

JESUS *is Better* THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Week One: Incomparable Christ

Introduction

God has spoken in the past through human prophets. In these last days, He has spoken most eloquently through His Son. Jesus is, in his essence, fully God.

Digging Deeper

God speaks. What an incredible thought, that almighty God, who “upholds the universe by the word of his power” has spoken to us, who by our very nature were his enemies. Yet our whole salvation depends on this, because the Bible is clear that if God had not spoken to us, then we would never have acknowledged him (Psalm 53).

In fact, God has been speaking, from the very beginning. He has been speaking “at many times and in many ways,” according to v. 1, and primarily through his obedient prophets. The Old Testament is filled with stories of faithful men who proclaimed the truth of God in the face of overwhelming circumstances, caring not for their own safety or comfort. All had this in common: They were the mouthpieces of a loving, gracious God who was trying to speak to his children about salvation.

But in v. 2 we see the culmination of God’s speech: His Son, Jesus Christ. How has God spoken by his Son? Because Jesus, in every way, showed us what God is like. He revealed the character of God, the goodness of God, the mercy of God, and above all, the plan of God, by dying on the cross for our sins. He who is “the heir of all things,” who “created the world,” was punished for our sins.

The theme of the book of Hebrews can be expressed in three simple words: Jesus is better. Better than the angels, better than sacrifices and priests — better than anything that purports to get us to God. Why, exactly, is he better? Jesus is better because Jesus is God.

Verse 3 says that Jesus is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact imprint, or express image, of his nature. Jesus is God because of who he is. We don’t have to wonder what God would be like if he became a man — all we have to do is open the Bible and read Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. We know exactly what God is like because Jesus is God.

Further, we know that Jesus is God because of what he does. Verse 3 goes on to say that he upholds the universe by the word of His power. Words were God’s preferred instrument of creation, whereby he spoke all things into existence. This same power belongs to Jesus; nothing happens apart from him.

Majesty. Glory. Mind-boggling power. Jesus embodies all of these things, which is why the last half of verse 3 is incredible. This God-man “by himself purged our sins.” Instead of clinging to his glory, Jesus suffered and died for us because he wanted to obey the loving, merciful plan of his heavenly Father. In Matt. 20:28 Jesus says about himself, “the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Phil. 2:5-11 is a well-known poetic passage that reminds of Jesus’ remarkable humility, humility that led to his well-deserved exaltation.

In fact, it is exaltation that the author of Hebrews moves to in v. 4. Jesus took his seat on high, commanding the angels, because he was not just a son, but *the* Son of God. And how do we become sons (and daughters)? *Through faith in him.*

Bible Study Questions

Read Hebrews 1:1

A. In verse one, the writer states that God spoke to the Hebrews forefathers. Can you name three implications from this? Hints below. Why are these important to our understanding of God, the Biblical revelation, and our responsibility?

1. God exists.
2. God wants to communicate to his creation.
3. His creation has the capacity to understand what He is saying.

B. Look up the following verses and list the ways in which God has spoken.

1. Exodus 2
2. I Kings 19
3. Isaiah 6
4. Hosea 1:2
5. Amos 8:1

David Guzik states that God spoke in a spectrum in the O.T. and Jesus is like the prism that collects all the colors and focuses them in to a single beam. What do you think he means?

C. What does the writer mean when he says God has "...spoken to us **by** his Son..." rather than through his Son? (Jesus did not bring a message; he is the message!)

Group Application Questions

1. Do you consider often enough the majesty and power of Jesus? Do you let it leave you in awe?
2. Do you trust him to uphold all things, or are you trying to control all your life's details on your own?
3. Are you following Jesus' example of service and humility? Or do you have a sense of entitlement?
4. Have you thanked God recently for the simple fact that He has revealed Himself to you? If not, take time in prayer today to do just that.

Prayer

Ezekiel 20:5 "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: On the day I chose Israel, I swore with uplifted hand to the descendants of Jacob and revealed myself to them in Egypt with uplifted hand I said to them, 'I am the Lord your God.'"

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*Overview was adapted from Richland Hills Community Church

*Questions were adapted from "Hebrews, An Anchor for the Soul" by Kent Hughes and "The NIV Application Commentary" by George H Guthrie.

