

## Jason Upchurch - Hebrews 1 - A Divine Son is Born - Christmas Eve 2025

As we worship the Lord through the preaching of the Word this evening, I want to turn our attention to **Hebrews 1**. As we consider the Lord Jesus coming into the world to save wretched sinners, there are few places in the Bible that more clearly articulate the greatness of Jesus than Hebrews 1.

The whole premise of the book of Hebrews is that Jesus is Greater. He's greater than angels, greater than Moses, gives a better rest, he's a greater high priest than the Old Testament priests, from a greater priesthood, gives a greater covenant, ministering from a greater Temple, where he is the greater sacrifice. It's to him all the saints in the hall of faith looked forward to, and it's to him we in the New Covenant are told to look back to for endurance in this life.

**Heb. 12:3:** Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself so that you may not grow weary or faint hearted.

Are you weary this evening? Are you faint? Maybe the rush of Christmas has you worn out. Maybe Christmas brings up difficult circumstances. Maybe sin has crept back into your life.

The author of Hebrews says if that's you, then turns your eyes to Jesus. Think about him and consider him. Who he is and what he's done to secure our salvation.

So I want to turn our eyes to Jesus. The glory and miracle of Christmas is that the glorious Son of God humbled himself by coming into the world in human flesh. I want us to consider his glory, and then be reminded that that glorious God is who came to save us.

There are many passages that talk about the reality of Jesus being God. They state it simply.

**John 1:1:** In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word, of course, is Jesus.

**Rom. 9:5:** says simply that Jesus, who is God over all, is blessed. Amen.

But Hebrews explains the divinity of Jesus in complexity. Who is this baby who is in the manger? Who is the one who came to save us?

### 1) Jesus speaks directly for God. Read 1-2a

In the OT God spoke to his people in many different ways. Sometimes he spoke audibly to them, sometimes he came in the form of the angel of the Lord like in the burning bush. Sometimes it was a still small voice with Elijah, and other times it was simply giving a word to a prophet to proclaim to the nation.

He did this over the course of several millennia. We often read the Bible and think that God was just speaking all the time to people. But when you realize the Bible records the highlights over 3-4,000 years the amount of times God spoke is actually small. But in these last days - when Jesus came - he spoke to us through his Son.

Jesus is the fullness of what God wanted to say to us. And it's not as though Jesus says something different than what was said before - most of Jesus's teachings are just reiteration of God's commands and promises in the past. But Jesus is the final revelation.

I know we live in a technological age with text messages and emails and social media. But I still think the best form of communication is in-person communication. Where you see a person and watch them and relate to them.

That's part of Jesus coming into the world - it's not just a message through someone else. It's God taking on flesh and dwelling among us to be with us.

Jesus's words, his life, his death, his resurrection, his teaching - are the final revelation of all God wanted to say. The baby who came was really the fullest revelation of God to humanity.

## 2) Jesus created the world in order to inherit the world. Read 1-2

So this baby in the manger is the creator of the universe. This is the mystery of how the Son of God can somehow be truly God and also become truly man. How can the Creator of the universe be confined to a body, let alone the body of an infant? We can't totally comprehend it.

We just know these things are true. The one through whom all things were created- according to his divine nature - is eternal but now also lying in the manger.

He was there in **Genesis 1:1** before anything had been created and he is the one who said "let there be light." It's also the humility of Jesus. The creator God took on flesh, born of a woman he made, born into a world he made, surrounded by sin and sorrow, to redeem rebellious sinners. He created.

Hebrews says he is also the heir. That is, all of Creation is designed for Jesus to have. God the Father planned creation and redemption as a gift to his eternally divine Son.

Imagine that your dad commissioned you to build him a mansion, fully funded but you do all the hard work. But when he dies, you inherit the mansion.

Well, the Father commissioned Jesus to create the universe and save the world, and ultimately he will inherit all of it.

That's what an heir is, they get something from someone else. If you're listed as an heir in a will you get stuff. Jesus is the heir of everything he created.

What that means is that at the end of the age, Jesus will inherit all creation as his own where he will rule and reign forever and ever. He does that now, but in eternity future it will be manifest to all his people for all eternity.

So Jesus speaks directly for God. He created and will inherit.

## 3) The man Jesus is fully divine. Now, we've seen this already to some extent. But this is the most technical way the author can describe the deity of Jesus. **Read 3**

There's 3 brief statements about Jesus's divinity here. He is the radiance of the glory of God. That is he is the brightness of the glory of God.

Think about the sun. I know we haven't seen it for weeks. It's the bright ball in the sky that comes out in March. But when we look up at the sun, we don't actually see the sun, we see photons, we see light particles or waves coming at us. Kids, don't do this - you'll go blind. It's just an illustration. But we don't really distinguish between the glory of the sun and the sun itself. When you go outside in the summer you don't photon tan, you get sun tan. The sun and the photons, or the glory of the sun, are connected. So connected we use them interchangeably.

That's Jesus. He is the radiance of the glory of God. He is not the Father, but he is the brightness of the Father.

That's why Jesus can say to Phillip: Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Because the Father is in him and he is in the Father. **John 14:8-10**

The Father and the Son are separate persons, but there is an indwelling unity that can't be broken.

**Verse 3** says he is the exact imprint of his nature.

This is an amazing claim. The divine nature that Jesus has is the exact same divine nature that the Father and the Spirit have.

Unbelieving Jews deny that Jesus has any divine nature.

JWs say that the nature of Jesus is an angel.

Mormons say Jesus's nature is sort of divine, but he is not equal to the Father.

And I think if we're honest, a lot of Christians struggle with the divinity of Jesus. They might say he's fully man and fully God, but they would say that somehow Jesus is less important or less glorious or less divine than the Father. No, his divinity is the exact imprint of the Father and Spirit.

You know the US Mint that cranks out all our coins? Part of the process they go through to make coins ensures they are all exactly the same. Blam - quarter. Blam - quarter. Blam quarter. Every one needs to be the exact same in every way.

Well, when it comes to the divine nature, the Father, Son and Spirit all have the exact same divine nature. All three persons of the Trinity are co-equal in all attributes, co-equal in glory, co-equal in deserving of worship. All the stuff - the attributes and glory - that it is to be God, Jesus has in the exact same measure. That's who's lying in the manger.

And that that same God, Hebrews says, upholds the universe by the word of his power. **Read 3**

The moon is swirling around the earth, the earth is swirling around the sun, the solar system is swirling around the Milky Way galaxy, and our galaxy and every other galaxy and the whole universe and everything in it is upheld simply by the power of Jesus's words.

He is the creator of the universe, but he is also the sovereign sustainer of the universe. Everything that comes about, all of human history by the word of the Lord lying in the manger.

#### 4) This baby is also our kingly high priest. Read 3b

In the OT there were 3 main offices that God used to lead his people: prophet, priest and king. We've already seen that Jesus is the pre-eminent prophet of God - God spoke through him like a prophet.

But Jesus is also priest and King. He made purification for sins. Jesus came into the world to die and specifically die as a perfect, sinless sacrifice in the place of all who believe in him. He purified the sins of believers by dying for their sins. Their sins imputed to him, his righteousness imputed to us - all through faith, not of any works.

That's what a priest does: a priest cleanses people to stand pure before God. And that's what he did.

When I was in college there was a power generating plant that was just down the road, my buddy worked there. And one day we went down there to wash our cars. And I asked him why we were washing our cars at the power plant. And he said because it's the purest water on planet earth. They have to purify the water thoroughly because it's going through super hot steam generators and there can't be any residue. The only thing in this massive 100ft tall tank was completely distilled H2O - 100% purified.

That's what Jesus does for us: he purifies us from 100% of all unrighteousness. Through faith he cleanses us so that we are acceptable to God.

And our priest, once he finished his purification on the cross and ascended into heaven, sat back down on his throne. **Read 3b**

The right hand of the majesty on high is a long way of saying God's throne. The only person who sits on God's throne, of course, is God. The divine prophet and divine priest, is also our eternal divine King.

Now, the author of Hebrews is going to lengths to show how much greater Jesus is than angels. If you've read through the Bible you know that angels are awesome creatures. More powerful than us, more glorious than us. In Revelation there are 2 times when the apostle John sees an angel and vision is so overwhelming he falls down to worship the angel. He can't help himself because the angel is so powerful and amazing and dazzling.

We would do the same thing as angels are glorious. But what we see here is that however great and glorious and powerful angels are, the pale in comparison in every way to Jesus.

#### 5) Jesus is God's Son. Read 4-5

The fact that Jesus is uniquely the Son of God is on full display here. We often use that phrase about Jesus, but sometimes it's helpful just to pause and consider what it means.

It means he has the same nature as the Father, we've already seen that. We've seen that a father gives and inheritance, a son receives the inheritance.

But here there is begetting. Today I have begotten you. That's from Psalm 2 where God promises to exalt his Son, the Messiah, over all the universe. Jesus was begotten - enthroned as ruler - when he ascended into heaven.

That's the unique aspect between the Father and the Son. The father has ordained the Son to rule.

Angels don't rule. The word angel might sound cool to us but it just means a messenger. Someone who delivers a message from one person to another. That's all angel means. And while they are awesome creatures, there's nothing particularly flashy about a messenger.

But over and over God calls Jesus his Son. **Psalm 2** and **2 Sam 7** are quoted here. Both of those passages are talking about the Messiah to come and reign over a kingdom that will never end.

No angel has ever had that honor. No angel can claim a special relationship to the Father like Jesus can. He is over them, above them.

#### 6) Jesus receives worship. Read 6-9

If you're ever talking to a JW or Mormon, this is a great place to take them because here we see categorically that angels are to worship Jesus. Jesus and angels are not equal. He is so far above all angels and principalities that they are to honor him through worship.

And, since we're only ever to worship God, then what we see here is that God is commanding his divine Son to be worshipped by angels.

And, again, as powerful as angels are they are just wind, flames of fire. This is a quote from **Psalm 104** where God is described as riding on the wings of the wind, the clouds are his chariot. God uses his creation as his servants. That's what angels are, they are his servants.

Great kings of old would have their slaves carry them around in carts on their shoulders. The great king would ride above them as they moved him about. That's God proverbially does with angels.

They are the proverbial wind he rides around on, they are the lightning - the flame of fire - that carries their sovereign king around on. But that's not Jesus. Jesus isn't carrying God around. No, Jesus is the Son up there with God sitting on God's throne.

Think about the Temple, the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies was a box called the Ark of the Covenant. That was God's throne on earth. What was on the ark? Two angels. God sat on his throne above 2 angels that would proverbially carry him around when the ark moved.

And here's the most incredible passage of all. **Read 8-9**

God the Father calls the Son God: Your throne O God is forever and ever...therefore God your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness.**Psalm 45**

There is no clearer place where the Son is called God. And as God he sits on a throne of gladness and joy.

This is the baby in the manger. The ruler of the universe, over all the angels. Did you ever wonder why a multitude of heavenly host come and praise Jesus at his birth? "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those who he is pleased."

Because that's what they are commanded to do. That's what they delight to do to their creator.

7) Jesus is eternally the same. Read 10-14

So here we have the immutability of Jesus. If you think of the word mutation, the idea is that something changes. The comic book heroes the XMen we all mutants, they all changed at some point. Jesus is immutable - he doesn't change.

He the same yesterday, today and forever. Humans will come and go, people will rise and fall, Jesus will never change, his years will have no end.

Interestingly, not only is Jesus above angels, but so are we. Angels were made by God to serve us. They are ministering spirits for Christians. We don't fully understand how all that works, except to say there is a spiritual realm around us that we don't perceive and they apparently serve us in that realm.

But Jesus is the divine, eternal Son who will never change who came down into the world to save us. We rejoice not because he was a baby, but because he is our God. Immanuel, God with us.

This is what Christmas is all about. The miracle of our creator God coming into the world, to save us, serve us and love us.

**Pray**