

Appointed as Heir

Key Verse: “[God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”
—Hebrews 1:2

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 1:1-5

IN HIS LETTER TO THE Hebrew brethren, Paul begins by stating that in former times God had spoken to their forefathers by the prophets. In our Key Verse, however, the apostle says how in these latter times God has “spoken unto us” by his Son, who has been appointed “heir of all things.”

The purpose of Paul’s letter to the Hebrews was to strengthen their faith in Christ Jesus. God is unchangeable. (Mal. 3:6) Therefore, the truths which would now be revealed through the words of his Son, and expanded upon by the apostles, are in harmony with what the prophets of Israel had previously testified.

Paul also declares in our Key Verse that God’s beloved Son labored directly with him in the many works of creation. The Apostle John confirms this, stating: “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”—John 1:3

Jesus is the “express image” of God, Paul says. (Heb. 1:3) The phrase “express image” is a translation of the Greek word *charakter*, and denotes an “exact copy” or “representation.” In Jesus we see a perfect representation of the character of God. Similarly, each follower of Christ, in proportion as they develop the spirit of the

Lord, becomes a representation of God's dear Son and, therefore, also a copy of the Heavenly Father. The apostle further states in verse 3 that after Jesus "purged our sins" by the willing sacrifice of his own life, God raised him from the dead, and he has now "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."—Heb. 1:3

The Hebrew Christians knew of the existence of angels—invisible spirit beings which are of a higher order than human creation. Israel's prophets had made many references to these angels, indicating that they were honorably used by God to convey messages to his people and render other services. (Gen. 22:11,15; Exod. 3:2; Isa. 37:36; Zech. 3:1,5,6) However, Paul points out that the resurrected and glorified Jesus has been made "much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."—Heb. 1:4; Eph. 1:20-22

Paul further emphasized the greater honor which the God of Israel had bestowed upon his beloved Son, Christ Jesus, by posing questions to the Hebrew brethren. "Unto which of the angels said he [God] at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?"—Heb. 1:5; Ps. 2:7

All should honor Jesus, not in the same way as the Father, but as his direct representative. It was not as a man that Jesus was made "heir of all things." Rather, it is the resurrected and glorified Christ Jesus, the "express image" of the Father for eternity, who is the heir which will bless "all the families of the earth." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He is ... the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."—Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:8,16; John 3:16; Col. 1:18,19