Hebrews 1:1-4

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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***Hebrews 1:1–4*** (ESV)  
**1** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. **3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, **4** having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

1. In the ESV, Heb 1:2 begins with the word “**but**”. What is the original Greek here? How does this change the way we understand things in English?

There is no “but” in the Greek. There is no conjunction at all here, but rather two separate sentences that build one upon the other. First, long ago, God spoke though his many prophets. Now, in these last days, he has spoken through his Son. There is no contrast, as though the means and message now are different than before. It is not contrast but rather progression that seems to be emphasized.

1. In is sometimes taught that the contrastive word “**but**” in Heb 1:2 is implied because the author is contrasting the old message for Israel with the new message to the “church” in the “church age”. What is the Greek word normally used for “church” throughout the “New Testament” and what does it actually mean? The Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the “Old Testament”) first uses this word as a noun in Dt 9:10 and Dt 18:16. The same word is also used in Acts 7:38. How is translated in these passages, and to which group of people did this word refer? How might this change our view of the “church” and the “church age”?

**Ekklesia** “assembly, congregation, gathering of people” from **ékklētos** “called out”, which is from **ekkaléō** “to call out”. It was a common term for a congregation of the **ekklētoí** “the called people, or those called out or assembled.”

***Deuteronomy 9:10*** (ESV)  
**10** And YHWH gave me the two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words that YHWH had spoken with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the **assembly**.

***Deuteronomy 18:16*** (ESV)  
**16** just as you desired of YHWH your God at Horeb on the day of the **assembly**, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of YHWH my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’

***Acts 7:37–38*** (ESV)  
**37** This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’ **38** This is the one who was in the **congregation** in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us.

In the above passages (from both “old” and “new” Testaments) this word **ekklesia** referred to the people of Israel. They were the “**called out**” ones. Called out by God to be set apart for Him. This is the church it the true sense of the word. It was first the people of Israel, and later added those who were grafted in.

1. What does Heb 1:2 tell us about how God created the world? What other Scriptures seem to teach this same thing? How does this challenge the way we normally think about Creation and the Messiah?

***John 1:1–3*** (ESV)  
**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** **All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

***1 Corinthians 8:5–6*** (ESV)  
**5** For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”— **6** yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, **Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.**

***Colossians 1:15–16*** (ESV)  
**15** He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation. 16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—a**ll things were created through him and for him**.

We normally thing about God as the sole creator, but these verses make it clear that Yeshua was there from the beginning. He is called the “firstborn of creation”, so in some way He was a creation of the Father, and then together, all of creation was formed.

1. Heb 1:2 also speaks of Yeshua as being the “heir of all things”. What does this mean? How can he be the heir and also the creator?

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As discussed above, Yeshua is called the “firstborn of creation”, so in some way He was a creation of the Father, and then together, all of creation was formed, with the purpose in mind from the beginning that He was to be heir of it all. This was His Creation for Him to rule.

1. From our Zechariah study, what was the significance of God's title, **YHWH Tsava’ot** ? Reading Heb 1:2, what phrase makes it seem like the writer may be trying to comfort God's people in a similar way? Why is the writer emphasizing the strength of God through Yeshua?

**YHWH Tsava’ot** “LORD of Hosts”.

Singular: צַָבָא tsava’ army, warrior, division, large group, array, stars

**Tseva’ot** can refer to an army of people, the people of Israel, the army of YHWH, the stars of the heavens, all created beings in heavens and earths

In the Septuagint (abbreviated LXX) the name **Yehuah of Hosts** is usually translated into Greek as **kyrios pantokrator**.

**Kyrios** is Greek for “Lord or Master” and was used in place of the actual personal name YHWH.

**Pantokrator**:

panto = “all”; krator=”ruler, master” 🡪 pantokrator = “ruler of all, master of all”

(English autocrat 🡨 auto+kator “self+ruler”)

In Heb 1:2, the phrase that describes Yeshua as “the heir of all things” actually fits with the meaning of YHWH Tsava’ot.

1. Consider the various phrases used to describe Yeshua in Heb 1:3a. What does this tell us about Yeshua? What is the Greek word that is translated as “universe”, and how does that word point us again to the name **YHWH Tsava’ot**?

Radiance of the glory of God, Exact imprint of his nature, upholds the universe the word of his power

Universe = panta “all” as in panto-krator “ruler of all, master of all” = YHWH Tsavao’t

These phrases are all meant to show us that Yeshua is equal to YHWH. They are one.

1. Consider Heb 1:3b. How did Yeshua make “purification for sins”? Where is Yeshua now?

This refers to his death as “the unblemished sacrificial lamb”. He now sits at the right hand of the Father.

1. Heb 1:4 refers to Yeshua as “having become” superior to angels. Just based on what the author has said so far, how did Yeshua become superior to angels? (The rest of the chapter builds his case even more.)

He made purification for sins (all sins, but this is not made clear in this particular verse). This is something angels have not done.

He sits at the right hand of the father. This is seat of the heir to the throne, not the place of angels.

Through Him all was created. The angels were not creators.

He is the exact imprint of the nature of God. Again, this cannot be said of angels.

He upholds the universe by the word of his power. Angels cannot do this.

1. There are sacrifices and offerings for things other than sin. Go to Leviticus and take a look at all of the other types of offerings. What are they, and what were their significance? How did each of the offerings foreshadow (or *point to*) Yeshua? You can browse through Leviticus 1-6.

There are burnt, grain, peace, sin, and guilt.

Burnt offerings were given fully to God. God enjoyed this offering, it was fully for him. The burnt offering was given after sin offering and being able to do it indicated a pure heart, right relationship with God, and showed that you were part of the Israel community.

Grain offering (or gift offering) was one that was made without animal sacrifice. This was more of a free will gift, some given to God and some given to the priests. This gift was to be unleavened and always seasoned with salt. This is an interesting comparison to Yeshua being our Unleavened Bread as well as his reference to believers being the salt of the earth.

Peace offerings were partially given to God- only the fat, entrails, etc. Later, in Leviticus 7, God tells Moses that the priest is to eat the right thigh of the peace offering (if it is an animal), which could presumably mean that others who take place in this meal eat the other portion *with* the priest.

The sin offering was very similar to the burnt offering. It was done in the same place, but the contents of the offering changed based on status. For example, the poor could give a sacrifice of flour, while the high priest sacrificed a bull, and a common Israelite could bring a female goat. The priest who made the offering was allowed to eat of it in a consecrated place.

1. Angels became a big part of worship in Yeshua's time. Rabbinic teachers would teach that angels would intercede in prayer and have a be a stronger connection to the Father.  Who are some major angels mentioned in the Scriptures? What were their roles? See Rev. 4:8, Rev. 14:6-11, Psa. 78:49 for just a few examples.

The only angels that have a name in the Scriptures are Michael and Gabriel.  Angels have numerous roles, but it is extremely important to remember that their role in God’s plan does not involve their glorification.  They are not to be worshiped, even though they carry out much of God’s will. Col. 2:18, Rev. 19:10. An angel’s job in God’s kingdom could involve delivering a message, minister to humans, protection of specific areas (such as the Garden of Eden), and take part in battle against evil.

***Revelation 4:8*** (ESV)  
**8** And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

***Revelation 14:6–11*** (ESV)  
**6** Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. **7** And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.” **8** Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.” **9** And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, **10** he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. **11** And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”

***Psalm 78:49*** (ESV)  
**49** He let loose on them his burning anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels.

***Colossians 2:18*** (ESV)  
**18** Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,

***Revelation 19:10*** (ESV)  
**10** Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

1. In Heb 1:4, what does it mean that “the name he inherited is more excellent” than that of the angels?

We are not talking about the name “Yeshua” versus the name “angel”. We are talking about the authority they were created to have. Yeshua was the heir of all. The name he inherited was the name of the Father, YHWH. He was equal to Him, the exact imprint of His nature. He was ALL that the Father was and is. The “name inherited” refers to the authority given. The Father gave the Son all authority. Not so with the angels. These were created beings, created after the Son. Created for the Son, since all was created by Him and for Him. They had been created for a lesser purpose, with lesser authority. Hence “the name they inherited” was from the beginning designed to be less than that of the Son.