

## Hebrews – The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

### Lesson One Article

Christ is better than the prophets.

#### A. *In His Person.*

Christ is the Son of God; the prophets were merely men who were called to be servants. Christ made the worlds (or “framed the ages”), and it is He who upholds the worlds. His Word has power. He spoke the worlds into being, and now His Word controls and sustains our world. Christ is also the Heir of all things. “All things were made by Him and for Him” (Col. 1:16). He is God’s sacrifice for the sins of the world. He “purged our sins” by His death on the cross. Now He is seated in glory, as God’s King-Priest. His work on earth is completed; He has sat down.

#### B. *In His message.*

God’s revelations in old times were given “in many portions and in many ways.” No prophet received the complete revelation. God spoke through visions, dreams, symbols, and events, as well as through human lips. These revelations pointed to Christ, and He is the final revelation from God. Christ is God’s “last Word” to the world. All of OT revelation led up to Christ, God’s final and full revelation. Anyone today who boasts of having a “new revelation from God” is deceived. God is not giving revelations today; He is illuminating His once-for-all revelation in Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Christians believe that God is a *speaking* God. The first chapter of the Bible is punctuated by the phrase ‘and God said’. In the New Testament one of the great titles of Jesus is ‘The Word’. Immediately we are crossing swords with much of modern liberal theology which ridicules the concept of a faith based on propositional statements. The recipients of this letter believed without doubt that God had *spoken* in the past. Only thus could mankind have any knowledge of what God is like.

The opening verse of Hebrews tells how God *spoke* in the past ‘many times and in various ways’. God has *spoken* through the created world (Ps. 19). This is what Job calls God’s ‘*whisper*’, ‘the outer fringe of his works’ (Job 26:14). A clearer view of God’s character and demands is given as he *speaks* through law, prophets, poetry and history in the pages of the Old Testament.

There is always unfinished business in those Scriptures, so that we do not move from the less true to the more true when we pass Malachi; rather, we move from promise to fulfillment. In this letter we will see that worked out supremely in the themes of temple, priesthood, sacrifice and covenant. ‘God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect’ (11:40).

One of the common misconceptions of our day is the belief that the Old Testament is dominated by the theme of the judgment of God and the New Testament by that of the love of God. In fact, both themes run together in both Testaments and reach their highest fulfillment in the New. That fits with verse 2 and its reference to God speaking by his Son ‘in these last days’. That phrase ‘in these last days’ is shorthand for the whole era of grace in which we live, between the first and second comings of Christ. All roads in the Bible lead to him and revelation is complete in him. Beyond him the church’s task is to interpret these truths within the context of our day, but there is no further new revelation from God. He has *spoken* finally in Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the New Testament* (676). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup> Hacking, P. H. (2006). *Opening up Hebrews*. Opening Up Commentary (11–12). Leominster: Day One Publications.