seen Jesus Christ as the prophet, the priest, and the king.

He is God's last message, he made an adequate sacrifice, and He is a King of righteousness.

LESSON #8: Jesus Christ is superior to the angels.

In the same way a son is superior to a servant.

LESSON #9: Angels have a unique ministry of service for the sake of those who are about to be inheriting salvation.

LESSON #10: We need to be reminded that Satan is a fallen angel, and he can be transformed as an angel of light.

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

PART I

STUDY NUMBER ONE - Hebrews 1:1-14

v. 1 In many ways and in many portions, God, in former times having spoken to the fathers by means of the prophets,

v. 2 in the last of these days spoke to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds (ages),

v. 3 who being the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature (real being), and who is bearing up all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

v. 4 having become as much superior to the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

v. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him, and He shall be a Son to me"?

v. 6 And when He shall have brought again the firstborn into the inhabited earth, He is saying, "And let all the angels of God worship Him."

v. 7 And with reference to the angels He is saying, "Who is making His angels winds, and His servants a flame of fire."

v. 8 But with reference to the Son He is saying, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His Kingdom.

v. 9 You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness: therefore God, your God, anointed you, with the oil of gladness above your companions."

v.10 And "as for you, in the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands;

v.11 they themselves will perish, but as for you, you are remaining; and they all will become old as a garment,

v.12 and as a cloak you will roll them up; as a garment they will also be changed. But as for you, you are the same, and your years will not come to an end."

v.13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Be sitting at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

v.14 Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent out to render service for the sake of those who are about to be inheriting salvation?

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read Hebrews 1:1-14 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. How has God chosen to speak to man in the past, according to verse 1?**
- 3. In these last days, how has He chosen to speak to us, according to verse 2?**
- 4. What did Jesus do after He made purification of sins, according to verse 3?**
- 5. To whom is Jesus superior, according to verse 4?**
- 6. How is the Lord described in verse 10?**
- 7. How is the Lord characterized in verse 12?**
- 8. What did God the Father say to God the Son, according to verse 13?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: In former times God spoke by means of the prophets, and in these last days has spoken through His Son.

LESSON #2: Jesus Christ planned the program and created the worlds.

LESSON #3: Jesus Christ is God in human flesh as we have witnessed His glory, His nature, and His power.

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