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*"The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light"*

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*Editor:* A. McDONALD REDWOOD

# NOTES ON HEBREWS

BY W. E. VINE M.A., (Lond.)\*

## THE TWO CHIEF SUBJECTS OF THE EPISTLE

(A) The Presentation of Christ, 1-10: 18

(B) The Practice of Christianity, 10: 19 to 13: 25

### ANALYSIS

1. Christ's superiority to the prophets ... 1: 1-3.
2. " " " angels ... 1: 4-14; 2: 5-18.  
*First series of admonitions* ... 2: 1-4.
3. Christ's superiority to Moses ... 3: 1-6.  
*Second series of admonitions* ... 3: 7 to 4: 7.
4. Christ's superiority to Joshua ... 4: 8-10.  
*Third series of admonitions* ... 4: 11-13.
5. Christ's superiority as a High Priest ... 4: 14-10: 18.  
*(a) The superiority of His Priesthood* 4: 14; 5: 10; 6: 13; 7: 28.  
*Fourth series of admonitions* ... 5: 11; 6: 12.  
*(b) The superiority of His Sanctuary* 8: 1-5; 9: 1-12.  
*(c) The superiority of God's Covenant* 8: 6-13; 9: 15-20; 10: 16-18.  
*(d) The superiority of His sacrifices* 9: 12-14; 9: 21-28; 10: 1-15.  
*Fifth series of admonitions* ... 10: 19-12: 2.
6. Christ's superiority in faith ... 12: 2, 3.  
*Sixth series of admonitions* ... 12: 4-13: 19.
7. Christ's superiority as a Shepherd ... 13: 20, 21.  
*Seventh series of admonitions* ... 13: 22-25.

The Epistle to the Hebrews reveals the Lord Jesus Christ to us, *firstly*, in the perfections of His Personal glory as the Son of God and Son of Man; *secondly*, in the perfections of His High Priesthood; and *thirdly*, in relation to the value and efficacy of His sacrifice.

Each of the first two chapters reveal Him in a double aspect. The first chapter speaks of His Deity and Kingship, the second

\* Mr. W. E. Vine has been in the past a valued contributor to the *Bible Student*; in fact, almost continuously from 1925 until 1938. During that time he gave us the complete studies on *Romans* and *First John*, which were then brought out in book form, but have been out of print for some time. We understand they are now being reprinted in England. Also he contributed the earlier parts of his 'Word Studies' (until 1938), which now are published complete in four volumes under the title *An Expository Dictionary of N. T. Words*, by Oliphants Ltd., London. We welcome thankfully his renewed promise of articles, commencing with the Epistle to the Hebrews.

of His Humanity and Priesthood. As to His Deity, He is the Son of God, appointed by the Father as Heir of all things, the One by whom He made the worlds or rather the ages (see R.V. margin). These speak of the providential arrangements in regard to the successive ages, or eras, beginning with Creation and proceeding until the bringing in of the new heavens and earth. This includes the actual creation of the universe, which is far wider in its scope. He ever was the effulgence of the Father's glory and the very image of His substance, the One who upheld all things by the Word of His power; and now, in virtue of His sacrificial work on the Cross\*, He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

### Chapter 1:1-3.

#### i. Verses 1-2a: God's Channels of Communication.

##### (A) The Past

(a) The period—"of old time"	v. 1	v. 1
(b) The persons addressed, "the fathers"		"
(c) The means—"the prophets"		"
(d) The method—"by divers portions"		"
(e) The mode—"in divers manners"		"

##### (B) The Present

(a) The time—"at the end of these days"	v. 2a
(b) The persons addressed—"us"	"
(c) The means—"in His Son"	"

#### ii. Verses 2b-3: The Son of God.

##### (A) The Son's Glory in Creation

(a) The appointed Heir of all things	v. 2b
(b) The Agent in creating them	"

##### (B) The Son's Glory in the Godhead

(a) The Father's glory displayed	v. 3
(b) The Father's essence revealed	"
(c) The Son's omnipotence exercised	"

\* The word in the original rendered 'made purification' is in the Middle Voice, which suggests the special interest which the Lord *Himself* had in accomplishing the work.

## (C) The Son's Glory in Redemption

- (a) The grace of His atoning sacrifice v.3  
 (b) The glory of His resulting exaltation ”

The first three verses contain eight statements concerning Christ all of which had received intimation, or direct prediction in the Old Testament. They were therefore designed to appeal to Jews in a manner which would not have been possible had they been entirely new truths. For the statements in verses 1-2 cp. Ps. 2; Dan. 7. 13; Psa. 33 and 102. For those in verse 3 see Psa. 45:2 and again Dan. 7:13; Psa. 40; Isa. 53 and, finally, Psa 110. The chief point in all this is that God was now speaking, not by an angel, nor any creature, but by Christ, and the Divine message through Him is a continuation of the mission of prophets and of angles. His was superior to all.

## Chapter 1:4-14.

## Christ's superiority to angels

- i.* His more excellent name v.4  
*ii.* His eternal relationship to the Father displayed  
     in His Incarnation v.5  
*iii.* His worship by angels at His Second Advent v.6  
*iv.* His Sovereignty vs.7-9

Shewn by:

1. His throne—everlasting
  2. His sceptre—of righteousness
  3. His anointing—
    - (a) the agent—God
    - (b) the means—the oil of gladness
    - (c) the preeminence—above His fellows
- Angels His servants (their character)
- v.* His Creatorship: The earth, the heavens v.10
1. their origin
  2. their destiny
    - (a) to perish
    - (b) to wax old
    - (c) to be rolled up
- vi.* His Immutability v.11, 12  
*vii.* His Authority v.13, 14
- (1) His position
  - (2) His dominion
- Angels His servants (their ministry)

Christ's Deity is implied in His Sonship, and it is in this respect that He is contrasted with the angels. His superiority over them is seen, firstly, in the more excellent name which He has inherited (v. 4); secondly, in the fact of His everlasting relationship to the Father as His only begotten Son (v. 5); thirdly, as the One whom angels worship.

Their very worship proclaims His Deity. To God alone belongs the prerogative of worship on the part of the creature. Worship can be rightly offered only to Deity. Unfallen angels would never worship anyone save God. This is their highest occupation.\* Fourthly, angels are simply ministers of God; the Son, on the contrary has a Throne, which forms the centre of their ministry (vv. 7, 8, 13, 14). They are ministering spirits, first as being engaged in personal attendance upon the Lord (cp. Dan. 7:10). In this capacity they are likewise constantly being sent forth (the verb is in the continuous tense), "to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation" (see, for example, Dan. 3:28; 6:32; Acts 12:11).

Him, too, the Father addresses as God: "Unto the Son He saith, Thy Throne O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom" (v. 8). It is quite possible that He similarly addresses Him in the words of the following verse. The original expresses it in the same way, and we may thus read it as follows: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore, O God, Thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." The word rendered "fellows" literally denotes those who share in something. Elsewhere in the Epistle it is used of believers (see 3:1; 3:14; 6:4; 12:8). We may perhaps understand the word here as representing all who actually became partakers of Christ. But Ps. 45

\* The place and meaning of the word "again" in verse 6 are important. The R. V. correctly renders by "When He again bringeth in the Firstborn into the World, He saith And let all the angels of God worship Him." The time is yet future, and the occasion is that of the second Advent at the introduction of the Millennial reign of Christ. At His first Advent there was a *multitude* of the heavenly host praising and worshipping, but when Christ comes again in His manifested glory, *all* the angels in an assembled host will worship Him. This is confirmed by the Septuagint of Deut. 32: 43 (2nd line, from which this quotation is taken).

points to the occupants of the throne of David including all who will reign with Him. In addressing the Son of God He speaks of His throne, His sceptre, His kingdom, His character, His exaltation, His Deity, His equality in Deity, His Creative power and His immutability. This is one of the plainest evidences of Scripture concerning the Deity of Christ. He addresses Him both as God and as Lord: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the works of Thy hands" (v. 10).

The statements in verses 10 and 11 that Christ laid the foundation of the earth, that the heavens are the works of His hands, that He will eventually roll them up as a mantle (v. 12), are an expansion of that in verse 2 which declares that the Son of God "made *the ages*". Everything is thus under the control of, and dependent upon, Him who alone possesses inherent life and, being one with the Father in the Godhead, is self-existent.

Verse 13 is quoted from Psa. 110, which plays an important part in this Epistle. The formal reception of the Son by the Father to the highest place of honour at His right hand signalises His own approval of all that the Son had accomplished on earth in the perfect fulfilment of the Father's will. Cp. Rom. 1:4 The end of Psa. 110 describes the fulfilment of the prediction in verse 1, "Until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool".

The chapter closes with a statement of the actual ministry of angels, whose inferiority to the Son of God has been set forth in the preceding part of the chapter. That the angels are ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation contains an intimation that these blessings were not limited to the Jews.

*(To be continued)*

#### LIFE'S PRIVATIONS

Life without Truth is a ship without Chart,  
 Life without Love is a world without Heart,  
 Life without Faith is a way without Light,  
 Life without Hope is a death without Christ.

'It is said that the way-worn labourers of Iona found their burdens grow lighter when they reached the most difficult part of their journey, because the secret prayers of their aged master Columba met them there . . . Such comfort of unspoken sympathy the Church at home can give to the isolated missionary.'—*Bishop Westcott.*