

HEBREWS – PRESSING ON

“Lord, Please Don’t Let Me Grow Mildew!”

Week 1

Central to the book of Hebrews: the superiority of Christ, the Messiah! We see Jesus as “better than” the angels; “better than” Moses; “better than the Aaronic priesthood.”

“Better” – more advantageous/more beneficial. WHY?

Jesus is the fulfillment. All the promises God gave to Israel that we read in the Hebrew Scriptures are wrapped up in HIM!

Jesus is our great High Priest and nowhere in the NT do we see this – aside from Hebrews!

The priest in the OT times represented the people to God. Once a year the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies at Yom Kippur (Lev. 16).

When Jesus cried from the cross, “IT IS FINISHED,” Scripture tells us that the veil in the Temple – the very thick veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies – was torn from TOP to bottom.

There is a bit of uncertainty as to the exact measurement of the veil, but according to documentation from Josephus, it is safe to assume that this veil was somewhere near 60 feet high. Josephus also tells us that the veil was four inches thick and that horses tied to each side could not pull the veil apart. The book of Exodus teaches that this thick veil was fashioned from blue, purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen.

The size and thickness of the veil makes the events occurring at the moment of Jesus’ death on the cross so much more momentous. “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” (Matthew 27:50-51a).

Jesus, at His crucifixion – opened the way once and for all into the Holy of Holies – into the sanctuary – into the presence of God!

This book, while so FILLED with heavy theology is so FILLED with pleas – from GOD to press on and press in and live life in God’s presence.

The basic truth that will be before us this semester is that it is possible for us to know God in a degree of intimacy that is PROGRESSIVE (II Cor. 3:18 – transformed from glory to glory; sanctification is a maturing in Christ process) as well as DYNAMIC (Eph. 1:19, 20 – God’s power that raised Jesus from the dead is operating toward us and in us!). We want to KNOW GOD in an increasing level of intimacy from day to day! Perhaps no other book in the NT better sets forth fellowship with God through worship than does the book of Hebrews.

Because we’re in the Book of Hebrews this semester, let’s turn to Isaiah 6:1. . . .

SETTING/TIMEFRAME: Judah, the southern Kingdom in Israel between 739 BC to 686 BC.

At the time of Isaiah, Judah had experienced 52 years of peace and prosperity under King Uzziah. Instead of using that time to grow strong, spiritually, the people of

Judah had drifted so far from God that they teetered on the brink of moral and spiritual bankruptcy. At this time, God raised up Isaiah.

Isaiah received a wake-up call. . .

“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord”!

King Uzziah’s passing was seemingly a small footnote in the history of the world – to some. Uzziah’s death marked the passing of a golden age of prosperity in Judah – an age, however, that had also seen a spiritual decline. However, as we read this chapter in Isaiah, it was a life-shaking experience to Isaiah – and it ushered in a vision of the Lord.

King Uzziah might’ve been an anchor to Isaiah. Whatever King Uzziah represented to Isaiah, his passing into eternity was monumental - to Isaiah. . . as it’s noted in Scripture. Upon hearing of Uzziah’s death – Isaiah sees God!

Even though King Uzziah died – leaving the earthly throne vacant for the moment – GOD was/is still on His throne – ALWAYS AND FOREVER!

What does that say to us? When we lose a special person in our lives (be it through death, moving, whatever circumstances), do we give up everything? Do we become ill? Do we become disheartened? Despondent? Do we doubt God? OR – do we SEE the Lord? Are we focused on HIM?

Isaiah saw the Lord and he pressed on – he answered God’s call!

There are times when God removes people from our lives - to put Himself in their place – to bring us to the point of looking unto Him and worshipping Him alone!

The book of Hebrews begins with GOD!

In a believer’s life, it must be God first, God second, and God third, ad infinitum, until the life of the believer is faced steadily with looking unto HIM!

Through this study we want to SEE THE LORD! We are going to LOOK UNTO JESUS – as the author of Hebrews encourages us to do so! CONSIDER JESUS! FIX OUR EYES ON JESUS! LISTEN! HEED HIM!

Jesus is the Priest AND the sacrifice. He offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice – once for all.

NOW He is speaking in His office of High Priest from within the sanctuary in heaven – guaranteeing to every believer an entrance into the very presence of God.

As a genuine believer in Jesus, we are assured eternal life in God’s presence.

Believer – are you, are we, experiencing God’s presence in our lives moment-by-moment? Are we resting in Him.

Hebrews from 50,000 feet:

Hebrews 4:12 – the Word of God is living and active – doctrine/theology.

Hebrews 10:19-25 – practical application. . . .

The book of Hebrews begins with a grand introduction to JESUS! We truly see Jesus HIGH AND LIFTED UP throughout the book.

The author of Hebrews helps clarify Who Jesus is so that we can press on. Why?

We need to press on because there's another world that demands our attention – Heb. 2:5.

To whom is the author writing?

Hebrews. Hebrews. Hebrew – “one from beyond” – who has crossed over. ABRAHAM was called a Hebrew (Gen. 14) – God called him to come out of his country and to go to a place that He, God, would show him. Abraham CROSSED OVER.

I'm suggesting that these HEBREWS – who come from Abraham's line – are Jewish. The Apostle Paul called himself a Hebrew of the Hebrews (Phil. 3:5).

I'm suggesting that these Jewish readers are Jewish believers:

J. Dwight Pentecost, *Faith that Endures*:

“1) It is clear from the book that the author views the recipients as genuine believers.

Consider the following passages:

- 1:3 – ‘He had by Himself purged our sins.’
- 2:1-3 – The author warns them about neglecting, not rejecting, the salvation that has been provided
- 3:1 – The author refers to them as ‘holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.’ The author states that Jesus is the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.
- 4:1 – The author argues that the danger is not that they will fail to attain salvation (since they are already believers [justified]), but that they will not experience the rest such salvation brings.
- 4:3 – The author includes the recipients as fellow believers together with him.
- 4:14 – Christ is assumed to be the High Priest interceding for these believers.
- 4:16 – They have access to the throne of grace, not to obtain salvation, but to obtain help in their present circumstances.
- 5:12 – They have been taught so well themselves; it is assumed by this time in their walk with Jesus that they would be qualified to teach others.
- 6:4-5 – When the author refers to those who were once enlightened, have tasted the heavenly gift, have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, he is referring to the actual spiritual experience into which his original readers have entered.

- 6:9-10 – Their works demonstrated the genuineness of their salvation.
- 7:26-8:1 – The author affirms again that Jesus Christ is their interceding High Priest.
- 9:14 – They could serve the living God.
- 10:10 – They have been sanctified.
- 10:15 – They received a ministry of the Spirit.
- 10:19 – They are called ‘brethren.’
- 10:21 – They have a High Priest.
- 10:22-25 – Their hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience. They have been cleansed. They had made public confession of their faith in Christ. They are identified with other believers.
- 10:34 – They had made sacrifices for the author.
- 10:36-39 – Their need is not salvation, since they are believers, but patient endurance, which is the product of a genuine faith.
- 12:2 – Jesus is the author and finisher of their faith.
- 12:7 – They are called ‘sons.’
- 12:28 – They are inheriting a kingdom.
- 13:1-19 – All of the exhortations delivered to the recipients are applicable only to believers.”

4

Pentecost continues,

“In short, from a survey of the book we must conclude that the original recipients of this letter were genuine believers.

2) They had been baptized, publicly identifying themselves with Jesus Christ. . . . The confession referred to in 3:1, 4:14, and 10:23 is baptism.

3) They were undergoing intense persecution (10:34; 12:4; 13:3, 5).

4) If not wealthy, they at least had not been poor (6:10), but now they had become impoverished.

5) Because of hardship and persecution, serious spiritual regression had taken place (5:11-14). Instead of growing under discipline, they were drifting.

6) They needed encouragement to live by faith so that faith might produce patient endurance (11:39-40).

7) They obviously were neither first-generation believers (2:3), nor were they new believers (5:11-12). Much of their disappointment may have come through their failure to realize the eager expectation that Jesus Christ would return to subjugate all to Himself, establish His kingdom, and deliver them from persecution. Therefore they were in danger of losing hope. Because of this, the apostle would encourage them to a steadfast confidence based on the hope that had been laid before them.”

Why was this epistle/letter written to these people? We need to know that the author was writing during a fiery time for the early Church. Nero was on the throne of the Roman Empire. Tradition says Peter and Paul perished in this persecution (Heb. 10:32-39; 12:4). Jewish believers at this time were also experiencing persecution from fellow Jews who were NOT believers in Jesus (Acts 8:1).

Believing in Jesus – the FULFILLMENT of the Old Covenant – made things extremely uncomfortable for the readers. Because of this, the readers, the Jewish believers are on the verge of lapsing back into the MOSAIC COVENANT – observing the commandments connected with the Temple – the commandments that ruled Jewish life prior to Jesus – the covenant which spoke to the PROMISE of what was to come – of WHO was to come – JESUS – Who is the FULFILLMENT of the Mosaic Covenant.

If we don't have a Biblical understanding of Jesus, we can NEVER be willing to LIVE for Him or DIE for Him. If we don't KNOW who Jesus is, Who He is according to Scripture, we could easily be deceived and follow a false Jesus (Galatians 1:8).

WHY am I mentioning DYING?

REMEMBER – the author is attempting to FOCUS their attention on the FUTURE WORLD (Heb. 2:5). This is truly a HUGE point to HANG UNTO AT THE OUTSET of our study! HUGE!!!!

So, the author is telling his readers – the Jewish believers – as he is telling US:

- Don't doubt
- Don't go back
- Press on
- Fix your eyes on Jesus
- Look beyond this life
- What you do NOW – how you live out your faith in this life – IMPACTS your role in the future world
- Pay attention
- Don't become dull of hearing
- Give more earnest heed to what you have heard
 - That Jesus is better than the angels
 - He's better than Moses
 - He's better than the priesthood under Aaron

This condition of lapsing was an immediate danger (2:1) based upon:

- Unbelief (3:12)
- Conduct which intimated such a potential of going back (5:13, 14)
- Neglect of public worship (10:25)
- Weakness in prayer (12:12)
- Instability in doctrine (13:9)
- Refusal to teach others as mature believers (5:12)
- Neglect of the Scriptures (2:1)

The author educates the readers and encourages them while exhorting them. The author WARNS the readers that there are serious consequences for failing to pay attention which could then lead to doubting, drifting, and going back.

This book of Hebrews is a CRUCIAL book! It addresses our maturing in Christ! This book does NOT address justification – our being saved at a point in time – like at a Billy Graham crusade, or when you prayed and asked Jesus for forgiveness. . . .

For the readers of the book, they're already justified – they already have the righteousness of God credited to their account. They are bound for heaven.

The question – what role will they be given when they enter the Kingdom of God?

Will they receive crowns? Will they hear from Jesus, “Well done good and faithful servant” – or not.

All believers will see Jesus face-to-face.

How will they serve Him in the Kingdom of God?

The Judgment seat of Christ – where BELIEVERS will stand before Jesus – our sins already forgiven – but where our works – how we serve Jesus here on earth following our being justified/declared righteous - will be judged (II Cor. 5:9-11)

Firstly, think of the crowns that we may receive – we're going to cast them at Jesus feet – Rev. 4:10

Secondly, it's IMPORTANT, in our grasping of the BIG PICTURE of Scripture, for us to understand these rewards that the Bible presents.

Jesus told the parable of the ten minas in Luke 19:11-19 (READ). Equal gifts if used with unequal diligence, may be unequally rewarded.

Rewards will be apportioned in the Kingdom of God according to the servant's diligence.

I Cor. 3:9-15

This comment from John MacArthur re "the things done in the body" (II Cor. 5:10) might prove to be helpful: "These are actions which happened during the believer's time of earthly ministry. **This does not include sins, since their judgment took place at the cross (Eph. 1:7).** 'Whether good or bad' - these Greek terms do not refer to moral good and moral evil. (See definitions from lexicon below) Matters of sin have been completely dealt with by the death of the Savior. Rather, Paul was comparing worthwhile eternally valuable activities with useless ones. His point was not that believers should not enjoy certain wholesome, earthly things, but that they should glorify God in them and spend most of their energy and time with what has eternal value."

"Good" - useful, salutary; good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy; excellent, distinguished; upright, honorable. "Bad" - not such as it ought to be, of a mode of

thinking, feeling, acting; base, wrong, wicked; troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful.

7

Thirdly, it's important for us to know that the Bible teaches that BELIEVERS need to run the race for the prize – for the reward. . . so that we can live for Him and look forward to an “abundant entrance” [II Pet. 1:10-11] into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Messiah)

NOW – if this book is APPLICABLE to us – we need to identify with this “fiery time”.

PICTURE IT: the gov't has determined that believers in Jesus are responsible for all the problems of society. What happens? We begin to lose rights, personal property, freedoms, church buildings. THEN, family members experience persecution and even martyrdom. Would we remain true to the end? What if we no longer had homes, food, clothing? Would we be on the verge of defecting from our faith? May God spare us from this experience! OR, if it's His will to take us through rough times. . . if you feel as if you're now in such times, may the truths of Scripture hold us firm to the end.

THIS is how the book of Hebrews is applicable to us. It keeps us ROOTED to our anchor – the anchor of our soul – Jesus. Heb. 6:19 – “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul [God Who cannot lie has promised; we have strong consolation; we flee to HIM for refuge] – both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

The author of Hebrews is telling his/her readers NOT to NEGLECT the salvation they have in Jesus because how they live out their faith today will impact how they will rule and reign with Jesus in the future world. How we live our lives as Jesus followers today will impact our role in the future during the Millennial Kingdom.

Everything we do NOW counts forever!

The book of Hebrews speaks to the deepest needs of hearts. The author addresses the Jews who wandered in the wilderness. He is our very present help in trouble and the Guarantor of eternal blessings. So let us, the author exhorts, “fix our eyes on Jesus” (Heb. 12:2).

No higher view of Jesus is to be found anywhere in Scripture (1:3). But these great theological – Christological – teachings are intended to serve as the basis for ACTION - TODAY! Hebrews speaks of running the race (Hebrews 12).

AND, because this book EXALTS Jesus and keeps us focused on Him and compels us to serve Him out of love (II Cor. 5:9) – and since I mentioned “ACTION” – homework – read Hebrews 1. For the most ambitious at heart – read the entire book and note:

- to whom is the author writing
- define “salvation” in the book

If Jesus were to walk into this room, we would bow down. That's why we are here – to fall on our faces before Him – to worship Him – to be in love with Him – to exalt Him. All eyes should be on Him, worshipping and honoring Him. This book of Hebrews is written to exhort, encourage, and educate us as to Who King Jesus is.

(. . . so that we can live for Him and look forward to an “abundant entrance” [II Pet. 1:10-11] into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Messiah)

May God strengthen us and give us CONFIDENCE in Him as we run the race – with our eyes forever FIXED ON JESUS!

HEBREWS – PRESSING ON

“Lord, Please Don’t Let Me Grow Mildew!”

Week 2

The writer of Hebrews was addressing Jewish believers who were facing persecution. It was a fiery time for the early Church. Nero was on the throne of the Roman Empire. Tradition says Peter and Paul perished in this persecution (Heb. 10:32-39; 12:4).

Under such pressure, there was the strong temptation to lapse back into the familiar lifestyle that they had known under the Mosaic Covenant – under the Law.

The Jewish believers, were on the verge of lapsing back into the MOSAIC COVENANT – putting themselves under the Mosaic Covenant - observing the commandments connected with the Temple (which was still standing [Heb. 10:11]) – the commandments that ruled Jewish life prior to Jesus – that God gave the Jews to point them to Jesus. Jesus had come!

The Jewish believers were comparing their previous life in following the Mosaic Covenant with their life in Jesus – the FULFILLMENT of the Mosaic Covenant. They might’ve been thinking, “I didn’t get persecuted by following the Law of Moses (so much) and now I’m getting persecuted by following Jesus. What should I do?”

This is the background to the book and the reasons for the topics the author is addressing. Because the readers were on the verge of turning from the FULFILLMENT and going back under the PROMISE, the author of Hebrews emblazons on every page WHO JESUS IS and HIS FINISHED WORK ON OUR BEHALF.

If we don’t have a Biblical understanding of Jesus, we can never be willing to LIVE for Him or DIE for Him.

If we don’t KNOW who Jesus is (Phil. 3:10 – Paul says, “. . . that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. . .”) – Who He is according to Scripture – we could easily be deceived (that’s truly a word for TODAY!) and be following a false Jesus – NOT the Biblical Jesus – a manmade Jesus. And, thus, we could drift away! (Galatians 1:8 – Paul tells the Galatians that they were turning away [transferring – putting something in the place of another] to a different gospel – because they were turning away from the Biblical Jesus).

The knowledge of God is crucial (Hab. 2:14)

The author is attempting to FOCUS their attention on the FUTURE WORLD (Heb. 2:5). His message to the readers - be faithful and obedient NOW because it’s going to impact the future – how we rule and reign with Christ!

The author is telling his readers – the Jewish believers – as he is telling US: don’t doubt; don’t go back; press on; fix your eyes on Jesus; look beyond this life; what you do NOW impacts your role in the future; pay attention; don’t become dull of hearing; give more earnest heed to what you have heard. It is imperative that these wavering believers persevere in the faith and go on to maturity – to press on in faithfulness – in obedience.

The book of Hebrews is:

- Intensely theological – it is a book of “high Christology” – study re: the Christ, the Anointed – Who He is and His work on our behalf.
- Sincerely encouraging – the author LOVED the recipients of this letter. Their circumstances were the same. He is coming alongside them and truly LOVING them – so much so that his words to them, inspired by the Holy Spirit, are. . . .

Lovingly in their face. There are HARDCORE warnings in this book. The author is exhorting them to “GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER” to “PRESS ON”!

The book is entitled HEBREWS. To whom is the author writing?

- To the _____
- “Hebrew” means _____

HEBREWS 1:1-4

The book of Hebrews begins with a grand introduction to Jesus.

v. 1 – “GOD, Who at various times and in various ways SPOKE in time past to the fathers by the prophets. . . .”

Hebrews begins with GOD. GOD – there is NO attempt to prove God’s existence. God is – and was – and is to come. He is ETERNAL.

God SPOKE. God has always communicated. WHY?

So that we may KNOW HIM! God created for relationships.

Consider the Tri-unity of God – one Godhead – three Persons – RELATIONSHIP; ETERNAL COMMUNION among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God speaks. . . . He wants us to know HIM – not just to know *about* Him. He wants us to worship Him for Who He is.

When God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, there was no barrier to their fellowship with Him. What happened? Man rebelled against God. God gave them everything in the garden – and gave man dominion over all things. There was one stipulation. God told them not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man ate. Man wasn’t satisfied with what God gave him. Man wanted to be like God. Man rebelled.

At the Fall when man sinned – immediately there was a separation from God. God’s desire is to NOT be separated from man. Gen. 3:8 – MAN hid. We no longer see man and God walking together (Gen. 3:8).

BUT GOD has **not** chosen to hide Himself from mankind. He has revealed Himself through General Revelation (through nature - Romans 1:18-20; Psa. 19:1) so that mankind is without excuse -- and through Special Revelation (revealing Himself to those whom He has chosen – John 6:37, 44) so that we might come to know Him personally

and have a relationship with Him. God's desire is to give us PEACE in our hearts. Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace. The root word for peace means: repairing that which was broken. Our relationship with God was broken.

God spoke directly to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (I Cor. 10) through various ways:

- To Abraham – audibly (Gen. 12:1ff)
- To Jacob in a dream (Gen. 28:12)

This first verse in Hebrews, however, emphasizes God speaking “by the prophets”:

- Moses was a prophet (Deut. 18:18)
 - God spoke to Moses in a burning bush (Ex. 3)
 - The Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Tanakh)
- To Elijah by a still small voice (I Kings 19)
- To Isaiah by a heavenly vision (Isaiah 6)
- To Hosea through a family crisis (Hosea 1:2)
- To Amos by a basket of fruit (Amos 8:1)

The OT communication/revelation from God anticipated a fuller revelation – yet to come – a final revelation.

God has in these last days spoken to us IN *His* Son:

- “in” – NASV
- “His” not in the original manuscript of the NT
- God has chosen to speak in these last days in THE INCARNATION – IMMANUEL - GOD WITH US. “In” emphasizes the ONENESS of the Godhead.

It isn't so much that Jesus *brought* a message from the Father; He *is* the message from the Father. He is the WORD (John 1:1 – “In the beginning was the Word. . .”) – He is God/Immanuel (God in the flesh) – He is God speaking to us! The Son is the FINAL word of God! We know God through His word!

In the OT Jesus – in His pre-incarnate state – before His incarnation – before He identified with mankind and became man (but always 100% GOD/deity) - He is seen as the ANGEL of the Lord (Gen. 16:7-11; Gen. 22:11-12; Ex. 3:2; Judges 13:3. . .)

“Angel” means messenger. In the NT, Jesus is introduced to us as the WORD – the One Who speaks – Who has a MESSAGE. (Psa. 107:20. . .)

According to Heb. 1:1, in the past, God chose to reveal Himself in “divers portions (through the Law, the Writings, the Prophets) and in divers manners.” (visions, dreams, miracles). God revealed His plan – He UNFOLDED His plan to the people a bit at a time – Bible scholars have labeled this unfolding of God – “Progressive revelation” – it addresses the truth that God’s message to man – His redemptive plan - was not given in one single act but was UNFOLDED throughout the OT.

The profile of the Messiah is unfolded progressively throughout the pages of the OT. We see Him in Gen. 3:15 – seed of a woman – battling the seed of Satan. We don’t know that He was to be from the tribe of Judah until we get to Gen. 49:10. His birthplace as Bethlehem Ephrathah is not known until Micah 5:2.

God did not unfold His entire plan of redemption to Adam and Eve – or to Abraham – or to Moses. We see the unfolding of His plan as we read through Scripture. And it all moves toward the Messiah Who restores man – those who trust in Him for salvation – and the earth.

Genesis gives truth; Exodus builds on that truth; the Law is given to the nation of Israel; God “legislates” from the Tabernacle - we read in Leviticus that He speaks to Moses from the mercy seat; in Joshua they enter the Promised Land. . . .

NOTE: Heb. 11:13, 39-40

Divine revelation going from the OT to the NT is progressive revelation. It progressed from promise (Abraham/Moses/David) to the FULFILLMENT – JESUS! Jesus is BETTER than because He is God’s final word.

Heb. 1:2 - the writer of Hebrews declares that “God. . . has in these last days spoken to us by (His) Son.” In “these last days,” God revealed Himself through the Son. In the Jewish mindset and throughout the OT, we read of two ages. We need to know this to understand how the Jewish disciples thought as we read the Gospels.

Two ages:

The pre-Messianic age – before the Messiah comes as KING - promise.

The Messianic age – when the Messiah reigns on earth – fulfillment!

NOTE: Not so much do we see the Messiah as the SUFFERING SERVANT in the Jewish mindset of the ages.

Does the OT teach that the Messiah was to SUFFER?

Gen. 3:15 – His heel would be bruised; Gen. 22:8 – God Himself would be the sacrificial lamb; Ex. 12 – the slain Passover Lamb points to Jesus. Leviticus – the ENTIRE sacrificial system points to Jesus.

Rev. 13:8 – Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!

“These last days” speaks to the days directly before the Messianic age – the rule of the Messiah. Are we in “these last days”? YES!

Jesus suffered and died. He ROSE from the dead as the OT prophesied (Psa. 16:10 – God would not allow His Holy One – Jesus – to see corruption; Psa. 22 (crucifixion)-Psa. 23 (tho’ I walk through the valley of the shadow of death) -Psa. 24(the King of glory and His Kingdom) Isa. 53:10 – it pleased the Lord to bruise Him but He shall prolong His days)

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit was given 10 days following His ascension. When Peter preached to those gathered in Jerusalem about Pentecost, Peter quoted Joel 2:28-32 which speaks to the “last days”

I Pet. 1:20 – “in these last times”; I John 2:18 – “it is the last hour”; Jude v. 18 – “mockers in the last time” – equating it to the time Jude was written.

This reference to the “last days” contrasts God’s new revelation to the revelation that HE had previously given through the prophets.

This new/final revelation is the realization – the continuation – of all that was anticipated in past revelation. It’s the FULFILLMENT! That does NOT mean that former revelation is of no value. Past revelation was from GOD. He had specific intentions in communicating to the people through the prophets.

Past revelation spoke to the people about the Messiah so that they could identify Him when He arrived at His first coming.

And, God, in the final revelation to us, “has spoken to us in *His* Son. God’s ULTIMATE revelation of **Himself** is in the Son!

- John 1:14 – “And we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten (unique, one of a kind) of the Father, full of grace and truth.”
- John 14:8 – Philip – “Lord, show us the Father. . . .”
- John 14:9 – “. . . He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

Why is the Son eligible to be the final Word/Revealer? What are His credentials?

Heb. 1:2 - He is the heir (possessor) of all things.

Jesus has been APPOINTED heir by GOD the Father – an appointment to authority (Matt. 28:18 – “. . . all authority has been given to Me in heaven and in earth.”)

What is He heir over? ALL things – the entire universe.

This book is about the future world (Heb. 2:5) and guess Who inherits it? Jesus!

He is the heir because He created all things.

Heb. 1:2 – the Son is the One through Whom God made the worlds. “The worlds” – “the times,” “the ages,” or the “whole time-bound universe. Jesus supervises everything that happens, to keep it all flowing in harmony with God’s purposes and on schedule with God’s will. Jesus is the sovereign Administrator of all the ages of time that will ever unfold within the universe.

Heb. 1:3 - Jesus IS the brightness of God’s glory. He did not *become* the brightness of God’s glory! Brightness – this word is used only here in the NT. It expresses the

concept of sending forth light or shining (John 8:12 – “I am the light of the world”; II Cor. 4:4, 6). “Brightness” is *apaugasma*, which “denotes the radiance shining forth from the source of light.” The Son is not merely reflecting God’s glory. He is God and radiates His own essential glory.

“Glory” – *kavod* – weight – all Who God is – His character, His reputation.

Shekinah glory of God - Shekinah – Rabbinical word from *schachan* which means to dwell. In the OT – the glory of God was His localized manifested presence (pillar of cloud/fire; burning bush).

Num. 24:17 – scepter/star

John 1:14 – “And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”

The Father’s glory which Jesus revealed was not a mere reflected glory. Rather it was the shining forth of Christ’s inherent (intrinsic; His own – within His character, nature) glory which itself was the glory of the Father. This emphasizes the ONENESS of the Son with the Father.

Heb. 1:3 - The Son is the express image of His person (God the Father’s person).

“Express image” is used only here in the NT.

Extrabiblical literature tells us that “express image” was used to explain an engraving on wood, an etching in metal, a brand on animal hide, an impression in clay, and a stamped image on coins.

“Person” is a word expressing nature, being or essence. The Son is the perfect imprint, the exact representation of the nature and essence of God in time and space (John 14:9; Col. 1:15; 2:9).

The Son is the Revealer of God – the incarnation of God. If you want to understand God – you can read about Him in the OT as you also read about the Redeemer, the Messiah in the OT. BUT, you can SEE God in the person of Jesus.

John 14:8 – Philip – “Show us the Father.”

John 14:9 – Jesus – “. . . He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

Col. 1:15-20 - He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation. He has first place in everything because it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness of grace to dwell in Him. Jesus is very God of very God.

Col. 2:9 – This Jesus is God – “. . . in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” .

Jesus is the Revealer of all things and “. . . upholds things by the word of His power. Col. 1:16b-17 – “. . . all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.” Jesus keeps the world from disintegrating. The universe and everything in it is constantly sustained by the Son’s powerfully effective word. The term also conveys the concept of movement or progress. No stagnation – no mildew!

We see here the idea of carrying something along to a designated end. The Son of God directs all things toward the consummation of all things according to God's sovereign purpose.

And next we read of the Son's power to render void/annul the effects of humanity's sin. He made purification for sin – the Son is the Redeemer of man. He purged our sins by the substitutionary sacrifice of Himself on the cross (Titus 2:14; Rev. 1:5).

Mankind is contaminated with sin which stands as an impenetrable barrier (Isa. 59:2) to communication and fellowship with God, Who is absolutely holy and pure.

What was purged? OUR sins. This was an external purification – external to us. The purification was by HIM – as we cannot purify ourselves.

Gen. 22:8 – God HIMSELF was the Lamb that was promised.

We have a personal God Who meets our personal need. Do we each have a personal need? TO BE FORGIVEN!

How personal was this gift of forgiveness through the payment of the penalty of our sin? The nail scars in His hands and feet – seen in His resurrected body - show just how personal it was (Luke 24:39-40; John 20:20, 27).

Continuing in Heb. 1:3, we see Hebrews greatest theme – Jesus our Great High Priest!

He has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High which emphasizes His present position. The right hand (Matt. 22:44; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1) is the place of power, authority and honor (v. 13; Rom. 8:34; I Pet. 3:22)

The Son's sitting implies the completion of His atoning work. Priests in the Temple never sat!

Jesus is the One Who has taken on our sin and has given us His righteousness. This is the One Who intercedes for us – Who sustains us – Who holds us together. This is the One Whose POWER operates toward us (Eph. 1:19)

If we don't have a Biblical understanding of Jesus, we would not be willing to LIVE for Him or DIE for Him.