

# Hebrews 1:1-4

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Date: 16 January 2011

Preacher: Harvey Guest

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Thank you. Well, I'll only touch on this very briefly today as we look at Hebrews chapter 1. It's going to be actually more than the first paragraph. So now it's going to be a look at the whole chapter. But very briefly we'll touch upon how this is the language of a sort of embryonic form of what later is high doctrine about our Lord, which implies therefore a high doctrine of the Trinity.
- So again, it's sort of embryonically, I think that's just the right word, present often in Scripture, that kind of thing. And with that in mind, let me invoke the God we believe in before we look at his word.
- So shall we say a word of prayer? Our most blessed Trinity, we are honored to look at the blessed word that your spirit has given us.
- May we look at it worthily and may it make us worthy to know you better and to worship you as we are called to do. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.
- [ 1 : 17 ]     Amen. The more I do, get right to it. This is the opening. It's called an exordium sometime. The opening declarations of a treatise, which this letter to the Hebrews is. There it is as it starts.
- You're familiar, I know, with this great opening to this treatise. In the past, starts the author. In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets many times and in various ways.
- But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.
- After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven. So, he became as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.
- [ 2 : 37 ]     In many, another translation, in many and various ways, says the same thing up here, doesn't it? God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets.
- But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. An interesting contrast there. You'll agree, I take it, this is written, sort of advertised by the way this treatise begins, this is written by a very reflective person.
- He, we'll call him he, he observes the variousness of God's speaking. Prophets appears, he refers to prophets, appears to mean the whole, really, the whole Old Testament drama.
- Later on in this chapter, we'll see why that's justifiable to say that. So, he means by prophets. The whole drama of what we call the Old Testament.
- The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses, of course. Wisdom writers. And the great classical prophets, as they usually call Isaiah, Micah, Amos.
- [ 3 : 49 ]     Those great names. The high and beautiful speakers, known as prophets. Later in this chapter, which we'll look at, he quotes from Scripture.

He quotes from Scripture seven times. It's not an accident. Seven, the number of perfection. From the Psalter, we'll see quotes.

He quotes from the Pentateuch. He quotes from 2 Samuel. Scripture, he believes, by quoting it seven times, that he sends out this little signal. Endlessly subtle ways that ancient writers had to do this kind of thing.

Scripture, he believes, is perfect. It cannot be broken, as our Lord said. In them, God speaks. In many and various ways, to our forefathers, through the prophets, many times, various ways, God spoke.

God spoke. He spoke. He spoke. In them, in the Scriptures, the oracles of God, God speaks. God is there, if you will, He is recorded as speaking.

[ 4 : 53 ] He also states, and this is by implication, this, again, this reflective man, that all the speaking was, if you will, a speaking in preparation, doesn't he?

He says that by implication. There was a further, there was a further and final definitive speaking to come, which he tells us.

But in these last days, after all of this speaking, in these last days, this God has spoken by his Son. Another definitive, amazing, shaking almost, new kind of speaking, by his very Son.

This is just a guess. In Genesis, we hear that in the cool of the day, the Lord God came walking in the garden. God spoke openly with his creature, man, with humankind.

Was there a hope in believing Israel that God would walk again in their midst, so freely, so beautifully? Walk and speak in openness?

[ 6 : 04 ] But in these last days, says our author, he has spoken by his Son, who has walked amongst us. Did this author know people who had known Jesus?

I have no idea. It appears this treatise was written before 70 A.D. That is an uncertainty, but you get the impression that the temple, you're familiar with the letter to this treatise, to the Hebrews, you get the impression that the temple is still standing.

Again, you don't know that, but you get that, you could easily believe that the temple is still standing. In 70 A.D., the temple was destroyed by the Romans. Believers appear under threat in this book, which Christians were under threat in those early years.

Again, it appears that the temple still stands. So that's some guesswork, end of the guesswork. Through now to verse 4, we hear, don't we, this Son, this Son is described.

He invokes through the Son, God has spoken. Now he says amazing things about this Son, through whom God spoke. We can pause even here right now, and think about, just a moment, God speaking.

[ 7 : 30 ] What does that mean? Let me just suggest a gloss, that I think is, does bring out truly, what our author means. in many, in various ways, God revealed his identity to our forefathers, I think we can say.

Why, after all, do you speak? In these last days, he has revealed his identity through his Son. To speak, is to reveal.

Interesting thought, I find it interesting. To speak, to reveal yourself, and to reveal your identity. Here I am. Personal agents, also we can say, personal agents speak.

And in that again, he, she, reveals identity. A person, is a something, capable of saying, I.

It's the best definition, I've ever come across, of what a person is. A person, sort of a functional definition, but I think it's profound. A person is someone, who can say, I.

[ 8 : 46 ] If your pet dog, or cat, or your hamster, for instance, this morning, before breakfast, has said to you, I expect it will rain, next Wednesday. Do call a philosopher, about that.

Or see, see a doctor. You're off your medication again. Identity, identity, is, roughly, continuity, over time.

The Hebrews, profoundly saw, this identity, as ethical, or moral, in its character. God, the God, whose identity, they knew, was, an identity, that was, unchanging.

It was, faithful. Don't you like, a friend, who is unchanging, and faithful, in the rich sense, of that word? His word, was reliable. He had, an identity, over time.

When he spoke, one way once, he wouldn't suddenly, start, changing, the game, on you. There was, there was, in God, an eternal, continuity.

[ 9 : 55 ] So, in a sense, somewhat formally, immutability, and moral reliability, are closely related, in the Hebrew mind. The sun.

So, let's just look, at what he says. It's just good, to look, at scripture. The sun. Again, our most, reflective teacher here. About the sun, he says the following.

He says that he has been appointed, see the third line down, at the end of, verse two, getting on, halfway into verse two. The sun he appointed, the, he has appointed the sun, the air, of all things.

He's going to define, he's invoked the word, sun. He's going to tell us, about the sun. He then says, that through whom, the sun, he made, the universe. universe. Right at the end of verse two.

What can you say, about what he's saying, about the sun? He appointed, he's appointed him, the air of all things. He's going to receive, all things. And through him, this sun, he made the universe.

[ 11 : 01 ] He then says, that he is, at verse three, the sun is the radiance, of God's glory. And, the exact, representation, of his being.

Words that almost, soar off into, a high, hard to grasp meaning, there. He, the sun, sustains, later on in verse three, he sustains, all things, by his powerful word, says our author.

He then says, at, well into, verse three, that he provided, that he provided, purification, for sins.

And after having, done that, he says immediately, he, the sun, sat down, sat down, at the hand, of the majesty, in heaven.

And then, just, he says, as an afterthought, here almost, angels, and he's going to, expand on this later, he says that he has become, as superior to angels, as the name he has, inherited, is as superior, to their names.

[ 12 : 20 ] It's interesting, just to see, to unfold, what all these assertions, appear to mean. Another, a gloss on them. When he says, that he is the heir, of all things, the heir, of all things, he has been appointed, in our more traditional, theological language, we would say, that he is, he will be given, the eschatological rule, over all things.

In the future, in God's perfect future, this sun, is going to be given, the rule, over all things. He was, the agent, of the creation, of all things, through whom, he made the universe.

He is also, as the exact, representation, of God's being, we can say, that he is nothing less, the sun, than eternal, divine being.

When he next says, that he sustains, all things, we can say, that the sun, has been given, or acts, upon his, providential sovereignty, over all things.

then, when we're told, that he, provided purification, for, sins, we can say, that he provided, the, high priestly, atonement, that action, for Israel, and the world.

[ 13 : 49 ] And then, when he says, that, he sat down, at the right hand, of the majesty, in heaven, heaven, we could, put it more, like saying, well, exaltation, to God's throne, in heaven.

And when we're told, that he has become, superior to angels, because, he has inherited, a superior name, the author, appears to be saying, that, there is, a perfect, identification, between, this son, and God, because, he has, in fact, inherited, the name, Yahweh, which is, Israel's name, for God.

This, is, one of the great, obviously, one of the great, opening passages, in the New Testament. Again, it's called, an exhortium, an idea, of how you start, a treatise, with great assertions, about your subject matter.

And, it is parallel, in the New Testament, by, Philippians 2, 5 through 11, the passage, we looked at last week. Colossians 1, 15 to 20, sounds much like, this passage.

So does, a few verses, in Ephesians, chapter 1, 20 to 23. And, of course, this passage, sounds much like, as much, to be paralleled, by John's, famous prologue, couldn't it?

[ 15 : 18 ] When he says, in points, 1, 2, and 4, as I'm calling them, he talks about, eschatological rule, over all things, heir of all things, he's the creator, of all things, that he sustains, all things, he's saying, nothing less, that the one, celebrated here, again, the one, celebrated here, is divine.

Only God, creates all things, sustains all things, is sovereign, over all things. A creature, could never do, any of these, all things.

But God can, and this son, does. This kind of passage, do you agree, it speaks, for itself.

It's hard to know, how to, how do you, gloss this, and try, it's so, it's such a high, celebration, of the son of God.

Last week, we looked at, one of the parallel passages, Philippians 2, 5 through 11, if you were here for that. Here are just some, parallels, between the two passages.

[ 16 : 35 ] In Philippians, you'll recall, we hear, the amazing phrase, though he was, in the form of God. Remember, Paul says that, in Philippians 2, though he was, in the form of God, he emptied himself.

Here, in Hebrews, we hear, that he, is the heir, of all things, through whom, he created, all things.

So, he is, the form of God. He is God, the one, who created, all things. Furthermore, in Hebrews, you'll recall, this passage, we hear about, the radiance, of the Son's glory.

We hear that, he is the exact, representation, of his being. What, is in mind, here, that's parallel, in Philippians, might be, the whole drama, of Christ's life.

Perhaps, the transfiguration, or the resurrection. But, in Philippians, it is, again, he emptied himself, taking the form, of a servant.

[ 17 : 44 ] Do you think, in Paul's mind, in the Philippians passage, he emptied himself, taking the form, of a servant. Is that, what the Hebrews writer, means, that by, the Son's radiance.

The, the radiance, of God's very being. I don't know. I'm not sure, what the writer, to the Hebrews, in other words, has in mind, specifically, and concretely, by the radiance.

He is, he is the radiance, of God. It's, it's, it's marvelous, to contemplate that. Of course, in Hebrews, we hear about, purification, for sins, here, don't we?

This is unique, to Hebrews, when compared, with the other, parallel passages, in the New Testament. Although, Paul does say, if you recall, in the Philippians, chapter 2 passage, he talks about, our Lord, as obedient to death, even death, on a cross.

Paul, at least in the background, of his mind, is thinking about, the atonement there. The Lord died, for the sin of the world. Then, of course, there's a more, direct parallel, I think.

[ 18 : 58 ] Here, in Hebrews, we hear about, he sat down, the Son, he sat down, he sat down, at the right hand, of the majesty, in heaven.

And in Philippians, you recall, we hear about, therefore, God, has highly, exalted him. Same idea, same exaltation, motif.

And both passages, invoke, don't they, the mystery, of name. In Hebrews, here, we hear that, he has received, a superior name.

And in Philippians, we hear nothing less, than at the name, at his new name, if it is a new name, at this name, every knee should bow. Every knee, every knee, every knee, will bow.

So, both passages, both these passages, this is an interesting, thing to note. Both passages, are sustained, by scripture.

[ 20 : 07 ] Both Paul's, letter to the, passage in Philippians, and this passage, that we're looking at here, Hebrews, are sustained, are held up, by earlier scripture.

And the, specific scripture, that you can refer to, all the time, when you read Hebrews, is, we mentioned this, last week, in regards to, scripture as a whole, the New Testament, as a whole.

These passages, are sustained, by Psalm, 110. Psalm 110, as we said last week, is the most quoted, scripture, in the New Testament.

Some scholars, Richard Bauckham, quotes some, I'm not sure, if he agrees with them, or not. But some serious scholars, call the letter, to the Hebrews, an extended commentary, on Psalm 110.

That's what it is. I don't know, if that's true or not. But we want to, there's, there's again, the great, the great, exhortum, call it that, the great, opening lines, of a great treatise.

[ 21 : 14 ] In the past, God spoke to our forefathers, through the prophets, revealing his identity, in that way. Many times, he did this, in various ways. Our author, reflects on that.

But in these last days, he has spoken to us, by his son, whom he appointed, heir of all things. What a status, the son has. Appointed heir of all things.

Through whom, he made the universe. The son is the radiance, of God's glory. The exact representation, of his being. Sustaining all things, by his powerful word.

Very, very redolent, of the prologue, of John's gospel, there isn't it? After he had provided, purification for sins, he sat down, at the right hand, of the majesty, in heaven.

Remember the one, who sat down, in Psalm 110, sit at my right hand, until I make, your enemies, your footstool. Later in that Psalm, the mystery, of the strange priest, called Melchizedek, is invoked.

[ 22 : 19 ] And here, this son, provided purification, for sins, sitting down, at the right hand, of the majesty, in heaven. Much like, you read about, in Revelation, chapters, five and six, especially six.

The son, is with the father, in the throne room, receiving the worship, of all creation. He sat down, at the right hand, of the majesty.

So he became, as much superior, to angels. Now, he now turns, this reflective man, to angels. Interestingly.

This is both, about angels, so far. But now he says, so he became, as much superior, to angels, as the name, he has inherited, superior to theirs. So, since he's turned, to the subject of angels, so should we.

Let's turn, and see, what he says, about angels. We have two, I forget the sort of thing. Here's how he starts, to talk about angels.

[ 23 : 28 ] I always think about, some of you people, actually, when the angels, comes up. Maybe, maybe a comparison, by way of contrast, or by, something, that I didn't say, didn't commit myself.

It's another subject, for another day. Now, see where I am here. He turns, again, as the name, he has inherited, is, in this translation, two people did, by overhead, you can tell, different translations, is more excellent, than theirs.

It means the same thing. Turns to the subject, of angels. Now, here he moves on, to, um, a direct, allusion, to Psalm 110, has already been given, to us.

He sat down, at the right hand, is an allusion, up there, at the, at the end of chapter four, at the end, at the end of verse four, it's an allusion, to Psalm 10, which says, sit at my right hand.

This is, and then, at the end of this, um, this, uh, these references, to angels, we're going to see it, on the next, on the next, uh, overhead. We're going to hear about, um, we're going to hear about, um, we're going to hear again, you can tell, I'm looking at notes, for next week, that aren't quite, clear yet.

[ 25 : 08 ] There's a, uh, there's a direct quote, at the end here, of chapter one, to Psalm 110. And this is the way, the old writers did, what they called, what they called, what they now called, inclusions.

He makes a reference, to Psalm 110, at the end of verse four, then at the end, of this chapter, what we call a chapter, he makes another, a quote from Psalm, from Psalm 110, telling you that, this is a block, of, of, of material.

It's a bit like, it sort of functioned, in some ways, the way we, um, use, uh, in, in our printed books, we use chapters. There's a bit of an inclusio, here, um, using Psalm 110.

I wish I could make that, clearer for you, but it'll come, clearer later, I hope. Speaking of the old writers, um, just, obviously, we're looking at, a first century, Christian writer.

I delight here, to quote, um, to quote my friend, I'm getting to think of it, as a personal friend, Richard Bauckham, at, uh, St. Andrews. He writes, he says this, uh, the primary medium, of theological development, uh, for the first Christians, for early Jewish Christian writers, certainly, was, exegesis.

[ 26 : 29 ] And Mr. Bauckham calls it, now this is a direct quote, he calls it, meticulous, and disciplined, exegesis, of scriptural text, deployed, with, the sophisticated, exegetical techniques, of contemporary, then contemporary, Jewish scholarship, he'll even call it.

We're looking at, a very exact mind, here at work. You know, that's worth, that's worth putting out there, I think that's worth believing. In some, in some kinds of scholarship, about the Bible, you'll often get a kind of, offhand attitude, towards, these writers, that, ah, they raced through scripture, grabbed a passage here, and there, threw it together, and ah, it sounds good, I'll go with that.

Mr. Bauckham's saying, there is no justification, for that attitude, whatsoever. These writers, were exact, and they were disciplined, and they knew exactly, what they were doing, when they wrote, and when they did, this exegesis of scripture.

Whenever, Bill Chandler, asked me to stand here, as he did, just the other day, on Friday, it happened to me again, I seem to find things, in newspapers, which give me, encouragement of sorts, to carry on, with the subject matter, I think I'm trying to, I'm meditating on.

Yesterday, even as I was, putting this material, quickly together, for today, there was a book review, maybe you should tell me, I shouldn't have been, reading book reviews, I should have been, working on this.

[ 28 : 04 ] There was a book review, I think it was in the, National Post, by a woman, you may have heard of, Karen Armstrong, about her favorite topic, she writes incessantly, about the religions, and she always says, if you know, Karen Armstrong at all, I think you'll find this, relevant to what, I'm talking about today, I hope you will, she always says, the same thing, and I'll bet, from friends, colleagues, people that you, talk with, you've probably heard, this kind of thing, it's, it's, quite, pervasive in our culture, but, Karen Armstrong's, a scholar, so she, gets attention, when she says, these things, she always says, this, essentially, and she said this, as she was, favorably reviewed, in the paper yesterday, for some new book, she's written, she always says this, God, God is unknowable, the religions, well, they're all, looking for, this unknowable, therefore, therefore, this is her big pitch, of course, therefore, no one should claim truth, and what's more, if you do make true claims, you're dangerous, we hear this all the time, it's, it's part of the, background noise, now, of our culture, scholars, who think like this, about the religions, and the subject of religion, get their way, with this sort of, unchallenged, kind of talk,

God is unknowable, you know, we have all these religions, the world, what are they about, what are they looking for, this unknowable, something, therefore, there's no real connection, the therefore here, is very weak, it's just really, a separate assertion, but if you believe, something's true, you're probably dangerous, you want to fly airplanes, into office towers, or something, the first point, directly, of course, we should take this kind of thing, seriously, the first point, directly contradicts, our faith, we do believe, that God, is knowable, really, our author, this morning, has told us, in fact, that God speaks, that's how you get to know someone, God speaks, and he has spoken, we can ask, how does Karen Armstrong, know, that God, has the property, of being unknowable, she does know, that God is unknowable, we can ask, how do you know that, if you don't know anything, about God, how do you know, he's unknowable, learn, Alvin Plantinga, talks like that, in some of his books, he's not referring to,

Karen Armstrong, as far as I know, did she figure that out, all by herself, is God, if you will, the prisoner, of his transcendence, presumably, she thinks so, there are many religions, there are many views, therefore, we don't, cannot know truth, and, our only, answer to her, is something like, well truth, is always contested, it is not, always easy, but that doesn't, necessarily mean, that we can't, know some truth, remember last week, we mentioned, on Erica Brown, traditional Jewish, teacher, in the United States, one of her students, says, liberates us, from the tyranny, of the perpetually, open mind, I have a feeling, that Karen Armstrong, invites us into, a life, in which we have, a perpetually, open mind, about all the religions, and you know, there are Anglican bishops, who think the same way, and I won't mention, their names, so we would send, a message, to Karen Armstrong, and also to some,

Anglican bishops, that maybe they should read, at least Erica Brown, or especially, if they're bishops, they might pay attention, to the letter, to the Hebrews, which speaks, a different kind, of message, God has spoken, but again, it's a sidebar, on to the rest, of chapter one, we are now given, as you know, a string, of scripture text, do you like fancy words, you want, string of scripture text, you call that, a katina, it's a word, each introduced, with, an ever so brief, word, for instance, in verse five up there, you see our, author says, remember he said, that our Lord, the son, has received a name, more excellent, than that of angels, and then he introduces, a quote from scripture, by this little introduction, formula, for to which of the angels, did God ever say, this is how he, he wants to, unfold his argument here, each introduction, in fact, these little introduction, snippets, guides the reader, to understand, what is being said, what is being invoked, by the scripture quotes, interesting to note here again, there are seven verses, some shorter, some longer, the author quotes,

Psalm two, that's what's in front of us, in verse five, verse seven, Psalm two, verse seven, he quotes from, second Samuel, 714, he also quotes, Deuteronomy 32, verse 43, and then he quotes, Psalm 194, he quotes Psalm 45, he quotes Psalm 102, this is what I was trying to say, so awkwardly later, he ends, with a quote, from Psalm 110, verse one, again, he's echoed, Psalm 110, up in verse four, and then he quotes from it directly, forming thereby, an inclusio, ancient writers like to do that kind of thing, observing the obvious here, our author believes that the scriptures, he believes the scriptures, he's come to believe, that these scriptures that he quotes from, they're redolent, of Jesus Christ, God's son, that's what he believes, to state that in terms, and increasingly as time goes by, in our culture, we're going to all have to learn to do this, in one way or the other, to state this truth, in terms which would, perhaps bother,

[ 34 : 21 ] Karen Armstrong, it's not my duty, to bother people like her, our author, this is anachronistic, but it goes to the point, it's what he's saying, our author believes, that the Jesus of history, equals, and knew himself, to be the Christ of faith, we're going to have to learn, to say that kind of thing, in our culture, Jesus of history, understood himself, to be the one, that we know as the Christ of faith, there's no division between them, the surface of scripture, is true, Jesus understood himself, to be, a special one from God, and that unfolded, in his mystery, in his ministry, understood himself, to be, Yahweh come amongst us, as he did in the garden, he accepted the worship, of doubting Thomas, my Lord and my God, that's the Jesus of history, there's no division, all of modern talk, when it becomes popular in newspapers, boy it's getting, it's saturated out there, with this sort of stuff, oh we don't know the Jesus of history, the Christians have a fantasy view of Jesus, our author says, no, that's not the case, this is the Jesus, that we may know, on this issue, of course, everything turns, in our faith, everything, remember here, and this will very much, echo last week, but bear with me, this is so important, otherwise we really, just hear scripture, go in one ear, and out in the other,

I think, and we don't really understand, the import, of what's going on here, remember here, the Jewish, Israel faith, about the issue of, where we are, so we talked about this last week, I wish, there is, think of, just a straight, thick line, the Jewish understanding, of reality, there is above the line, God, below the line, everything else, it's that simple, God, everything else, below that line, you can make it, a bit more complex, there is, a heavenly world, below that line, created by God, what we call, a heavenly world, and there is, our visible, earthly world, beneath that line, I find, it's a delight, to the imagination, and is meant, to instruct us, if we are willing, and you find this, so much in scripture, it's good to stop, I notice in our psalms, today, it's there in our psalm, readings this morning, the metaphor, of height, is deeply, instructive, it's a precise, idea, in the Jewish mind, in the scripture, writer's mind,

God is the, most high, there is no, high, above, God's highness, he exhausts, the meaning, of high, God is, most high, no, angel, is most high, God is, most high, no, higher, than that, God is, most high, I find that, since scripture, invites me, to, ponder this, I think I should, and it's, it's beautiful, to do it, so our author, now says, for to which, of the angels, did God ever say, getting right to it, for to which, of the angels, did God ever say, you are my son, today, I have begotten you, Psalm 2, verse 7, then he says, or again, or again, let me emphasize, this for you, I guess he's saying, I will be, to him a father, he shall be, to me, a son, he is superior, to the angels, as son, he is, twice now, in these, first two quotes, 5a, and 5b, if we can call them that, says, the same thing, twice, regarding the angels, the son is, superior as son, he is, superior as son, or, again, and again, when he brings, the firstborn, into the world, he says, let all God's angels, worship him, so the son, is, worshipped, it isn't,



I, I, I, I, I, I, I've always read this as, tell me something new, I'm glad for a scholar, who says, slow down, and look, at what's in front of you, this writer says, that the son, is worshipped, by angels, he thinks, that's very significant, and if he thinks, it's significant, I'll bet it is, he's worshipped, by angels, let all God's angels, worship him, let's move on, to another, life, finally, yes, that's the word, what is this, a mess, he moves on, and he wants to say more, about angels, of the angels, he says, he makes his angels, winds, and his ministers, a flame of fire,

I think this is wonderful, this is 104, he's quoting, Psalm 104, he himself, he himself, the son, created the angels, to be his servants, and to conduct, I'll show you this, in a moment, to be his servants, and to conduct his, it can be called, his cult, in heaven, that's because, twice here, the word angels, is used, the first time, it's angelus, my pronunciation, I'm sure is horrible, which means messengers, and the next time, he's, they're called, these angels, are called ministers, which is another Greek word, and it's something, kind of, how's my pronunciation, it's, it's liturgus, it's the word, from which, from which we get our word, liturgy, taking these, just at face value, it appears, that the angels, do two things for God, they serve him, by serving us, that's worthy of a talk, at Learners Exchange Sunday, to have that, with a sober mind, unfolded, we are served, by angels, angels, and God is, therefore God is served, by angels, and angels, apparently, may be understood, to conduct worship, certainly they conduct, worship in heaven, they are, liturgy, ones, just in passing, it just, occurs to me, it could be the day, just now, but,

[ 41 : 46 ] I didn't look up the reference, but in, it's in Corinthians, isn't it, one of the Corinthian letters, Paul says, and it's one of those, magnificently obscure, moments in scripture, you can just love, because of its obscurity, Paul talks about, the wearing of veils, and he, a throwaway line, in his, oh because of the angels, Paul has, Paul has some sense, that when Christians, gather for worship, the angels are present, and we can offend them, they lead worship, the angels, somehow, in heaven, maybe amongst us, I don't know, but, but of the sun, he says, I must rush along, but of the sun, he says, your throne, oh God, is forever, and ever, the scepter of uprightness, is the scepter of your kingdom, extended quote here, from a song, you have loved righteousness, and hated wickedness, therefore, God, your God, has anointed you, with the oil of gladness, beyond your, beyond your, companions, amazing stuff, he reigns as God, this is telling us, forever, on the cosmic throne, of God, he possesses, unique, divine rule, over all things, you could stop, and talk about that, for the longest time, we're running out of time, and must continue, you, oh Lord, you Lord, laid the foundation, of the earth, in the beginning, he says, at verse 10, and the heavens, are the work of your hands, they will perish, but you remain, they will all wear out, like a garment, they will all wear out, like a garment, he is, he is fully eternal, the author is telling us, and that, from eternity, to eternity, he will be worshipped, including the angels, who are created, and transient, like everything else, that God creates, or potentially they are, but to which, where can I find, the next one, one last word, that, and, then, verse 12,

I can find it here, like a robe, you will roll them up, with a garment, they will be changed, but you are the same, and your years, will have to be, Again, the sun created everything below the line.

All of it is potentially transient. It depends upon God's upholding word to be sustained. And then finally, but to which of the angels has he ever said?

He continues his contrast to the sun with the angels. To which of the angels has he ever said, sit at my right hand? He now quotes Psalm 110 directly. Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool. He is exalted, in other words, the sun, to share God's cosmic throne and his future rule, his ex-schatological rule.

[ 45 : 25 ] Then he says, are they not all, the angels, ministering spirits? The ministering spirit sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation.

The Messiah has a mysterious sovereignty. It seems to be mysterious because they know Jesus as a man. He possesses the sovereignty to angels.

The author has changed the order of the words.

I don't have the sixth quotation up there right now. But in that quote, he changes the order of the Greek words in the septuagint. That's the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

He says, you in the beginning, Lord. And here, let me show you the significance of this with a full quote from Mr. Bauckham. Thus placing the person addressed, Jesus Christ, at the same beginning with which Genesis begins.

[ 46 : 37 ] With which Genesis begins. The primordial eternity before the creation of the heavens and the earth. For which the pre-existent Christ is here made responsible.

The author to Hebrews does nothing less than give us a Christological reading of the opening words of Genesis. Jesus Christ, the mystery of his person, was the one through whom God created the world.

And again, are not angels. He tells us about angels again. They are ministering spirits. He ends this great exordium. Sent to serve you and I. Those who are going to inherit salvation.

When the church... I must end. I tell this is material in progress. I apologize for some of its choppiness. Trying to straighten this stuff out for a future talk.

When the church over time worked out the wondrous doctrine of our Lord as... You know this language. I hope you know it. Our Lord as one person.

[ 47 : 54 ] Two natures. It was simply obeying scripture like the letter to the Hebrews. There are straight contradictions in the letter to the Hebrews.

That cannot be understood other than by a notion of two natures. And at least embryonically, this doctrine as it's present in a letter like the letter to the Hebrews.

Is related to that of later patristic Christology. You know the next chapter of course.

Yes. The author goes on to talk about our Lord's... His priesthood. Or later on in the letter. Our Lord's priesthood. He emphasizes the full identification of Jesus with our humanity.

The author just boldly talks like this. And it's just as if he's saying to the church. See? Two natures. One person. The later patristic thinkers just made that formal.

[ 48 : 59 ] They were faithful to scripture. Jesus has two natures. Divine. He's human. And he's one person. They worked that out in great detail so that we could remain faithful to scripture.

This kind of meditation on scripture, I hope you'll agree, is good just for its own sake. It is its own application. You don't have to constantly say to yourself, well, how does this help me?

Don't worry about that, I would think. It is part of the mystery doing this kind of thing of beholding the glory of the Lord, as Paul says it.

Beholding the glory of the Lord. And as you do that, you are transformed amazingly by the Spirit's mysterious work in us. Transformed into his likeness.

That's the application. Just keep looking at this Jesus as described by, for instance, Hebrews chapter 1, and you will be blessed.

[ 50 : 01 ] He created all things through him. He will inherit all things. He upholds all things. He is therefore God, as worshipped by Israel.

He's above that line. And to ponder him is to behold the glory of the Lord, again, as Paul says. And it contains for me perhaps a lesser blessing, and I hope for you too, but a lesser blessing not to be despised.

It takes the form of rhetorical questions. I think that's appropriate here. Who stands behind such a piece of writing? What has this author seen so that he can write words like this?

What kind of community does he belong to that believes this kind of thing? How did this community form? What, again, I don't know how else to put it.

What have they seen in the deepest sense? What is the real ultimate source behind this kind of writing? And you know the answer to that.

[ 51 : 14 ] You know that there's a person, a mysterious presence, that caused this kind of thinking and this kind of writing to happen. The Gospels tell us, in closing, the Gospels tell us of moments of wonder.

When they, the disciples, when they saw a man command the stormy creation to be still. And we're told that the creation obeyed.

And they said, who then is this? Who then is this? They asked, as we know, in amazement. So, again, this writer, this wonderful writer to the Hebrews, records the witness of many.

And he invites us to ask, does he not? Who then is this? How did they come to believe such things about this one they call the Son, Jesus Christ? And he invites us, very beautifully and subtly, does he not, to join with angels in worship of the Most High, who is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ.

So, behind this wonderful, exuberant assertion about Jesus, creator, sustainer, the heir of all things, who is worshipped by angels, who created the angels.

[ 52 : 42 ] What a view of our Lord is here. So, we can say, Lord, with the angels, may we worship you and know you.

Know you. I want to know Jesus the way the writer of Hebrews chapter 1 knew him. It seems so glorious. Again, I apologize for the lack of continuity here.

But I'm not. Put it down to enthusiasm. I love Hebrews. I love Hebrews chapter 1. I wonder who wrote it. No one knows.

Some people say, ah, it must have been Paul. He was the only thinker back then. This guy was mighty in the scriptures. Was he not? Marvelous.

And he sees all the scripture pointing to Jesus. Again, he's above that line. And so angels worship him and we worship him.

[ 53 : 40 ] And we can say to Erica Brown, we're not idolaters. We worship God revealed in the face of Jesus. So, you must have questions.

Let me say a word of prayer. We'll get on to some good questions. Lord, we thank you for your word. It is beyond our comment. It burns up our comment.

It's greater than anything we can say. We thank you for it. Help us to ponder it as we should. And may we be turned into the likeness of the one, celebrated in these mighty words.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. You could go through every chapter, couldn't you, in Hebrews.

And, oh, what's he saying about Moses? What's he saying about Melchizedek? He comes back to Psalm 110 to deal with Melchizedek. He talks about atonement, the priestliness of Jesus.

[ 54 : 48 ] This man is steeped in Israel's faith and life. And he sees Jesus fulfilling it perfectly. Just every chapter is filled with so much.

Mr. Bauckman says that if you look at this, he doesn't have time in this chapter when she talks about Hebrews. There are subtleties after subtlety in this first chapter.

The author is so sophisticated. The way he puts little hints of what his argument is into these seven quotes. Every one of the quotes is from a messianic passage.

He knows the scriptures that really well. He just says that Jesus fulfills this. There may have been proof in the first century that Jesus must have been an angel, right?

That's what you knew. This new bunch must believe. He was an angel. And they said, no, he wasn't an angel. He was an intermediary figure of some kind then. And they said, no, he's God.

[ 55 : 55 ] And then they said, he's man. So you can see why the church had to work out the doctrine of two natures, one person. I'm repeating myself. In the second row there.

Thanks, Mark. Speaking of exploring subtleties, you certainly always help us to do that. I think you could find meaning in a question mark. Thank you.

Thank you. Question. No, it's great. Can we go back to 2 verses 7 and 8 for a minute? Sure. On the, I can't quote them, so I'm going to need the overhead.

7 and 8. I've made a mess of it. This looks worse than my regular case. 7 and 8. Of the angels, he says.

He makes his angels reign. Yes, who is the he? Who is the he? The, well, is it the psalmist? Of the angels, he says.

[ 57 : 03 ] That's the father. Yes. It's on there. Well, yeah. It's on to be God. He's quoting the psalm, and it, he tells us the truth about God who he made, who made the angels wins.

Okay. Now, I guess I've got the wrong one. It might have been the one before this. The one that says, an exact imprint. That's in the first four verses. Yeah, okay.

So, we wouldn't call that a clone, would we not, in the 21st century? This is how you get the same DNA as the original. You clone it. Yeah. Whatever godness is, he's God.

Yes. Yeah. So, and, and, so do you want, and at the end, and verse 10, you, Lord, if, if this is God speaking, then he's not referring to himself.

You, Lord, Jesus, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning. Yeah, well, see, yeah, go back to the idea that, that, the early Christians, and the proof of the pudding is obvious in the whole New Testament, as we talked about this last week, that, Psalm 110, verse 1, is mysterious, and the Lord, said to my Lord.

[ 58 : 16 ] So, there is, there is a binary mystery, at least so far, in, in God, awaiting to be unfolded. And, and, and they look at Psalm 110, and one, say, this is where we were told ahead of time about this strange mystery.

Okay. Or, as the creed will say, God, from God. Both are God, but there's a God from God. And, and, and we're on our way to full-blown Trinitarian-ness now.

Yeah, there's a lot of, I think, Trinitarian. Yeah, it, it, it, yeah, yes. The doctrine was not an accident. It was forced upon the church in her thinking, as you know, as you know.

And, Jen, sounds a lot like, I think you mentioned, the introduction to John, you know, about Jesus actually being a part of this creative process before we ever knew him.

Yes, yes, yes. And this is where, like, translations are, of course, what would we do without them? But, in fact, his word order is, you in the beginning, Lord.

[ 59 : 26 ] That's his Greek word order, changing it from the Septuagint, the Greek translation, the Hebrew Scriptures. And he's almost certainly saying, I'm, I'm, I'm identifying this Lord with the, the one in Genesis chapter one, in the beginning.

The, the Jews practiced, and there's a fancy, uh, term for it, and I can't forget, it's two words, but they thought, that, and I think, I think, that when in a, passage A and passage B, no matter how far separated, you have the same word, you're, you're permissioned, to think about them together.

They had such a high doctrine of scripture, they thought they may be speaking to one another. So he is saying, if I say in the beginning, well, what does that remind you of Genesis chapter one? So he's saying, Jesus, the mystery of the son is there.

He's the creator. Through, and Paul puts that in, through whom he created the world, through whom God created the world. So again, um, Mr. Bauckham's good word is embryonic, embryonic, uh, Trinitarianism and Christology is here.

Thanks, thanks for, um, Bill, sir. Um, don't you think that, Christian, evolutionists, would come to a skidding halt, if they look at this carefully?

[ 60 : 58 ] Because it gives you a little clue, how, uh, about creation, and then it comes about, by a command. a command, and, uh, and is sustained by a command.

So, uh, is, is, is it too much to, say, I think I understand what that, that, that is saying, but he commands the, uh, the winds and, and the storm, he has control over nature, uh, um, he has control over atoms, he don't know how the atoms stay together, but, if we believe this, God has commanded the atoms to stay together, and, uh, to hold together, and by a command, he can make them disappear.

So, I'm talking about Christian evolutionists here, but, if they really look at this, it doesn't, it seems to me, to point, to this great power, of speaking, that God has, things into existence, um, without the, without the claims of what evolutionists say, where they have the natural selection, and all sort of, uh, over a large period of time, here we have, God's commanding things into existence, and holding them into existence, and able to roll it up like a rug, at the end of it, if he wants to, and it's all here, uh, now that's my simplistic, response, to this work, and, um, how do you respond, to such an idea?

I, I, I never, you know, I've never thought of it, as addressing those kind of things, but, well, if you, at verse 11 down there, you can, press a point, and say, well, the psalmist says, they will perish, the creation, things of the, but you remain, and, they will all wear out, like a garment, well, he sustains all things, but he also lets them wear out, like a garment, so he's not, I don't know if he's pressing points, that we would call scientific, but, um, specifically, how God created things, I, other than, by the mystery of his speaking, whether he created fully formed forms, or he created an energy, that allowed them to become forms, is beyond me, you have to ask the learned scientists, in our congregation, questions like that, they will all wear out, like a garment, I'm getting, I'm experiencing that, all the time,

I'm going quicker, than my garments, because I, where I shot, and with my book, sorry, someone else had a, this thing, it seems very, very comfortable, with the word angels, it's much more comfortable, than we are, this author, yes, yes, yes, I hear you, I hear you, yeah, I think, um, Baca, Baca makes a big deal, the fact that, our author has a rhetorical strategy, in mind, and he wants to say, okay, we're all agreed, God, angels, us, and he wants to say, where, okay, here's what, who is Jesus, where is he, because later on, he says, he made him a little lower, than the angels, he quotes, the psalm eight, famously, which is about, in its context, it's about Adam,

[ 64 : 58 ] I think, it's about humanity, it's us, Jesus identified himself, with our status, as lower than angels, now he's exalted, to, the high, to, to fellowship, on the, with the most high, and then he, firms that up, that he is, divine, he didn't, he didn't, he wasn't given, a divine status, that he never had, it's the fancy word, is, there's a protological, thing that comes in, he was always God, he, he, has, the divine, mystery, of eternity, Bauchem goes, shows you, time, over and over again, when Jews, spoke to Gentiles, and especially, of sophisticated Jews, they were able, to come to common ground, with Gentiles, over the issue of, whatever the word God means, it must mean eternity, and everyone was agreed, the, the, the privative,

Alpha, I remember that, neat phrase, I love these fancy phrases, the, without beginning, without end, God must be that, the Gentiles got that, yeah, okay, if there's a deity, must be forever, or he's a fake deity, and, and the Jews said, yeah, we're with you on that, God is that, he's eternal, and there, in that sense, Karen Armstrong is right, at that level, we can say, God's unthinkable, but for her, that's the only thing, you, she runs with that, and friends, also, it's a silly conclusion, the eternity, of anything, is unthinkable, but she also thought, the world was eternal, it's just, don't ask where it came from, he said, it's just always been there, that, that, that's the, the humility of a creature, I take it that an angel, an archangel, cannot grasp that, we have that in common with them, on the subject of angels, we're, oh sure,

I'm an expert, just, say that again, sorry, we're warned about, entertaining angels, as well, well we might entertain them, unawares, from Genesis, yes, yes, are you inviting me over, for lunch, I'd love to talk about it, yeah, well, yeah, this, I like the comment, this author is very, but again, he has a rhetorical strategy, but he does know, angels are real, and they're, they apparently conduct, I love this idea, that they conduct worship, certainly in Revelation, they conduct worship, or they, they're mysterious, myriads and myriads, unthinkable numbers, join in, I can't imagine, what angelic worship must be, what it must sound like, what it must, what, what would it, what would it, what would compose such worship?

Of course. I don't know, it's a wonderful thing, to contemplate, isn't it? I'm going to try this on, besides, so, it says, that we are made, a little Lord, the angels, for a while, yeah, but, it also says, somewhere, that the angels, long to look into, our salvation, I think, because they must see it, as something that, is, just astonishing, and they haven't experienced it, yeah, and I think, back to, last week, in talking about, praise, and, um, how, how Jesus responded, when he was, I think, going into Jerusalem, that, if, the people weren't allowed, to praise, the psalms, would cry out, that's lovely, I think, everything in creation, was meant to praise, but surely, man, more than anything, because, um, God has died for us, he hasn't done that, for anything else, and, and,

I guess, that the, angels will, have some, from our perspective, uh, magnificent praise, that, imagine glory, no one will have, greater praise than us, when we, rightly, see, what, the gift, has been for us, our God, and God, yeah, I believe the, um, it's interesting out there, thanks for quoting that, the, um, I think, I'm trying to remember, all over O'Donovan, somewhere, I think, I believe the temporalization, of the quote, by the writer, to the Hebrews, is his, it isn't, in the psalm, in Hebrew, so it's in the light of Jesus, that he'll say, for a little while, that it's due for, the universe, is, uh, the hierarchy, can be flexible, and we're worth nothing, on our own, because God, redeemed us, worthy of dying, for, I mean, our ancestors, I mean, it's just, our ancestors, went to town, on this thing, didn't they,

[ 70 : 09 ] I mean, I don't know, was it wise, or unwise, but they, thought, let all God's angels, worship him, and that's when, Lucifer said, not me, you know, or, or, serve my little, biped, mortals, I've made out of flesh, and blood, he said, not me, that's, the origin, of the mystery, of iniquity, he wouldn't serve, but I, you know, I don't know, if that was wise, because they're reading, a lot, they should have, maybe been a bit more, careful about that, so, when this was accepted, into the canon, did the fathers, leave any comments on it?

Oh, I'm, I'm sure they did, but I, I can't, off the top of my head, oh, okay, it stands out, doesn't it, as a, quite a unique book, it's got to be Palestinian, I mean, he's talking to Jews, about Jesus, Jesus, any, um, you're very patient today, thanks very much, for, stuffing, thank you, and who's on next week, Bill, um, anybody who's feeling healthy, for the whole week, yeah, I could have, I could have, I could have, I could have, I could have, I could have, I could have, uh, next week, I think I mentioned, uh, Joseph, Joseph, um, Lee, Lee, the subject, well, the subject is, have the New Testament authors, misused, the Old Testament, they are the, up and ready, you could ask her, me first, what do you think my answer is,

I wouldn't even hesitate, yes, thank you, thank you people, for your patience, never.  
through, move the subject.

Thank you. Thank you so much. cold, thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 72 : 40 ] Thank you.