

JESUS, THE FINAL WORD

THE FINAL WORD: KNOWING CHRIST THROUGH HEBREWS | HEBREWS 1:1-4
APRIL 19, 2020 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son." (Hebrews 1:1-2)

Introducing Hebrews

The God Who Speaks (Hebrews 1:1)

To the ancestors/fathers
Through the prophets
At many times
In various ways

The Contrast (Hebrews 1:1-2)

"at many times" – "in these last days"
"through the prophets" – "by his Son"

Seven Facets of Jesus' Unique Identity (Hebrews 1:2-4)

1. "his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things" (1:2a)
2. "through whom also he made the universe" (1:2b)
3. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (1:3a)
4. "sustaining all things by his powerful word" (1:3b)
5. "After he provided purification for sins" (1:3c)
6. "he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (1:3d)
7. "So he became as much superior to the angels" (1:4)

Hearing the Final Word who is Jesus

Listen to Scripture
Treasure the uniqueness of Christ
Live in light of God's Word in Jesus (Hebrews 2)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This week, we begin a new series, "The Final Word: Knowing Jesus through Hebrews." Begin your study by praying that God would speak to you through His Word. Then, whether you're alone or with a group, read Hebrews 1:1-4 aloud.
2. *Background:* Hebrews is a very unique book in the New Testament. It is structured more like an extended sermon than a letter. Although many suggestions have been made, we do not know for sure who wrote it, who it was written to, or when it was written. Most likely, it was written sometime in the 60s AD, before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (70), to Jewish-background believers near Rome, who are facing persecution.
3. In Hebrews 1:1, the writer takes it for granted that God has spoken. How has God spoken according to this first verse?
4. A fundamental idea of the Christian view of God is that God speaks to humanity. Why is this important and how might this be unique in comparison with other religions or philosophies of life?
5. There is a contrast between verse 1 and verse 2. What is God doing now that is different than in times past?
6. Verses 2-4 describe several characteristics of Jesus that deserve deeper exploration. Discuss the meaning of each characteristic with reference to the parallel passages listed below:
 - "appointed heir of all things" – see Psalm 2:8
 - "through whom also he made the universe" – see John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16
 - "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" – see Colossians 1:15 and 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - "sustaining all things by his powerful word" – see Colossians 1:17
 - "he provided purification for sins" – see John 1:29 and 1 John 2:2
 - "he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" – see Psalm 110 and Ephesians 4:10
 - "superior to the angels" – see Psalm 2:7 and Philippians 2:10
7. Which of these characteristics of Jesus speak most powerfully to you right now and why?
8. Both the prophets and the angels were considered messengers of God. As you look over these four verses again, how does Jesus stand superior to these other messengers?
9. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study of Hebrews 1:1-4? If you are on your own, write that down. If you are in a small group, discuss your answers with one another. Close in prayer. Choose one person in your life with whom you will share something you learned through this study.

DIG DEEPER:

This week let Hebrews 1:1-4 occupy your attention. Here are some practical ways to do that:

- Memorize the entire text of Hebrews 1:1-4
- Reflect each day of the week on one of the characteristics of Christ in verses 2-4, letting it become a source of prayer, journaling, or further meditation.
- Study other portions of the Bible that help you understand these phrases better, utilizing a Study Bible or cross references
- Watch the Bible Project overview video on Hebrews to prepare to study the entire book: <https://bibleproject.com/videos/hebrews/>.