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The Superiority of Messiah to the Prophets

1: 1-3

The superiority of Messiah to the prophets DIG: To what (to whom) is Jesus compared here? What was the function of the prophets in the Dispensation of the Torah? In what ways was Yeshua's function similar? How was it different? How is Messiah superior to the prophets? What is the difference between the past and in these last days? Define progressive revelation. What are the seven examples that demonstrate the superiority of the Son? What is significant about the fact that Yeshua is sitting down at the right hand of God the Father?

REFLECT: What are some of the things we trust in today rather than trusting in God? What sometimes keeps us from examining our lives? Where are you in your daily routine that you can become more aware of God's glory? In what area of your life do you need to ask the Ruach's power to be like Messiah today?



The author does not delay and uses a pun in the original language to make his point: **In the past God spoke at different times** (Greek: *polimeros*) **and in different ways** (Greek: *polutropos*), directly and indirectly, in dreams and stories, history and prophecy, poems and proverbs, **to our ancestors through the**

prophets of the Jewish people from **Moshe** to **Malachi**, and before **Moses** to **Abraham, Isaac** and **Joseph (1:1)**.¹²

The word **at different times** means that **YHVH** did not choose to give **His** whole revelation all at one **time**. **He** chose to give it progressively over a span of 1,600 years by some forty plus writers. All could not be revealed at once, because all could not be understood at once. You don't teach calculus to a first grader. It began to grow, truth upon truth. Sometimes **He** gave a little portion to **Obadiah**, which was one chapter long; at other times **He** gave a large portion as in **Isaiah**, which is sixty-six chapters long. And although **Jeremiah** has fewer chapters, it is longer than **Isaiah**. **At different times** can also be understood another way. Some prophets ministered for one month. An example of this is **Haggai**, who gave four prophecies all in one-month's time and that was his whole prophetic ministry. Others, such as **Moshe, Isaiah** and **Dani'el**, gave prophecies that covered a lifetime. The point is that it was always progressive. **ADONAI** revealed so much and then stopped. Every time **the LORD** gave some revelation, **He** answered certain questions and then left some question unanswered. **His** revelation progressed from lesser to greater light. It did not build from error to truth, but from incomplete truth to more complete truth. And it remained incomplete until the B'rit Chadashah, and the book of **Revelation**, was finished.¹³

But now in the *acharit-hayamin* (in these last days) God has spoken to us through His Son (1:2a CJB). Here the author emphasizes finality. The TaNaKh was progressive, but this **Word** is final. The word **last** (or **end** in some translations) primarily means *termination*. In other words, the B'rit Chadashah revelation was the goal of the TaNaKh. It marks *the termination* period in which **YHVH** completes **His** written **Word** to us. **The expression, in these last days, was a common rabbinic term for the Messianic days. The prophets** often spoke of the Messianic age as **in these last days (Jeremiah 33:14-16; Micah 5:1-4; Zechariah 9:9 and 16)**. So it was as if the author was saying, "It is now Messianic times because **the Messiah** has come, and **He** was the focal point toward whom all the previous revelation was pointing."¹⁴ The whole New Covenant is centered around **Jesus**. The gospels tell **His** story, the epistles comment on it, and **the Revelation** tells of its culmination. From beginning to end **the Messiah** can be seen on every page of the B'rit Chadashah. No **prophet** had been given **ADONAI's** whole truth. The TaNaKh was given to many men, in bits and pieces and fragments, and thus, was unfulfilled.¹⁵ It expectantly longs for the answer that only comes in **Jesus Christ**.

God has spoken. Had **YHVH** remained silent, enshrouded in thick darkness, the plight of mankind would have been desperate indeed.¹⁶ But **God** has spoken, revealing **His** life-giving **Word**. This is one of the most important statements that could be made in our time. It is something we need to know. Ours is an age of relativism. Most people insist there are no absolutes, either in matters of truth or morality. In secular society, having removed **God**, there is no longer a heavenly **Voice** to speak with clarity and authority. The price we have paid is the loss of truth, and loss of hope. Really, we are told, we don't know anything for sure, nor can we.

All this is especially important when it comes to our knowledge of **God Himself**. Is there a **Savior** to help us? Unless **God has spoken**, we cannot even be sure **He** is there; unless **God** is there, there is no ultimate hope for us, and no answer to the ultimate problem of death. So if **God** is there and **He** wants us to know **Him**, **He** has to speak to us. And **He** must speak in a way we can understand. Therefore, there is nothing more important, nothing more essential, than what **the Holy Spirit** says at the beginning of **Hebrews: God has spoken. He has spoken** with authority and with relevance to our lives.¹⁷

God has spoken to us through [His] Son. Motivated by love and directed by divinity, surprised everyone. **He** became a man. In an untouchable mystery, **He** disguised **Himself** as a carpenter and lived in a dusty Judaeian village. Determined to prove **His** love for **His** creation, **He** walked incognito through **His** own world. **His** callused hands touched wounds and **His** compassionate words healed hearts . . .

But as beautiful as this act of incarnation was, it was not the zenith. Like a master painter, **God** reserved **His** masterpiece until the end. All the earlier acts of love had been leading to this one. The angels hushed and the heavens paused to witness the finale. **God** unveils the canvas and the ultimate act of creative compassion is revealed.

God on a cross. **The Creator** being sacrificed for the creation. **God** convincing mankind once and for all that forgiveness still follows failure.¹⁸

God has spoken to us, not through **the prophets**, but **through [His] Son**. The word **[His]** is in brackets because it is not in the Greek text. Some translations may not read **through [His] Son**, but **through [the] Son**. But the definite article **the** is not in the Greek text either. The Greek text simply says **through Son**. In Greek, the absence of the definite article means there is an emphasis on the nature or quality

rather than on personality. In other words, earlier **He spoke through the prophets**, but now, **He** is speaking **through Son-ness**, which is distinctive. Here the writer is not stressing what **God** said, but **he** is stressing *the means* by which **His** message came: **through a Son**. This time revelation didn't come **through** mere men. This time it did not come **through** angels. This time it came **through a Son**. **Son** is singular in contrast to many **prophets** or many angels.¹⁹

Someone has said that **Jesus Christ** came from the bosom of **the Father** to the bosom of a woman. **He** put on humanity that we might put on divinity. **He** became **the Son of Man** that we might become the children of **God**. **He** was born contrary to the laws of nature, lived in poverty, was reared in obscurity, and only once crossed the boundary of the land in which **He** was born - and that in **His** childhood. **He** had no wealth or influence and had neither training nor education in the world's schools. **His** relatives were inconspicuous and uninfluential. In infancy **He** startled a king. In boyhood **He** puzzled the learned rabbis. In manhood **He** ruled the course of nature. **He** healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for **His** services. **He** never wrote a book and yet all the libraries of the world could not hold the books written about **Him**. **He** never wrote a song, yet **He** has furnished the theme for more songs than all the songwriters together. **He** never founded a college, yet all the schools together cannot boast of as many students as **He** has. **He** never practiced medicine and yet **He** has healed more people than all the hospitals in the world. This **Yeshua Messiah** is **the Star** of astronomy, **the Rock** of geology, **the lion and the lamb** of zoology, **the Harmonizer** of all discords, and **the Healer** of all diseases. Throughout history great men have come and gone, yet **He** lives on. Herod could not kill **Him**. The Adversary could not tempt **Him**. Death could not destroy **Him** and the grave could not hold **Him**.²⁰

But before **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** identifies **[the] Son** as **Jesus Christ**, **He** describes features that demonstrate **His** superiority. In a series of **seven** examples, which are part of a single Greek sentence, the author sets forth **the Son's** greatness.

1. He is appointed heir of all things (1:2b NET). This points to **His** being the focal point of the universe because **He** is the goal of history. **He** is the end **of all things**. **Revelation 5** pictures **Jesus** with the title deed to the earth in **His** hand (see the commentary on **Revelation**, to see link click **Cf - You Are Worthy To Take the Scroll**). It is the deed for **the Heir, the One** who has the right to take the earth. **He** is an **heir**, and that means lordship. **He** is exercising **the Father's** authority, and so being **appointed heir of all things** means **He** is exercising

universal lordship. And to be able to exercise universal lordship over all creation means **He** cannot be less than **God**. **He** came as a man, but **He** came as a **God-Man**, and **He** was appointed **heir** in keeping with **Psalm 2:7-8: He said to Me, "You are My Son (and in Isra'el it was the firstborn son who had the right of inheritance); today I have become your Father. Ask Me, and I will make the nations Your inheritance, the ends of the earth Your possession."**²¹

2. He created the ages (1:2c CJB). The common Greek word for universe is *kosmos*, but that is not the word used here. The word **ages** here is *aionas*, meaning that **the Son** was in control of **the Father's** plan and program for all eternity. Everything in time and space are under **His** control. Rabbi Sha'ul says it this way: **For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities. All things have been created through Him and for Him (Colossians 1:16).** The expression **through Him** indicates that **the universe** was created through an intermediary, which is not an idea foreign to Judaism (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Af - The Memra of God**). Also, the idea of *aionas* is not merely the vastness and majesty of the universe, but that **Yeshua** was the intermediary of **God's plan** as it unfolded down through **the ages**. Therefore, **the Son** is **the Divine Agent** not only of the original creation of the physical universe, but also in the operation and management of that universe and all its creatures down through the ages of time. And that makes **Him** greater than **the prophets**.²²

3. He is the radiance of the Sh'khinah glory, the visible manifestation of the presence of **God (1:3a CJB)**. **Jesus is the radiance of God's glory.** Therefore, **the Son** reveals the fullness of **God's** attributes because **He** has an unbroken connection with **the Father**. So **ADONAI's glory** is best seen in **Yeshua Messiah**. **Yeshua is the light of the world** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Gr - I AM the Light of the World**) and illuminates **God's** nature. Because of **Jesus**, we are no longer in the dark about what **YHVH** is really like. **Christ** came to the earth so we could fully understand **God's glory**. **The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. And we have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).**²³

4. He is the exact representation of God's essence (1:3b CJB). The words **exact representation** are the transliteration of the Greek word *charakter* and is where we get the English word character. **Jesus** is the very character of **God's**

essence. The Greek word means to have a perfect **representation** of **the divine essence**. It is a word that was used of the engraving tool from which a coin die was made. When the die was pressed against the metal and lifted off, the coin had **the exact representation** of what was on the die. Therefore, **the Son is the exact representation of the Father**. What is true of **God the Father** is true of **God the Son** in every respect. The Bible says that all people, not just believers, possess part of the image of **God (Colossians 1:15a)**.²⁴ That is why murder and abortion are wrong (**Exodus 20:13; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Romans 12:19 James 3:9**). But the image is incomplete and has been damaged and distorted by sin. So **the Father** sent **His Son** on a mission to restore the full image we have lost.²⁵

5. He upholds all that exists by His powerful word (1:3c CJB). **Yeshua** not only *is* the **Word (John 1:1)**, but **He** *voices* a **powerful spoken word** (Greek: *reima*) that **upholds all that exists**. The word **upholds** does not mean just to “hold it,” but to carry it towards a goal, and the present tense means **He** is continuously doing so, even now. All creation has a goal to accomplish a specific purpose and program of **YHVH**, and by means of **His reima, the Son** will make sure creation will reach its goal. **He** controls everything by **His powerful spoken word**.²⁶ Can you imagine what would happen if **Messiah** relinquished **His** sustaining power? The universe would be in chaos. But we need not worry. **Jesus** will finish what **He** started: **He who began a good work in you will carry it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6)**. When your life is given to **Messiah**, **He** holds it and sustains it and one day will take it into **the Father’s** very presence (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ms - The Eternal Security of the Believer**). A life, just as the universe, that is not sustained by **Christ** is chaos.²⁷

6. He made purification of sins through Himself (1:3d CJB). This emphasizes **the Son** being our **Redeemer**. The words **made purification** refer to a priestly work. **Yeshua made purification** by dying. There are four specific aspects of this **purification**. First, it was exclusive, for **He** made it by **Himself** and no one else provided this redemption. Secondly, it was a sacrificial work of cleansing, because **He made purification**. Thirdly, it is a finished work as seen by the use of the Greek aorist participle, which emphasizes something already done, and there is nothing more **He** needs to do to provide **purification** for us. Fourthly, it is not merely an external **purification**, like a ceremonial washing, but a **purification of sins**.²⁸

When **God** saves a sinner. **He** breaks the power of the indwelling sinful nature at

the instant the sinner places his faith in **the Lord Jesus (Romans 6)**. When that believer dies, he loses the sinful nature and is left with a sinless glorified body. **YHVH** also removes the guilt and penalty of **sin** and gives the believer a righteous standing (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Bw - What God Does For Us at the Moment of Faith**). **The Son** made all this possible when **He** died on the Cross. **His** blood delivers the believer from the *power* of **sin** in this present life, and from the *presence* of **sin** in the future life. As our perfect **High Priest**, **His** blood removes the guilt and penalty of **sin** and cleanses us from **its** defilement.²⁹ Yet amazingly, there are people who reject **Him** (see **Ag - The Audience of the book of Hebrews**).

7. When **His** work on the cross was finished, **the Son sat down at the right hand of HaG'dualh BaM'romim, the Majesty of heaven (Hebrews 1:3e CJB quoting Psalm 110:1a CJB)**. In the Bible, **the right hand** is the power side. **Jesus** took **His** place **at the right hand of God**. The marvelous thing about this statement is that **Messiah**, the perfect **High Priest**, **sat down**. This is in great contrast to the Levitical priests. There were no seats in the Tabernacle or Temple. The priest had no place to sit because **YHVH** knew it would never be appropriate. The responsibility of the priests was to sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice, over and over and over again. Therefore, the priests offered sacrifices daily . . . and never sat down. But **Yeshua** offered one sacrifice and said: **It is finished**. **He** then went and **sat down at the right hand of the Father**. **Christ's** one time sacrifice accomplished what could not be accomplished under the Levitical priesthood, even after centuries of sacrifices.

One of the human author's main points in **Hebrews** is that **Jesus** is greater than all those things associated with Judaism and the Jewish way of life. Sometimes he actually uses the words **greater than**; sometimes he does not. But in all cases the theme is clear.

Jesus is greater than the prophets: 1:1-3

Jesus is greater than the angels: 1:4-14, 2:5

Jesus is greater than Moshe: 3:1-6

Jesus is greater than Joshua: 4:6-11

Jesus is greater than the Aaronic high priests: 5:1-10, 7:26 to 8:2

Jesus is greater than the Levitical priests: 6:20 to 7:25

Jesus as High Priest in the order of Melchizedek is greater than Abraham: 7:1-10

Jesus' ministry is greater than the tabernacle ministry: 8:3-6, 9:1-28

Jesus' B'rit Chadashah is greater than the TaNaKh: 8:7-13

Jesus' sacrifice is greater than the sacrifices of the Torah: 10:1-14

Experiencing Jesus is greater than the experience on Mount Sinai: 12:18-24 NIV³⁰

Yeshua honored **the Father** by fulfilling **His** purpose on earth. We honor **ADONAI** the same way. We bring **glory** to **God** by worshiping **Him**, by loving other believers, by becoming like **Christ**, by serving others with our gifts and by telling others about **Him**. Living the rest of your life for **the glory** of **YHVH** will require a change in your priorities, your schedule, your relationships, and everything else. It will sometimes mean choosing a difficult path rather than an easy one. Will you live for your own goals, comfort, and pleasure, or will you live the rest of your life for **God's glory**, knowing that **He** has promised eternal rewards? **Those who love their life in this world will lose it. But those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity (John 12:25 NLT)**. It's time to settle the issue.

Who are you going to live for . . . yourself or **God**? Don't hesitate. Don't worry. **The LORD** will give you what you need if you will just make the choice to live for **Him**. **His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness (Second Peter 1:3)**. Right now, **God** is inviting you to live for **His glory** by fulfilling the purposes **He** made you for. It's really the only way to live. Everything else is just existing. Real life begins by committing yourself completely to **Jesus Christ**. If you are not sure you have done this, all you need to do is **receive** and **believe**. **To all that receive Him, to those who believe in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God (John 1:12)**. Will you accept **God's** offer?

First, **believe**. **Believe ADONAI** loves you and made you for **His** purposes.



Believe you are not an accident. **Believe** that you were made to last forever. **Believe God** has chosen you to have a relationship with **Jesus**, who died on the cross for you. **Believe** that no matter what you've done, **God** wants to forgive you.

Second, **receive**. **Receive Yeshua** into your life as your **Lord** and **Savior**. **Receive His** forgiveness for your **sins**. **Receive His Spirit**, who will give you the power to fulfill your life purpose. The Bible says: **Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life (Yochanan 3:36a)**. Wherever you are right now, I invite you to bow your head and quietly whisper the prayer that will change your eternity, "**Jesus, I believe in You and I receive You**. Amen." Go ahead.

If you sincerely meant that prayer, congratulations! Welcome to the family of **God**.³¹