

# Hebrews 1 Questions

## QUESTIONS FOR HEBREWS 1

What is this? On this page you will find "Who, What, Where, Why, When, How" questions to help you either personally study this chapter or aid you in leading a discussion on this chapter. Note that the 5W/H questions focus on [observation](#) of the text. The better you become at carefully observing the text, the more accurate will be your [Interpretation](#).

The questions are generally very simple and are stated in such a way as to stimulate you to observe the text to discern the answer. As a reminder, given the truth that our ultimate Teacher is the Holy Spirit, begin your time with God with a prayer such as Psalm 119:12+ "Blessed are You, O LORD; Teach me Your statutes." (you can vary it with similar prayers - Ps 119:18, 26, 33, 64, 66, 68, 108, 124, 135, 171, etc) A few questions have no answers and are left to your observations and the illuminating/teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Some qualifying thoughts - (1) use "As is" (2) Some questions may not be the best question for a given verse and my guess is that on some verses you will think of a far superior 5W/H questions and/or many other questions.

Dr Howard Hendricks once gave an assignment to his seminary students to list as many observations as they could from Acts 1:8+. He said "So far they've come up with more than 600 different ones! Imagine what fun you could have with 600 observations on this passage. Would you like to see Scripture with eyes like that?" (P. 63 [Living by the Book](#) - borrow) With practice you can begin to read Scripture like that! And needless to say, you will likely make many more observations and related questions than I have recorded below. Indeed, I pray that the Holy Spirit would lead you to discover a veritable treasure chest of observations and questions! In Jesus' Name. Amen

Why am I doing this? **Mortimer Adler** among others helped me develop a questioning mindset as I read, seeking to read actively rather than passively. Over the years I have discovered that as I have practiced reading with a 5W/H questioning mindset, it has yielded more accurate interpretation and the good fruit of meditation. In other words, consciously interacting with the inspired Holy Word of God and the illuminating Holy Spirit has honed my ability to meditate on the Scripture, and my prayer is that this tool will have the same impact in your spiritual life. The benefits of meditation are literally priceless in regard to their value in this life and in the life to come (cf discipline yourself for godliness in 1Ti 4:8+.) For some of the benefits - see Joshua 1:8+ and Psalm 1:2-3+. It will take diligence and mental effort to develop an "inductive" ([especially an "observational"](#)), interrogative mindset as you read God's Word, but it bears repeating that the benefits in this life and the rewards in the next will make it more than worth the effort you invest! Dear Christian reader let me encourage you to strongly consider learning the skills of [inductive Bible study](#) and spending the rest of your life practicing them on the Scriptures and living them out in your daily walk with Christ.

Although Mortimer Adler's advice is from a secular perspective, his words are worth pondering...

*Strictly, all reading is active. What we call passive is simply less active. Reading is better or worse according as it is more or less active. And one reader is better than another in proportion as he is capable of a greater range of activity in reading.* (Adler's classic book [How to Read a Book is free online](#))

[John Piper](#) adds that "Insight or understanding is the product of intensive, headache-producing meditation on two or three verses and how they fit together. This kind of reflection and rumination is provoked by asking questions of the text. And you cannot do it if you hurry. Therefore, we must resist the deceptive urge to carve notches in our bibliographic gun. Take two hours to ask ten questions of Galatians 2:20+ and you will gain one hundred times the insight you would have attained by reading thirty pages of the New Testament or any other book. Slow down. Query. Ponder. Chew.... (John Dewey rightly said) "People only truly think when they are confronted with a problem. Without some kind of dilemma to stimulate thought, behavior becomes habitual rather than thoughtful."

*"Asking questions is the key to understanding."*

--Jonathan Edwards

That said, below are the [5W/H questions](#) for this chapter.

**Hebrews 1:1** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

**HOW** is this epistle's opening different from most NT epistles (including Paul's)? Begins with **GOD**. **ALL** 13 of Paul's epistles begin with "PAUL..." (Only Genesis and John begin with focus on **GOD**)

(Addendum question - What does that suggest about who wrote Hebrews? Many are dogmatic that it was Paul, but others are more uncertain reminding me of Paul's promise in 1Cor 13:12+ that "now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I **know in part**, but **then I will know fully** just as I also have been fully known." (See note by William Barclay)

**WHAT is first time phrase/word?** [AFTER](#) (just to make sure they observe it)

**WHAT is the next time phrase?** LONG AGO

**WHAT does LONG AGO mean or imply?** In context = OT

**WHO did the prophets address?** The fathers.

**WHO are the FATHERS & WHAT is the implication?** OT Jewish fathers (could be the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob but cannot be dogmatic). Supports target audience is Jewish.

(TEST YOUR SKILL @ [observation](#)) **What is a KEY WORD in Heb 1:1-2?** IN = 5 times.

(EXTRA CREDIT) **WHEN did God first speak in Bible?** Genesis 1:3 – "Let there be light"

**WHAT kind of revelation does this (God speaking) describe (natural or special)?** [Special revelation](#)

**WHAT does the first IN signify? In other words, WHAT does it mean that God spoke IN the prophets?** Spirit of God **IN**spired their writings – **GOOD XR** = 2Pe 1:21+ "for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." Also 2Ti 3:16NIV+ = "All Scripture is God-breathed..."

**WHAT does "IN MANY PORTIONS" ([polumeros](#))** (Note other translations slightly different - ESV, NIV = "at many times") **describe?** God spoke at different times over an extended period of time.

**HOW coherent or interrelated were God's words despite being spoken over "many times"?** Coherent, not contradictory or confusing. (EXTRA - **WHAT doctrine regarding revelation does this support?** [Verbal plenary inspiration](#) = every word divinely inspired for it to be so coherent over time).

**WHAT does IN MANY WAYS ([polutropos](#)) signify? WHAT are some examples of the WAYS?** Elijah in a still, small voice, Moses in the burning bush, etc, Also includes different genres – historical books, poetry, prophecy, etc

**Hebrews 1:2** in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the world.

**WHAT is the obvious time phrase?** Last days

**WHEN (WHAT) is the Last Days?** (**LAST** = [eschatos](#) gives us [eschatology](#) = study of last things) In context = when God has spoken in His Son. He began to speak thru His Son when His Son was incarnate (Jn 8:38+). MOST commentaries feel it is the time that began at His First & ends at His Second Coming.

**WHAT is the tense of the verb HAS SPOKEN & how does this relate to divine revelation?** [aorist tense](#) in context = Past tense = completed action emphasizing finality & completeness. Upshot? No more Biblical revelation. [Canon is closed](#).

**WHAT does this teach about Jesus' SUPERIORITY TO THE PROPHETS OT men who were revered by the Jews?** The prophets received only fragmentary revelation, but **in the Son** is full and final revelation

**WHAT does it mean that God HAS SPOKEN in His Son? HOW would you explain that to someone?** When He was on earth He spoke the Words His Father gave Him to speak (Jn 8:28+).

**WHAT about those people who say they have "NEW revelation"?** They don't! They are false. Beware of those who say "I have a word from God!"

**HOW does God speak today?** Primarily He speaks through His Word illuminated by His Spirit but [He does not give new revelation](#).

**WHAT was the Son's inheritance?** EVERYTHING!

**HOW might that affect us?** We are heirs OF EVERYTHING because we are fellow heirs with Christ in Ro

8:17+!

**WHAT did the Father do THROUGH the Son?** Made the world (LITERALLY = made the ages = upshot is He created BOTH matter & time!)

**WHAT does this tell us about Who was involved in creation?** Father and Son were involved (cf Spirit Ge 1:2+ - ultimately [the Trinity](#))

**WHAT parallel truth did we learn in Colossians 1:15-18+?** ([READ SCRIPTURE](#))

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For (term of explanation - explains "firstborn" does not mean first created like Jehovah's Witnesses teach) by Him all things (HOW MANY?) were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities (WHO ARE THESE DESCRIBING? ANGELIC POWERS)—all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

**Hebrews 1:3** And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

**WHAT is the first description of Jesus in Heb 1:3+?** Greek = [apaugasma](#) – OUTSHINING, EFFULGENCE – NAS translation better than RSV = "He is the **reflection** of God's glory." The moon reflects the sun. But here the Son is not a reflection but an outshining. The Son has intrinsic glory!

**WHAT is this describing? WHAT is radiance?** Jesus is the very manifestation of God (Jn 10:30+) or as [Nicene Creed](#) says "GOD OF GOD, LIGHT OF LIGHT, VERY GOD OF VERY GOD."

**WHAT is glory ([doxa](#))?** A proper opinion – the manifestation of all the divine attributes of God are seen in Jesus

**WHO do you see when you see Jesus?** God the Father

**HOW do John 14:9+ help explain this truth?** (READ Jn 14:9+).

**WHAT is the second description of Jesus in Heb 1:3+?**

**WHAT is exact representation?** [charakter](#) - A die presses its exact image into the coin, so the coin shows what the die is like. In the same way, Jesus shows us what God is like.

**WHAT is the 3<sup>RD</sup> description of Jesus in Heb 1:3+?** Upholds (present tense = continually) ALL (how many/much?) things by the word ([rhema](#) = spoken word) of His power (dunamis) cf Lk 1:37ASV+ "For no word ([rhema](#)) from God shall be void of power ([adunateo](#))

**WHAT does Jesus do with His creation?** Upholds it continually!

**HOW?** By His spoken Word ([rhema](#)) = it has intrinsic power (Heb 4:12+ it is "living and active")

**WHAT attribute of Jesus?** [Omnipotence](#)

**HOW does this compare with Col 1:17+?** "in Him **ALL** things hold together"

QUOTE - Consider the dilemma of the nuclear physicist when he finally looks in utter amazement at the pattern he had now drawn of the oxygen nucleus.... For here are eight positively charged protons closely associated together within the confines of this tiny nucleus. With them are eight neutrons—a total of sixteen particles—eight positively charged, eight with no charge. Earlier physicists had discovered that like charges of electricity and like magnetic poles repel each other, and unlike charges or magnetic poles attract each other. And the entire history of electrical phenomena and electrical equipment had been built up on these principles known as Coulomb's law of electrostatic force and the law of magnetism. What was wrong? What holds the nucleus together? Why doesn't it fly apart? And therefore, why do not all atoms fly apart?

**APPLICATION - HOW can we apply this truth to our life when it feels like it is falling apart?**

**WHAT is the 4<sup>TH</sup> description of Jesus in Heb 1:3+?**

**WHAT** does made purification of sins refer to? (Note verb is past tense, completed act) The Cross (Jn 19:30+ It is finished = [tetelestai](#))

**WHY** did He sit at the right hand of the Majesty? Father honored the Son - Work of redemption finished – Father “highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the Name that is above every name”

Php 2:9+ (**IF YOU HAVE TIME MIGHT READ** Phil 2:5-11+ and ask what does “**FORM**” mean = [morphe](#) = emphasizes external is same as internal – speaks of nature THUS Php 2:6+ = “**FORM** ([morphe](#)) of God” = nature of God or FULLY GOD & in Php 2:7+ “**FORM** ([morphe](#)) of a bond-servant” = FULLY MAN)

**WHAT** does the verb “**SIT**” imply? Work of redemption finished -- The Levitical priests could not sit down when they offered the blood sacrifice on the Mercy Seat in the Holy of holies (Lev 16:14-17+) because there was no chair & mainly because the work of atonement was never accomplished with the blood of bulls and goats which could never take away sins (Heb 10:11+)!

**Hebrews 1:4** having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

**WHAT** is the comparison between? Jesus & angels

(HARDER QUESTION – MAY WAIT UNTIL CHAPTER 2) **WHEN** did He become better than the angels (CHECK CONTEXT = SAT DOWN AT RIGHT HAND...)? In context when He was exalted, He became better. For a little while He was lower than the angels (Heb 2:9+) – that is for 30+ years as a Man He was a little lower explaining why He then became “much better than the angels.”

**WHY** is Jesus better than the angels? Inherited a more excellent Name.

**Hebrews 1:5** FOR to which of the angels did He ever say, “YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU”(Ps 2:7)? And again, “I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME (2Sa 7:14)”

**WHAT** is the term of explanation? For ([gar](#))

**WHAT** is the writer explaining? **Why** Jesus has more excellent Name than the angels

**WHO** is “HE” in these passages? God the Father (Same in Heb 1:5, 6, 7, implied in Heb 1:8)

**WHAT** does the writer appeal to in order to support his argument that Jesus has a MORE EXCELLENT NAME? OT Scriptures

**HOW** can you tell which parts of the text are OT quotations? All caps but only in the NASB

**WHAT** is he quoting? From Psalm 2 and from 2Sa 7:14

**WHO** is speaking in these Old Testament quotes? God

**WHAT** is the first argument that Jesus has a more excellent name than angels? God calls Jesus **SON**, His only Son – God never calls an individual angel SON! (“sons of God” as in Job 38:7 but never the Son of God)

**WHAT** is next related argument? God reiterates He is Father and Jesus is His Son (quoting Davidic Covenant) Implication is God never says He is Father of angels.

**Hebrews 1:6** And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, “AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.” (Ps 97:7, a few favor Dt 32:43)

**WHAT** does this passage from Ps 97:7 prove? God **COMMANDS** Jesus to be worshipped by angels. Angels are not to be worshipped = Revelation 19:10 - *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*

**WHAT is FIRSTBORN** and how do the cults misinterpret this, e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses who teach Jesus was the first to be born? READ Col 1:15, then Col 1:16. First born is not about TIME but about POSITION! The pre-eminent one! Remember Esau was "firstborn" but Jacob got the inheritance.

**TEACHING POINT ABOUT HOW TRANSLATIONS CAN LEAD TO DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS** – Regarding placement of "AGAIN". KJV = "And AGAIN, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world" This suggests 1<sup>st</sup> Coming. Note – ESV is like KJV "And AGAIN, when He brings the firstborn into the world." NAS suggests 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

**Hebrews 1:7** And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE" (**Ps 104:4**) (

**WHY is the Son superior to the angels?** (1) He made (created) them (2) they are His possession = "HIS angels" and (3) they serve Him not vice versa

**HOW should winds and fire be interpreted – literal/figurative?** Most take figurative – fast like wind/destructive like fire. A few writers in past have said angels can be turned into wind, but most do not agree today.

**Hebrews 1:8** But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

**WHY is the Son superior? God says...**

(1) He has a throne – no angel ever described with a throne (angels are in the throne room but never seated on the throne). Speaks of Jesus' authority and sovereignty

(2) The Father definitively calls the Son "GOD"

**NOTE:** Jehovah's Witnesses mistranslate Hebrews 1:8 as "God is your throne forever and ever" and thus obscuring the truth of the text that Jesus is God!

**Robert Bowman** comments that to Jehovah's Witnesses' knowingly mistranslate Hebrews 1:8 - "The second way in which the New World Translation (NWT) has systematically abused the Divine Names or titles is its handling of texts in which Jesus is called God. In nine Bible texts Jesus is definitely called God (Isa 9:6, Jn 1:1, 18, Jn 20:28, Ro 9:5, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8, 2Pe 1:1, 1 Jn 5:20, possibly also Acts 20:28). Of these, the New World Translation translates four so that Jesus is NOT CALLED GOD AT ALL (Ro 9:5, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8, 2 Peter 1:1) and two so that He is "a god" or "god" (little "g") (John 1:1, 18). The remaining 3 texts are not mistranslated, but are interpreted so that either Jesus is not called God at all or He is called God only in some lesser sense. In short, the NWT translates texts that call Jesus God in such a way as to keep the text from making that identification." (BORROW [Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses : why they read the Bible the way they do](#))

**WHAT was Jesus' own claim in Jn 10:30-33** (READ) and **WHAT was the response?** Oneness with God therefore claiming deity which Jews recognized by attempting to stone Him!

(IF YOU HAVE TIME) **WHAT does Isaiah 9:6 teach about the Son?** He is "Mighty God"!

**Hebrews 1:9** "YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS."

**WHY the "therefore"?** Bc Jesus loved righteousness and hated lawlessness

**WHO is "GOD, YOUR GOD"?** The Father

**WHO are the companions Jesus is over?** In context = angels

[Hebrews 1:10](#) And, “YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; (Ps 102:25-27 quoted in Heb 1:10,11,12)

WHY is Jesus superior to the angels in this verse? He is Creator

[Hebrews 1:11](#) THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT,

WHAT happens to creation? WHAT's the term of comparison/simile? “like a garment”

WHAT is “but” contrasting? Jesus will “REMAIN”

[Hebrews 1:12](#) AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.”

WHAT will the Son do to His creation? Discard it and change it (new heaven, new earth)

WHAT else do we learn about the Son? Immutable, eternal

[Hebrews 1:13](#) But to which of the angels has He ever said, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET”? ([Ps 110:1](#))

WHAT is the description of Jesus? At right hand of His Father – place of authority and as victor over all.

[Hebrews 1:14](#) Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

WHAT are angels? Ministering spirits

WHO sends them out? God/Jesus

TO WHOM do they render service? believers

WHAT are some examples of render service? Angel shut lion's mouth in Daniel, etc.