

## Ye Who the Name of Jesus Bear

Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

Ye who the name of Jesus bear,  
his sacred steps pursue;  
And let that mind which was in him  
be also found in you.

Though in the form of God he was,  
his only Son declared,  
Nor to be equally adored  
as robb'ry did regard;

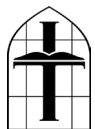
His greatness he for us abased,  
for us his glory veiled;  
In human likeness dwelt on earth,  
his majesty concealed:

Nor only as a man appears,  
but stoops a servant low;  
Submits to death, nay, bears the cross,  
in all its shame and woe.

Hence God this gen'rous love to men  
with honours just hath crowned,  
And raised the name of Jesus far  
above all names renowned:

That at this name, with sacred awe,  
each humble knee should bow  
Of hosts immortal in the skies,  
and nations spread below:

That all the prostrate pow'rs of hell  
might tremble at his word,  
And ev'ry tribe, and ev'ry tongue,  
confess that he is Lord.



*In the Nick of Time* is published by Central Baptist Theological Seminary.

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July 11, 2025

ΤΩ ΧΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ

## *In the Nick of Time*

### The Opening of Hebrews

Charles A. Hauser, Jr (with Kevin T. Bauder)

Charles Hauser was for many years the academic vice president of Central Baptist Theological Seminary. He is now with the Lord, but before he died, he left behind a rough manuscript for a commentary on Hebrews. He gave Kevin Bauder the job of getting that commentary in order for publication. That task is now nearing completion. As a sample, here is Dr. Hauser's commentary on the opening verse of the book.

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<sup>1</sup>God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup>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. (Heb. 1:1–2)

The book of Hebrews opens its exhortation by setting up a contrast. On the one hand is the revelation that God gave in the past. On the other is the revelation that has now come through Jesus Christ. Unlike the pagan gods of the Gentiles, the true and living God was not silent in the past. Indeed, He spoke on many occasions, so the fact that God spoke is not the point of the contrast. Neither is the truth or falsehood of what was said. What God said in the past was always true and never needed to be corrected.

The point of the contrast is emphasized by the words *portions* and *ways*. These are important terms. They are only used here in all the New Testament. The author puts them at the beginning of his sentence to emphasize them.

Both terms are compound words. The first, *portions*, joins the word for *many* with the word for *parts*; during the Old Testament God's revelation arrived in many parts. No prophet had all of God's revelation, for each revelation was only a part of what God wanted people to know. The second term, *ways*, joins the word for *many* with the word for *manner* or *way*. God used many ways to communicate His truth during the Old Testament. Sometimes He spoke through visions or dreams. Other times He wrote in stone, spoke in an audible voice, or used some other mechanism.

In the days of the Old Testament, God's revelation arrived in many pieces and in many ways. The author is not suggesting that this revelation was bad or false. On the contrary, it was true, as far as it went. Nevertheless, the prophets who communicated it were sinful men with limited understanding. Through them God provided only an incomplete revelation.

On the other hand, God has now spoken in the Son. *That* is the point of the contrast. The Son is the creator and heir of all things. He has unlimited knowledge and understanding. His person, deeds, and words express the final and fullest revelation that God intends to give His people.

Of course, the Son of whom the writer speaks is the Lord Jesus Christ. Behind these words are some difficult teachings. On the one hand, the Son is eternal God, equal with and of the same substance as the Father. On the other hand, the Son has come into the world as a human being. Into His eternal divine person He has taken a complete (though sinless) human nature. From the first perspective one can speak of the eternal Son; from the second perspective one can also speak of the incarnate Son.

When the writer states that the Son was "appointed heir of all things," he is viewing the Son in His incarnation. The human Christ occupies an exalted position: he is heir of all things. Every possession of the Father now belongs to the incarnate Son. True, the full manifestation of this inheritance will occur in the future (Ps. 2:8; 1 Cor. 15:25-27). Nevertheless, the inheritance is a rich one, and the declaration that the Son is heir of all things should bring joy to all believers—for they, too, are joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:16-17). Christians expect to inherit what Christ inherits. This expectation is part of the blessed hope with which all believers face the future.

The text also emphasizes that the Son is the one through whom God made the ages. At this point, the writer is viewing the Son in His eternal glory and dignity. Only one who is God could so be outside the ages as to create them. This phrase is a strong statement of the deity of the Son, and it agrees fully with other passages in the New Testament (Col 1:16; John 1:3). The Son is the one who created time and everything in it.

In sum, this passage emphasizes three realities about Christ, the eternal and incarnate Son. First, as to His person, He is the Son. Second, as to his dignity and rank, He is heir of all things. Third, as to His work, He made the ages. The overall picture shows the Son as superior over every other person in the history of the human race. It particularly shows His superiority over those Old Testament prophets through whom God spoke at many times and in many ways.



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