

## “Oh, My God” Hebrews 1:1-4

**Context:** The main object of Hebrews is an exhortation to remain faithful and avoid apostasy. This is done by casting off any weight of entangling sin and fixing your eyes upon Jesus, who initiated our faith. He empowers us to run the race until the day of our souls' perfected transformation in eternity (cf. Hebrews 12:1-3). Yet how could Jesus measure up to the majesty and power of God's angelic servants, how could even He compete with the likes of Moses, God's great human servant of the Old Testament law and covenant? After all, Jesus, though an incredible teacher, was a simple carpenter and his ministers were but simple fishermen. How could the few but simple rites taught by Jesus compare to worship in the splendor of the Temple with all its pageantry, music, and ritual? The first four chapters of the book address these questions and exhort the reader to turn from the apostasy to which they lead.

**Life Principle:** The joy in your release from guilt is just a taste of the release you will feast on forever (cf. Hebrews 11:16).

### 1. Jesus Christ as revelation – Hebrews 1:1-2a

The author introduces the summary point of Hebrews through a clear disclosure of progressive revelation. God reveals His nature, salvific plan, and will. He does this by revealing His promises to our fathers in the faith, such as Adam, Abraham, and Isaac, in various ways. These promises culminate in the revelation of the One to whom they point: Jesus. He is the ultimate revelation.

### 2. Jesus Christ as God – Hebrews 1:2b-3b

Jesus being described as God's heir sets up the discussion of His Divine nature. Jesus is the agent of “the all” that is created. He exists as a totally other order, as the only non-contingent Being. He in His very essence reflects the Divine infinite and intense capacity to act in every way and be acted upon in every way in the very character and Being of God. That is ‘what’ He is.

### 3. Jesus Christ as expiation – Hebrews 1:3c-4

The final claim for Jesus' Divinity is His omnipotent sinless nature which is characterized by the expiation of our sins. He initiated our cleansing by dying as a sinless sacrifice, who paid the debt we owe to a righteous God. He also washed us through the sending of His Spirit. Finally, He will perfect us at the time of our glorification at His second coming.

## For Further Study:

- The author introduces Hebrews with a declaration about God's progressive revelation. Our doctrinal statement mirrors this declaration, stating that God has partially revealed Himself through His prophets and perfectly through Jesus Christ (see our doctrinal statement ‘**On God's Revelation**’ under **what we believe**, footnotes 2-6 at <http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/DocStmnt.pdf>). Read the following verses and notice the progress: (1) Genesis 3:15; (2) Genesis 9:16; (3) Genesis 22:15-18; (4) Exodus 19:5-6; (5) Deuteronomy 30:1-6; (6) 2 Samuel 7:12-16; and (7) Jeremiah 31:29-34. How can Jesus be seen as initiator and perfecter of our faith in these passages?
- The author declares that Jesus Christ's very nature is Divine and then clearly calls Him God (Hebrews 1:3,8). Our doctrinal statement professes Jesus as God (see our **doctrinal statement ‘On Jesus Christ**’ under **what we believe**, footnote 5 at <http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/DocStmnt.pdf>). What are three differences between Jesus Christ described in the book of Hebrews and the Mormons' understanding of Jesus (cf. <http://www.mrm.org/jesus-of-mormonism>)? Why would the Mormon position be considered heresy according to orthodox Christianity (i.e. Athanasian Creed <http://www.creeds.net/ancient/nicene.htm>)? In what proper sense can Jesus be seen as the initiator and perfecter of our faith as fellow heirs to His Father's Kingdom (cp. Hebrews 1:2; Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:3-7)? How are we essentially different from Jesus (cf. John 20:31)?
- As a **Bible study method**, look up “to clean” (B-1) in *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. How did Jesus initiate our cleansing from sin (cf. Romans 5:6-15)? How does Jesus continue to cleanse us (cf. Titus 3:4-7; Ephesians 1:17-20)? How will Jesus perfect our cleansing (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:42-53)? Where do you find joy in His cleansing (cp. Hebrews 12:1-2)?

## Transformation exercise:

Memorize Hebrews 12:1-2. Take 10 minutes to recall when you first became aware of Jesus' work of cleansing you and then give thanks. Ask the Spirit to make you sensitive to share your testimony with someone this week.