

Hebrews 1:1-3

“The Final Word”

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I. Introduction

For the sake of examination, I divided the book of Hebrews into three sections. I choose to use one of the author’s favorite words “BETTER”.

1. From chapter 1 verse 1, through chapter 4 verse 13 the focus is upon Jesus being a “**BETTER PERSON**”. The first way in which Jesus proved Himself a “BETTER PERSON” is in the area of communication between the Godhead and His creation.
2. The second division of the book of Hebrews starts at chapter 4 verse 14 and runs through chapter 10 verse 18 where the author delivers upon another area of Jesus superiority as He offers a “**BETTER PERFORMANCE**” as our High Priest.
3. In the last division of this book I believe that the author reveals to his readers one last area where Jesus is better than any thing or anyone that came before Him and that is Jesus in chapter 10 verse 19 through chapter 13 verse 25 offers a “**BETTER PRACTICE**” in which we can place our faith in.

The very first book of the Bible and its very first verse starts with God’s communication to His creation saying, “*In the beginning God...*” Here in Hebrews the author wastes no time in this letter with an introduction whereby he would have made himself known to his readers. Instead the author is consumed with a much larger picture to write about; the “**Creators heart and desire to make Himself known to His creation**”. One of the primary aspects about God as our creator is that He was not content with merely creating all that exists out of nothing, instead His very nature is to reveal Himself to His creation. **The author of Hebrews in the first three verses of chapter 1 shows Seven Superiorities of Jesus as communicator above the prophets of the First Testament or Hebrew**

Scriptures. That is not to say that the First Testament isn't inspired but that God's way of communication through the prophets had limitations when compared with His communication with His creation through His Son.

II. Vs. 1 Progressive revelation

Vs. 1 The statement from the author is simple and blunt: The creator has always been interested in communicating with His creation and the word of God shows that it is a cornerstone of His nature. It is important to make the distinction between "revelation" and "discovery" as they are opposite. **REVELATION**, is God who is making himself known where as **DISCOVERY**, is dependent upon mankind to discover God. Up first for the author in verse 1 is to speak on how the Creator spoke through the prophets and the limitations of this form of communication. Such a challenge should not be lost upon us as we have all experienced the difficulty of getting our information across to others. We all realize that there are various roadblocks to communication such as a person's age, culture, education.

First thing we are told is that the initiator of this communication was GOD, it was the creator who initiated the communication to His creation and not His creation trying to communicate to the creator. I find it interesting in light of organizations like SETI whose purpose is stated as a; "*Scientific search for intelligent extraterrestrial life as they monitor electromagnetic radiation for signs of transmissions from civilizations on other worlds.*" Here is a bunch of very smart people spending every day listening to white noise hoping to hear something that indicates *intelligent extraterrestrial life* when all they needed to do is open their bibles and read about the Most Intelligent Life there is who is trying to see if there is any intelligent life left of the planet He created. Next we

are told that God spoke at “various times” and in “various ways”. The Greek is far more exacting than the English as the author’s point is not that God spoke, but that it was at at “various times” and in “various ways”. The author is NOT combating the denial of divine revelation, instead he is preparing the reader that **God has now through Jesus given His final word in revealing Himself**. This twofold statement is a comparison of the limitations of how God spoke in times past in the “First Testament”:

- a. “Various times”: The word is a compound word made up of two words “many” and “parts or portions”. **The point of the author is that God didn’t speak all at once, but in separate revelations each of which set forth only a part of His will.** One writer of the first testament was given a revelation, and another was given another element of truth about the Creator at another time.
- b. “Various ways”: This word is also a compound word that means “many” and “manners or ways”. This doesn’t refer to different ways in which God imparted truth to the writers of the first testament, but to various revelations in content and form. **In the first testament God didn’t choose to communicate once for all but only giving one writer some information and then another writer further information.** He spoke to Moses one way and time them Isaiah at another way and time etc. It is also obvious to those that examine the scriptures that at the beginning of God’s revelation that what He presented to the writers of the first testament was more basic and as time went on what He gave other writers was a more developed revelation.

The first testament revelation was “progressive” in nature as no one writer could understand or write about the revelation of God at once. The revelation was given many parts as well as many different types or modes: To one writer it was given as a law, to another it was given as history, another it was a poem, another a typology or parable and still another a prophecy. To the people of the 1st testament the God’s communication was like listening to a grandfather clock as they had to wait till the chime at the hour and the rest of the time was waiting till the sound was heard.

The phrase “*in times past*” is also a compound word made up of “times” and “past” these two words are very similar:

- A. “**Times**”: “Old in the point of TIME”
- B. “**Past**”: “*Old in the point of USE*” Meaning, worn out, ready to be replaced by something *new*”.

The close association of these two words suggests that the writer wanted to convey that the first testament was not to be cast aside but that it was time for a new revelation to be given, on that would be God’s final word and complete the first one.

Next the author says “*God having spoken, spoke*” and by *this word links the two revelations the 1st and the new.* God did this “*to the fathers or Israel*” by the prophets. John the Baptist confirms this, being the last of these who in John 1:23 said that was, “*A voice of One who is crying out in the wilderness.*” The Greek has that as John was one of many voices which God had used in the 1st testament.

III. Vs. 2-3 Seven superiorities of Jesus’ revelation

Vs. 2 The phrase “*in these last days*” again links the times in which God had spoke in the past through the prophets to the end of those times because He is now speaking through His Son. The fact that it said “**THE** prophets” set them off in a class by themselves but notice that the author doesn’t say “**THE** Son” which means that *the author is drawing the distinction NOT on CLASS but upon CHARACTER and NATURE. Jesus stands at the end of the future as he is also at the beginning of the past, for he is the creator of the worlds.* So here is the Seven Superiorities of Jesus as communicator above the prophets of the First Testament or Hebrew Scriptures:

- Vs. 2 “*Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son*”: The **FIRST WAY** in which Jesus is superior to the first testament prophets: **They were “mouthpieces of God”; Jesus the Son is God communicating to His creation.** The revelation God has given us through His Son is not superior merely in WHAT HE said but Who He is! The revelation is superior in PERSONALITY! A revelation made by the only One who in all He said and did revealed the Father. The Son as God, expressed all that God is, Jesus said in John 14:9 “*He that has seen Me has seen the Father.*” Or in John opening statement in his gospel John 1:1 “*On the*

beginning was the word (LOGOS), and the word (LOGOS) was with God, and the word (LOGOS) was God.” This is why Jesus is the final revelation to His creation.

- Vs. 2 “**Whom He has appointed heir of all things**”: The author quickly moves into the **SECOND WAY** Jesus is superior: **The prophets were part of the inheritance but the Son inherits all things**. The dominion promised to Adam was lost due to sin the prophets didn’t regain what Adam lost but Jesus through His incarnation, death and resurrection has alone regained what was lost. **This makes Jesus better than the prophets as they could only communicate truth where as Jesus PERFORMED what He communicated**.
- Vs. 2 “**Through whom also He made the worlds**”: The **THIRD WAY** **Jesus is superior is that He created all things and is the One that operates and manages all things**. The use of the word “*through*” in the Greek speaks of the fact that Jesus is the creator but not just a mere instrument or passive tool in creation. **Further more the Greek speaks of the fact that in Jesus all the laws and purposes which guided creation resided in Him**. The word “*worlds*” **includes all elements such as time and space as well as matter**. **What this suggests is that all things exist under these but these operate under Him and are a part of His on going and unfolding plan**. The Son is not only the divine agent of all of creation but the sustainer of the continual operation of all the creation.
- Vs. 3 “**Who being the brightness of His glory**”: The **FOURTH WAY** **Jesus is superior is that He shares the same glory of the Father and as such is co-eternal and co-existent processing the same glory not merely reflecting it like a moon does the sun**. None of the prophets came any where close to this. The Greek construct of the word “*brightness*” is best summed up in the authors statement in Hebrews 12:29 where he writes “*Our God is a consuming fire*”. One Greek scholar summed it up by saying that this word states that “*The Son of God is, in His essential majesty, the expression and sole expression of divine light*.” The Greek word for “*glory*” speaks of the collective divine attributes. This is different than Paul’s words in Philippians 2:6 where Paul says that Jesus, “*being in the **FORM** God..*” as the word there is immediate and speaks of the personal divine essence in His inmost being. Here the idea is that the glory is attached to His deity!
- Vs. 3 “**And the express image of His Person**”: The **FIFTH WAY**, **Jesus is superior to the prophets is that He is the exact impression of the Person and character of God. The prophets are clearly not!** The writer was not content with speaking only of the glory of God as it relates to Jesus but now moves to the character of God. The word “*express image*” in the Greek was used of an engraver who made a stamp of coins. Metaphorically it referred to a “*distinctive mark*” and was used in classical Greek of a “**person’s personal features**”. “*Of His Person*” in the Greek is a compound word made up of “*under*” and “*to stand*” or “*that which stands under*”! **The idea is that of a foundation that God placed in His Son as a distinctive stamp of attributes and characteristics that bear His exact image**.
- Vs. 3 “**And upholding all things by the word of His power**”: The **SIXTH WAY** **Jesus is better than the prophets is that He not only carries the weight of all**

of the creation, He maintains its coherence and development of it. Which of the prophets could make that claim? The idea here is not like the Greeks Atlas who sustained the dead weight of the world. Instead the idea is that Jesus sustains the movement of all of creation with all of its changes and transformation through out time. Paul wrote of this in Colossians 1:17 where he said of Jesus that, “*In Him all things **CONSIST**.”* Jesus holds all things together in their proper relationship to each other by His power, He alone is the BOUND in all of creation every where! He alone is the sustainer and maintainer of all of creation, holding it all together by His word.

- Vs. 3 “*When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*”: The **SEVENTH WAY Jesus is superior is that He alone shed His own blood of the cross to put away our sin and no prophet could ever do that.** The author has so far focused upon Jesus superiority in creation the final area is a look at His ability in re-creation! The words “When He had purged our sins” in the Greek indicate that He did so acting in His own interest and offering Himself which is what the author continues to insist in chapter 10 verse 12. Sin could only be eradicated by His blood, the bloods of bulls and goats only pointed towards the only cure of the LAMB OF GOD. Sin established its self through Adam’s disobedience and could only be cured by Jesus obedience. Our salvation through Jesus blood breaks the penalty and power of sin through our trust in Jesus. And when we leave this body, we will forever lose our old sin nature and in our glorified body only have His divine nature. The Greek has this as a once-for-all act and the fact that He has “*sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*” indicates that Jesus work if for ever finished where as the Levitical work was never finished.

God did speak in times past in many ways:

- The palmist wrote: Ps 19:1 “*The heavens declare the glory of God*”
- Paul wrote in Romans 1:19 that, “*What may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.*”
- The angels have many times declared as Luke 2:10 records “*I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.*”
- The prophet’s countless times spoke of His glory as in Isaiah 6:3 where we read, “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.*” He spoke to Moses in a storm and thunder and to Elijah in a still small voice.

Yet in none of these ways: *Creation above, conscience within, angels from on high or*

prophets in our midst was the message ever complete. Only in Jesus have do we as John

1:14 declares that we “*beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,*

full of grace and truth.” ***Jesus is God’s final word to humanity, there is nothing more***

to be said, there is nothing more unsaid, it has all been said in Jesus!