

1. Understanding How the Father Views Christ

Today, we are beginning a new series of topics on the book of Hebrews. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the people offered many sacrifices as a covering for sin. However, those sacrifices could never take away sin. When John the Baptist introduced Christ in John 1:29, that verse says, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’” Here, we see that Christ came to do what the Old Testament sacrifices could never do. We will gain a much greater understanding of this as we see the relationship of the Old Testament to the ministry of Christ.

Hebrews 1:1-2 says, “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.” In the verses in the introduction to the book of Hebrews, we see the way that God spoke in the time of the Old Testament contrasted with the way that the Father spoke to us through the ministry of Christ.

We begin by seeing that the Father spoke in various times in the Old Testament. The period of the writing of the Old Testament covered a period of between 1600 and 1800 years. In addition, some of the writers did not even fully understand what they were writing. Daniel 12:8-9 says, “Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things?*’ And he said, ‘Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.’” Here, we see that Daniel was told that the things that he wrote were sealed until the time of the end.

The long length of time over which the Old Testament books were written also meant that there were many different cultures and different customs during the time the various books of the Old Testament were written. In fact, the books were written in several different countries. As a result, God gave us a picture of what He wanted to communicate with us through the things that were written in these various cultures, customs and countries.

The Father also spoke in various ways through the Old Testament writers. Some writers wrote in poetry. Others gave historical accounts or even shared visions or dreams. These things were written to the fathers by the prophets. 2 Peter 1:20-21 says, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.” The Father led these writers to write through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

However, God did something new when we come to the time of the New Testament. John 1:14 says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Here, we see that during the time of the New Testament the Father sent His Son to live among the people of the world. Most of the New Testament writers had the opportunity to get to know Christ and travel with Him because the Father spoke to those writers through His Son. They got to spend much time with Christ while He was

here on this earth.

We see that the Father appointed the Son to be heir of all things. Psalm 2:7-8 says, “I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, “*You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.*”” This Psalm promised hundreds of years in advance that Christ would be the heir of all things. Even though Christ is the heir of all things, He has promised to share that inheritance with the church. Romans 8:16-17 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.” Here, we see that we are called joint heirs with Christ because He will share His inheritance with us throughout all eternity.

We are also reminded of the fact that Christ is the One who created the worlds. John 1:1-3 tells us, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Christ was the Creator of all things and so He is the One who has all authority over His entire creation. In addition to seeing that Christ is the Creator, we see that Christ is the exact image of the Father.

Hebrews 1:3-4 says, “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, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” We are reminded of several things about Christ in these verses. First, we see that He is the source of light. The very brightness of God comes from Christ and gives light to the world. In John 8:12, Christ said, “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’” Christ is the source of light for everyone in the world.

Second, we see that Christ is the express image of the Father. Although the word translated “express image” is only used here in the New Testament, in other uses it was used to speak of the image stamped on coins, in clay or through use of a metal or wooden image. Each of the things stamped by that same image would be an exact reproduction of the original. This is a clear statement that Christ is the exact image of the Father in every way. John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Christ is God just as the Father is God because they have the same exact image.

Third, we see that Christ upholds all things by the Word of His power. Colossians 1:15-17 says, “He 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.” Here, we see that Christ is the One who created all things whether those things are in heaven or on the earth. He created all things whether they can be seen or not. He is the One who places all rulers in their positions of influence and authority. In addition to creating all things, Christ created them for Himself. Here, we see that all things were created

for His glory. Christ is the One who is before all things and He is the One who holds all things together.

Fourth, we see the purpose for which Christ came to this earth. We see that He came and purged our sins. The word translated “purged” means *to act rightly or to perform a promise*. Christ came to keep the promise of the Father that He would take away our sins. Matthew 1:21 says, “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” Christ came to save us from our sins and He fulfilled that promise by shedding His blood to pay the penalty for our sins.

Fifth, when Christ completed His ministry on this earth, Christ returned to heaven and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. The fact that Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father is a clear indication that He completed the work that He had been sent to do on this earth. It also indicates the authority that has been given to Christ. Hebrews 1:13 says, “But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool?’” Here, we see that Christ has been given the authority that no angel ever had. This quotation is a quote from Psalm 110:1 and is also the quotation that Christ used after the Jewish religious leaders questioned the authority of Christ in Luke 20. Christ spoke in Luke 20:41-44, “And He said to them, ‘How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: ‘The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’” Therefore David calls Him Lord; how is He then his Son? The religious leaders knew this was a claim by Christ to be God.

As God, Christ was much greater than any of the angels. That is why Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Christ is the One to whom everyone will one day bow.

Christ has also obtained a more excellent name than the angels by inheritance. In verse two, we see that Christ became heir of all things because of the fact that the Father has appointed him heir. Christ spoke a parable to the Jewish religious leaders. In Luke 20:14-15, we read, “‘But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.’” So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them?’” The parable makes it clear that Christ is the One who was the Son. As we help our physical and spiritual children to understand these four verses that introduce the book of Hebrews, we help our children learn to explain one of the passages that clearly shows that Christ is the Son of God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children grow in their understanding of the deity of Christ.