

Christ is Superior to the Prophets
Hebrews 1:1-2
Part Two

Some people call it luck. Others just say that it's being born into the right circumstances. No matter what our stance might be on the subject, the public has become increasingly interested in the lives of famous heirs and heiresses who are waiting to inherit more money than most people could ever imagine spending; famous heirs and heiresses such as Paris Hilton, Ivanka Trump, Abigail Johnson, Sam Branson, Charlene Heineken, Allegra Versace etc.

So is the world, by and large, fascinated with these kinds of people and their lifestyles, as well as the vast fortunes that these people will one day inherit? And I believe that the answer to that question is pretty obvious. Of course the world is fascinated with these kind people and their lifestyles, and perhaps on some level the world might even be envious of them.

But for us as the followers of Christ it should not be this way. Why? It is because all that they might have or will have pales in comparison to the inheritance of Christ, the One whom we have chosen to follow, and whose inheritance we will one day enjoy as co-heir's with Christ.

And hopefully this thought will come alive for us this morning as we return back to our study of Hebrews, which was written by an unknown author to a group of Hebrew Christians living in Rome around 67-69 AD to strengthen their faith in the midst of a great persecution so that they in the midst of that persecution would not be tempted to turn from Christ back to Judaism.

So how did the author of this letter seek to strengthen the faith of these struggling Hebrew Christians? He sought to strengthen their faith by showing them in his letter that Christ was superior to anything that they might have left behind in Judaism, which led us to the question that we are now seeking to answer as we continue our study of this book. And what is that question?

How did the author of the book of Hebrews see Christ as superior? He saw Christ as superior in numerous ways.

First of all, the author of the book of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the Old Testament prophets (Hebrews 1:1-4). So how did the author of Hebrews see Christ as superior to these prophets?

The author of the book of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the Old Testament prophets because he believed that Christ, being God's Son, was the culmination of divine revelation (Hebrews 1:1-2a). In other words, the author of the book of Hebrews saw the Old Testament prophets simply as an opening act of divine revelation sent to prepare the way for the true headliner who was Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

So now let me read for you **Hebrews 1:1** and see if this is not so. **“God, after He spoke long ago to the Fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, (2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son.”** So did the author of Hebrews see Christ, the only begotten Son of God, as the culmination of divine revelation and therefore as superior to the Old Testament prophets? Absolutely!

But the author of Hebrews is not yet done with driving this point home to his readers. In fact, the author of Hebrews will not be satisfied until the Old Testament prophets are lost in the shadows of the Christ's superiority. So how will the author accomplish this goal?

The author of Hebrews will continue to drive home the magnitude of Christ's superiority to the Old Testament prophets by providing a sevenfold description of Christ (Hebrews 1:2b-4). The author believed, and rightfully so, that if the recipients of this letter truly saw Christ for who He was and what He had accomplished in this sevenfold description, that Christ's superiority would fully, totally, and completely overshadow the Old Testament prophets reinforcing in the minds of his readers why the Old Testament prophets were simply the opening act of divine revelation and not the headliner.

And where will we find this sevenfold description of Christ? We will find this sevenfold description of Christ beginning at the midpoint of **verse 2** through **verse 4**, a text that we will begin to examine this morning and will continue to examine for a number of weeks.

So now let me read these verses for you. **“Whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (3) And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (4) having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.”** So did the author, in spelling out this sevenfold description of Christ beginning at the mid-point of **verse 2** through **verse 4**, continue to drive home the superiority of Christ to the prophets of Old Testament, even beyond what he had already said in **Hebrew 1:1** and the first part **verse 2**? Absolutely!

So now let us take a closer look at this author’s sevenfold description of Christ. And what is the author’s very first descriptive phrase?

The author of Hebrews described Christ as God’s appointed heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2a). So now let us now go back to the mid-point of **verse 2** and see if this is not so. **“In these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He [referring to God] appointed heir of all things.”**

So did the author of Hebrews describe Christ as God’s appointed heir of all things? And of course the answer is yes, he did.

And what is my hope for this message as we begin to examine this particular phrase? My hope is that as we, the followers of Christ, better understand the inheritance of Christ and our participation in that inheritance, that it would fill us with a sense of excitement as we contemplate our future blessed state, and this contemplation would insulate us from the temptation of being envious of any heir or heiress or in other person who presently may be the object of the world’s fascination. There is nothing there for us to envy, in fact it should be quite the opposite.

So hopefully with this in mind, let us now go back to the author’s first descriptive phrase and seek to understand what the author meant when he described Christ as God’s appointed **“ heir of all things.”**

Now I know that it would appear that this descriptive phrase should be very easy to understand, but as is so often the case in the Scriptures, this phrase is

not nearly as easy to understand as we might think. And I would hope that this would become clear to us over the next few minutes.

So let us begin by looking at the word **“heir.”** So how should we understand this term? Typically when we think of the word **“heir,”** we typically think of a person who has inherited an estate from someone who has died or will inherit an estate when they die. But this certainly is not how we should understand the word here.

Why? God or in other words God the Father who has appointed Christ **“heir of all things”** will never die, therefore we cannot think of Christ as an “heir” in the sense that we might typically think of the word “heir,” but this does not make Christ any less of an heir. He is an heir and this is exactly why the author of Hebrews refers to Him as such.

The author refers to Christ as God’s appointed heir because at some future time Christ will take possession of what God has promised Him very much like an heir might take possession of an estate. So, what has God promised His Son? We know what God has promised His Son based on what we have already read. He promised His Son that He would become the **“heir of all things.”**

So, what does this phrase **“heir of all things mean”** mean? In order to understand what this phrase means we need to find the specific promise that God made to His Son, that these Hebrew Christians living in Rome would have understood as having made Christ God’s appointed **“heir of all things”** and then examine this promise in light of its context.

So where is this promise found in the Scriptures? God’s promise to His Son, that made Christ the appointed “heir of all things,” is most likely found in Psalm 2:8.

So let me now read this verse for you along with its surrounding context beginning with **verse 1** down through **verse 9**. **“Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? (2) The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying (3) ‘Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!’ (4) He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. (5) Then He will speak to them in His anger and**

terrify them in His fury, saying, (6) ‘But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy Mountain. (7) I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, “You are My Son, today I have begotten You. (8) Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. (9) You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.”’” So within these verses did God the Father make a promise to His Son that could have been interpreted as having made Christ the appointed “**heir of all things?**”

I believe that the answer would have to be yes! And where do we find that promise? We find that promise in **Psalm 2:8** where God speaking to His Son said to Him, “**Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.** Clearly this is a promise that the Hebrew Christians in Rome could easily have understood as the basis of the statement that the author of Hebrews made in **Hebrews 1:2**, that God had appointed Christ as the “**heir of all things.**”

So if **Psalm 2:8** was in fact the basis of the author’s statement in **Hebrews 1:2**, and the recipients of this letter would have understood this statement as such, then how should we understand the author’s reference to “**all things?**”

Because God’s promise to His Son in Psalm 2:8 is the basis of the statement in Hebrews 1:2, we can conclude that the “all things” is referring to “all things” pertaining to this earth or in other words to Christ’s dominion over the earth.

This is what Christ was promised by God according to **Psalm 2:8**, and this is the specific inheritance that the author of Hebrews has in mind when he tells the recipients of this letter that Christ is God’s appointed heir of “all things” in **Hebrews 1:2**.

And doesn’t this make total sense? Let me ask you this question. When this earth was created and Adam and Eve were placed in the garden, who was given dominion over this world by God? Adam and Eve were given dominion over this world or in other words Adam and Eve were made the rulers of this world. And this is made very clear to us **Genesis 1:26-28**. But their dominion over this world did not continue, did it?

They lost it. And how did they lose it? They sinned! And because they sinned they lost what they had. They lost dominion over this world. They were no longer the rulers of this world.

This certainly was not a very good day for the human race was it? But it got even worse! So, what do I mean by that?

When Adam and Eve sinned against God their once privileged position of having been given dominion over this world passed to Satan (Matthew 4:8; 1 John 5:19). Satan became the ruler of this world.

And if there is any doubt about this let me read for you **1 John 5:19**, which very clearly tells us that even up to this very time, because of the sin of Adam, that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. **“We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”**

And how much power does he have? He has a whole lot of power. Let me read for you **Matthew 4:8-9**. **“Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; (9) and he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give to you, if you fall down and worship me.’”** So, what was Satan offering to Christ? He was offering to Christ all the kingdoms of this world and all of their glory. This is what he was offering to Christ.

So how did Christ respond to this offer? Did he say to him, “You can’t do this for they are not yours to give?” No! He did not say that. He did not say that because Satan, according to His Father’s will, actually did have the power to give Him these things. But hopefully, as you remember the story, even though Satan did have the power to give these things to Christ, Christ rejected the offer commanding Satan to go from Him while quoting an Old Testament Scripture, **“You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”**

So did Adam and Eve once have dominion of this world? Yes! Did they, because of their sin, lose that dominion? Yes! Did that dominion pass to Satan? Yes! But now let me ask you an important question. Will Satan’s dominion over this earth continue?

And what is the answer? No! One day, based on the promise of God in Psalm 2:8, the dominion over this earth that Adam lost to Satan will be given to God's Son as His appointed "heir of all things."

And when will that day be? Christ will enter into the possession of this inheritance as the "heir of all things" immediately following the tribulation as He establishes as a gift from God His millennial rule over the whole of the earth and all the nations of the earth.

And what will characterize His earthly millennial rule? His rule will be characterized by righteousness, peace and joy. The inhabitants of the earth will be worshippers of Him. The curse that was placed on the creation at the fall of mankind will be removed, causing the desert and all of the earth to bloom and become fertile. Because of this, mankind will experience an unprecedented prosperity that will reach to every individual. This coupled with very long life spans and the absence of disease, will cause the population of the earth to increase rapidly, but all the while during this 1000 year period of time it will be managed brilliantly and lovingly by Christ.

But Christ will not be ruling over this His earthly millennial kingdom alone. We, as co-heirs with Christ, will co-reign with Him, not only during His millennial kingdom, but also throughout all eternity (1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:10; 20:6).

Let me read to you just a few verses that support this belief. What did Paul say to the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 6:3? **"Do you not know that we will judge angels?"** And what did Paul say to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:12? **"If we endure, we will also reign with Him."** What did Christ say to the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:21? **"He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."**

The world can become very fascinated with the celebrity status of certain heirs and heiresses who are waiting to inherit more money than we could ever imagine spending. But hopefully we would never fall victim to such a thing in light of the fact that the One we have chosen to follow is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is not simply an appointed heir of a chain of hotels, or an airline or a beer company but rather God's appointed "heir of all things." Beginning with His dominion over the earth, as the mediatory king of the

earthly millennial kingdom, which is the primary focus of the passage that we have been examining this morning; then to him being the “heir of all things” in respect to the whole of this universe when He hands over His millennial kingdom to His Father

May God give us the grace not to be fascinated with the heirs and heiresses of this world, but rather let us be fascinated with Christ, God’s appointed heir of all things and the fact that we are co-heirs with Him.