

Hebrews 1: 1-4; “Christ – The Heir of All Things”, A Sermon for the Christmas Season, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 9th, 2018, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

This book of Hebrews was written in order that all the Jewish believers in Christ might see the greatness and the glory of Christ in His Person and His work; His fulfilling of the Mosaic law and the Old Covenant, and His bringing to Israel a New Covenant by His finished work, by which they would most certainly be saved if they held the truth fast and they continued to believe in Him. Ultimately, this book was not simply written for Jewish believers; it was written for us Gentiles as well. Because, now that the Lord Jesus has accomplished this great work of redemption, He has ascended to heaven to sit at God’s right hand, and it is from that exalted position of governing the world as the King of glory, that He will someday come and gather all of God’s people to Himself as an everlasting possession, as His inheritance. He has become the Great High Priest of all Jewish and Gentile believers to intercede for them because they, as an inheritance, belong to Him even now.

And so, it will be good for us if we can understand where these things had their beginning and how we should view Christ now, as being the heir of all things; and also what this will mean for us in the future, as we draw nearer to eternal glory. Verse 4 says that, “Christ has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name.” He was appointed to have this name above every name by God the Father so that we might be worshipful; so that we might come and worship and adore Him today, the One who has come into the world to save sinners. At this Christmas season we should remember that Jesus, as the Father’s gift to a perishing world, is also the heir of all things throughout all the history of this world and into eternity.

1st of all – I would have you to see that He was appointed Heir of all things from before the foundation of the world. (verses 1 and 2)

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.” God has spoken and He has appointed. Our God is a God who speaks. But He is not a God who has spoken capriciously; that is, that He somehow might speak or act in an impulsive or unpredictable way. Rather, we know from His creation of the World that when He spoke; He spoke wisely. He spoke in an orderly way, and the things of earth and all of the creation came into being. And they came into being according to a wisely ordained plan which He had from all of eternity, which is called His “counsel”, or His decrees.

Jeremiah 32, verse 17 says, “Ah, Lord God!” “Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm.” “There is nothing too hard for You.” “You show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts.” “You are great in counsel and mighty in work, for your eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings.” In our text, when it says, “In times past”, it is referring to the revelation of God which was given by the prophets to “the fathers”, and it was given to them in the times before Christ came. That is; there were certain men who were given direct revelation from God, and these men communicated the very words which came to them from God, to certain of the people of those ancient times. They communicated His Word by direct inspiration of God to “the fathers”.

This meant not only Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but it also meant the whole body of the Jewish leaders and people during Old Testament times. Indeed, many of the fathers themselves were prophets. Speaking of Abraham in Genesis 10, verse 7, God says to Abimelech, “Restore

the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you, and you shall live." God spoke to His prophets; men who knew Him and who communicated to people around them, not only things about the future, but also God's will, when they spoke to others.

He spoke to them at various times; the word is "Πολυμερος" (polumeros) in the Greek. It means "in many parts". The revelation that was given in those Old Testament times was not given all at once; but over a long period of time. These prophecies were given from the beginning of the world to the days of Malachi, when prophecy ceased, four hundred years before Christ. It ceased for a time, because the people of Israel; God's Elect people, were waiting for the Messiah whom the prophets had all prophesied of. The people were waiting for the Son of God; the Lord Jesus Christ. At various times during this Old Testament time period, there were these portions of truth that were given to men who were called of God to the office of a prophet, and in terms of the future, they often had to do with the Promised Seed who was to come; the Lord Jesus Christ, as we shall see in our study in just a few minutes.

God also gave His Word to the fathers in various ways. "πολυτροπος" (polutropos) is the word in the Greek. It means that God did not always choose to reveal His will and His Word in the same way each time, to His prophets. Listen to Numbers 12: 6-8 – "If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream." "Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house." "I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the Lord." God spoke to Moses in an audible voice, and as it were, face to face. It was very plain and clear. He spoke to others of the prophets in their dreams and they proclaimed; not only things to come, but also his present will in regard to the obedience of individual people and nations.

This is how eventually the Old Testament Scriptures came to be written down. To be a prophet involved a certain and definite call from God Himself, in order to become His servant in the preaching and teaching. The great responsibility of the man called, was the declaration, and explanation of the verbal or the written Word that was given to them by a voice, or in a dream or a vision. This word did not come from themselves, and it did not come from the evil spirits; this prophetic Word was spoken or given by God Himself, and His servants the prophets received it and delivered it to the people. It was something that came to them by the Spirit's delivery of it to them. It was the burden that they bore; it was a fire burning in their bones, until they had delivered it faithfully. Their calling was for God to speak through them and by them.

Sometimes people like to quarrel with God over the way that He reveals Himself to men. They do not want a Word from God which is backed by His authority. They want a Word from God which they can modify or change at their pleasure. They sometimes want to become prophets themselves, even though the gift of prophecy has ceased. They want God's truth to be subject to their evaluation and their opinions of it. But all these are sinful impulses in the fallen hearts of men. Christ our Lord never acted in this way. God has given His Word to be heard and to be obeyed. He gave it to be trusted in, and depended upon, and lived out in all the situations of our life. This is what Christ did. God spoke and Christ lived out the Father's Word perfectly. It is for us to learn by Christ's grace to do the same; to learn to receive the truth of God's Word; to do it and keep it, by the power of Christ.

Let me ask you whether you have a good readable copy of the Scriptures? Do you treat this great revelation which God has given to you, with the reverence it deserves. Is it the Holy Bible to you? No other book can claim to be such. No other book can speak to the eternal and everlasting needs of your soul, except the Bible. Therefore, it is for you to receive the preaching of it, because it teaches you your need of Christ. And it will be good for you if you go away from here meditating upon it day and night. "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate upon it day and night that you may do according to all that is written

therein.” “For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1: 9) God has spoken in His Word in times past to the fathers by the prophets.

2nd – Christ was appointed heir of all things even from the time of His Incarnation.

“In these last days God has spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things.” These “last days” does not refer to the latter times of this present Church age. It refers to the whole of the New Testament Church age. It refers to the time of Jesus Christ’s Incarnation; His coming into this world, and His inaugurating “the last times” in which we currently live. “In these last days God has spoken to us by His Son.” We have seen in our study so far, that God spoke to the fathers; mostly the Jewish men of Old Testament times, in many parts and portions. These revelations of God were eventually written down for the prophets and priests to read and to study for themselves, and then to apply to the people in their teaching. And so through their study of the Old Testament Word, what they were supposed to teach the people; was that God in His Word was speaking concerning His Son, and the Everlasting Kingdom that He would bring in, through the Father sending Him into this world in the incarnation. Isaiah 7: 14 – “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel”, which is explained in Matthew 1: 22 as meaning, “God with us.”

Michael Card, a contemporary Christian songwriter says it this way in His song, *The Final Word*. “God spoke the Incarnation and so was born the Son.” “His final word was Jesus, He needed no other one.” “Spoke flesh and blood so He could bleed and make a way Divine.” “And so was born the baby who would die to make it mine.” This is good. The Lord Jesus Christ is God’s final Word. This is what Father was saying when He wove the Lord Jesus in Mary’s womb. He was saying that sinful men must have a Savior if they would have eternal life. God spoke, and this is what He was saying that He would do for sinful men; He would send His only begotten Son to die so that sinners believing in Him might be saved. He needs not to say anything more than what He said when He gave Him. But in saying this to you, I must also say that this was only the beginning of what would be spoken by men concerning Jesus Christ; God’s final Word, and the value of what He came to do for us. He would become the ultimate and final Prophet to teach us; the ultimate and final Priest to save us from our sins and intercede for us; and the ultimate and final King, not only for the Jews, but also for all mankind who would come to find the grace to seek Him. He would be our Prophet to come and teach us of how we can inherit all things by faith in Him.

Turn with me over to Deuteronomy Chapter 18, verse 15. Moses says here – “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren.” “Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’” “And the Lord said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good.’” “I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.” “And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.”

The prophet whom Moses prophesied of, was the Lord Jesus Christ. For Peter quotes this passage in his message given to the people after he had healed a lame man in Acts 3. He even built upon it by his saying toward the end of his sermon in verse 23: “And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” “Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.” Now this was how God has chosen to reveal Himself; not only to Old Testament Israel, but to us Gentiles as well. But listen to verse 9 of Deuteronomy chapter 18. Here you find a warning given to them. “When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.” “There shall not

be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritualist, or one who calls up the dead.” “For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. “You shall be blameless before the Lord your God.” “For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you.”

Let me apply this, in this holy way. Do you want to really come to know God? Then do not be deceived about how God speaks to you, and how you need to be taught by Him. God speaks to you by means of showing you Christ, in His written Word; both Old Testament and New, which Word was given directly to His prophets, and then subsequently, they wrote it down for the Jews. But Jesus came into this fallen world of sin and woe, not only for Jews, but for us Gentiles as well. He came to teach by His words and His life; everything that God wanted you to know about how to know Him and glorify Him. Do you see Jesus as the spoken Word of God? Do you see the Bible in this holy way; as the Word of God which faithfully represents Christ as the heir of all things, and the only way that you can inherit eternal life, and be saved, and find direction for everything in your life? Is He your prophet to teach you? If He is not, you must be thinking that that you know better than God.

Let me ask you this: Do you really think that there are other ways to find, and to know, and to walk with God? Do you seek for the soothsayers and the diviners, and the philosophers of this world? Or do you seek to have God speak to you through Christ and those whom He has appointed; His apostles? Satan speaks through diviners and philosophers. And in listening to them, and reading their writings, your mind and your heart come to be filled with wrong thinking about life, and about God. You come to have wrong thoughts about yourself and your own supposed ability to guide yourself. God speaks to you through Christ, and what Christ has given to you through His prophets and apostles in terms of the truth. God has spoken to this world through Christ and through His giving to all who will hear, the final and complete revelation of Himself His will in Jesus. But if you will trust in your own wisdom, or what is even worse, to the false spirituality of Satan, what does God say to you? Isaiah 8, verse 19 says, “And when they say to you, ‘Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter, should not a people seek their God?’ “Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?” “To the law and to the testimony!” “If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them!”

God speaks to men through His prophetic Word – The Bible. And the Bible itself speaks of Christ, the Son of God who came into this world to bear witness to the truth which God would have you to know. God has spoken to this fallen world of sinners and told them that in Jesus He has given to us His final word, appointing Jesus to be our great High Priest; our only Savior and Lord; the only way to God Himself; the only way to eternal life. When you hear that Jesus was born in a stable, and wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger, what does this say to you? It says that God has spoken by His sending His Son Jesus into this world, for the lowliest of persons, the most disadvantaged of persons; to the most needy and sinful of persons. He has given Him in this way to show you that even if you see yourself as a beast before God in your sins, that still He has been given for you, to spiritually feed upon Him by faith.

He has given Him for you the sinner, so that He might obey God’s law fully in your place , and satisfy all the righteous demands of it perfectly. He even gave Him to die as a sacrifice; offering Himself up on the cross for your sins, so that you might believe and have eternal life as a gift. This was God speaking by Christ to you. He is saying: Whatever kind of sinful person you have been, and whatever you have done to try to make up for it, will not be enough. I have spoken My final word on this subject in Christ. You should know that God’s final word is this:

You cannot be saved by the works of the law, or by your trying to merit favor by anything you do yourself, or by anything that you have done for you by some earthly priest. Therefore come directly to Jesus, because Jesus saves.

Turn over with me to Hebrews Chapter 7, verse 19. Here we find the apostle saying – “For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” “And inasmuch as Jesus was not made priest without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: “The Lord has sworn and will not relent, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Mechizedek’”), by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.” “Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.” “But He, because He continues forever has an unchangeable priesthood.” “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” “For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, (under the law) to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.” “For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.”

This, my beloved friends, is how God has spoken by His Son. He appointed Him a priest and He appointed Him to be your High Priest forever. You can tell Him of all your sins. You need not go to the Catholic priest. You have a High Priest who has been perfected forever by His sufferings on the cross for you. He learned obedience from the things that He suffered, and He will see to it that by His blood, all of your sins shall be cleansed and purged away, and He will intercede for you when your faith is small, or weak, or failing. God has spoken to us by His Son. And He is still speaking to us by Him.

3rd – Christ is declared the heir of all things by His Session at the right hand of the Father. (verse 3)

Verse 3 says that Christ is “the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...” When the Father spoke in His decretal appointments before the foundation of the world, and begot, or brought forth the Person of the Son, He was begetting His Son in relation to this greatest of all missions; the salvation of a people for His own possession; that all who would believe in His Son would be His possession and Christ’s inheritance.

This is proved by the High-Priestly Prayer of Jesus in John 17: 1 and 2. “Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come.’ “Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.” There are two things to note here in relation to these verses. Christ’s being the heir of all things was the Father’s definite appointment; not only something that He decreed in a general sense before time began; but more particularly in the very tangible sense that that His inheritance is specifically related to those whom He would give eternal life to, by means of His loving work of obedience rendered to the Father. I hope that you can see from these verses that Christ’s was a particular redemption of persons. These persons had been given to Christ before the foundation of the World. They and everything related to them and their future everlasting good, are the “all things” that Christ is heir to.

This authority which was given to Christ over all flesh, relates not only to His right to give salvation to the Elect, but also that He will be the final judge over all men at the last day when He returns. This inheritance which Christ will receive will be a righteous and a holy inheritance.

We shall be changed to be like Him. Everything material and physical in the New Heavens and the New Earth, and everything wonderful and spiritual in the fellowship between Christ and ourselves, His Church, has been planned for by the Father, and it will be established by the Father, to the praise of His glorious grace. This grace was purchased by Christ through His sufferings, and so He will increasingly receive the reward of His sufferings in His inheritance all during this present Church Age. Isaiah 53: 11 – “He shall see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.” “By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many.” Christ’s sufferings were very great. But He has come to know, and He will increasingly come to know, that it was worth all the pain; all the travail of His soul. This goodly inheritance of “all things” was appointed to Him by the Father. And the Father’s justice and judgment against all the sins of His people has been fully satisfied. And so, all of the justice and judgment that have been given to the Son that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, is a part of His inheritance.

Further, I hope that you understand that all of the plans for the Son’s inheriting of all things are presently being fulfilled. And they will continue to be fulfilled in progression, according to the Father’s will. The Father said to the Lord Jesus in Psalm 110, verse 1 – “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” This sitting at the Father’s right hand is called His Session. He is presently reigning, but His Church is not yet reigning. And so His inheritance of seeing conversion work among the nations through the efforts of many Christians preaching and sharing the gospel, is not yet completely gathered in. The Lord Jesus will not come back until the Father has put all of His, and His Church’s enemies, under His feet. The Father has ordained that Christ will have dominion over all the kingdoms and nations of this world. And so, when He returns a second time, He will return to those who eagerly await Him. He will return apart from sin, and for our everlasting salvation. (Hebrews 9: 28)

When He comes back, then will come the resurrection from the dead, and the end of all things as we know them now. 1st Corinthians 15: 24 – “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.” “For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.” At that time, Christ who has become the heir of all things, will present to the Father His kingdom; the kingdom which the Father had first given to Him. And then God will become “all in all”, it says there. But even as Jesus walked the earth and worked and labored for the salvation of God’s Elect people; this inheritance was in His holy mind.

As I close this message, I hope that you will remember, at this season as Christmas approaches, that Jesus was born a King. He, the King of Glory, found Himself in the lowliest of settings, as a Babe lying in a manger. Yet He, the One who was destined to inherit all things, humbled Himself; being content to be the Word which the Father had spoken; to be a righteous man who had come to live among sinful men. “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory; glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” This same Jesus will one day become the greatest of Kings over all the earth; and that which was given Him, He will inherit. He will be a great King over all the earth someday, and His name be the only One. But let us remember that the Father once spoke the Word and He who was the King of Glory was born a baby in the stable at Bethlehem, that you might be part of His eternal inheritance.

