

# A Greater Name

JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews #1 - Pastor Gary Combs - October 1, 2023 - Hebrews 1:1-14

**INTRO:** Good morning church! We're starting a series entitled, "JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews." Our theme verse is:

Hebrews 1:4 (NLT) This shows that the Son is far **greater than** the angels, just as the name God gave him is **greater than** their names.

Today, we'll be covering the first chapter of Hebrews in a sermon entitled "A Greater Name." Because the book of Hebrews teaches us that the name of Jesus is greater than any other name! Indeed, Jesus is greater than anyone or anything you're facing today!

But why does a name even matter? As Shakespeare wrote:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet." — William Shakespeare.

Shakespeare uses this line in his play Romeo and Juliet to convey that the naming of things is irrelevant. But in the Bible and in Jewish life this couldn't be more untrue. Names matter.

"For in our name lies our soul and self. That is why Jews always placed great emphasis on naming a child, for in that name there lay the history and past of the family and the hopes and blessings for the newborn's success in life." — Rabbi Berel Wein

So, names matter and the name of Jesus matters most of all!

**Need:** What names are you facing today? Divorce? Jesus is greater than divorce. He's the Reconciler. Cancer? Jesus is greater than cancer. He's the Great Physician. Addiction? Jesus is greater than your addiction. He is our strength and victory! Death of a loved one? Jesus is greater than death! He is the Resurrection and the Life. Loneliness? Jesus is greater. He promises to never leave nor forsake you. He sticks closer than a friend. Name what you're facing and write another name over it. A better name... a superior name... a name that is greater than any other. Write Jesus over it. He is greater than whatever you're facing today!

**Trans/intro to Hebrews:** That's the theme of Hebrews: Jesus is greater. Hebrews is an unusual book. It's an epistle, a letter with a benediction and a final greeting, but no salutation, it lists no recipient(s) and contains no author's autograph. Yet its content clearly aims the book at first century Jewish background Christian believers immersed in a Hellenistic culture. Thus, the title: "Hebrews." For it was certainly aimed at believers with a firm grasp of the Old Testament and familiarity with Temple worship. This internal evidence lends itself to an early date of 65 AD (before the Temple destruction in 70 AD). Hebrews is the only truly anonymous book in the NT. The majority view is that Paul was its author. Others have proposed Barnabas, Apollos or Clement. However, I'm of the viewpoint that it was written by Luke. For it contains astounding similarities in grammar, writing style and high classical Greek found in Luke's other books: The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. Each of these three books opens with a four-verse prologue written in Classical Greek.

We'll never know for sure, but we can be sure of this... its chief author and subject is the Lord Jesus Christ!

**BODY:** In the book of Hebrews chapter 1, Jewish background believers were implored to rightly see that Jesus is greater than all, even the angels, and therefore even His name is greater than any other name. We can rightly see that the name of Jesus is greater. Why is the name of Jesus greater? The text gives **four reasons** the name of Jesus is greater than any other name.

**Read text:** Hebrews 1:1-14 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? <sup>6</sup> And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." <sup>7</sup> Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." <sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom." <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." <sup>10</sup> And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; <sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, <sup>12</sup> like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end." <sup>13</sup> And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? <sup>14</sup> Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

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## THE NAME OF JESUS IS GREATER...

### 1. Because Jesus is the ultimate Spoken Word of God.

**EXP:** (1-2a) The English word “ultimate” means “being or happening at the end of a process; final;” as well as “the best achievable or imaginable of its kind.” That’s who Jesus is. He is the ultimate Spoken Word of God! He’s the last and final and best word God “has spoken to us” (2). This is Jesus in His prophetic role.

“**God spoke**” (1) - When? “Long ago” - Old Testament times. How? “Many times and in many ways” - dreams, visions, angels, voices, writing on walls, and even Balaam’s donkey. Who? To “our fathers by the prophets.”

“**Last days**” (2) - When? The “last days,” which began with the arrival of Jesus, God’s Son and continues until now. These are the “last days.”

“**Has spoken to us by His Son**” - The final and ultimate revelation of God has been given by Jesus.

**ARG:** **Jesus is the Word made flesh. He is the ultimate revelation of God to us.**

John 1:1, 14 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...  
<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Jesus spoke as the Father directed Him to speak.**

John 12:49-50 (NIV) <sup>49</sup> For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. <sup>50</sup> I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”

**ILL:**

**APP:** Jesus is the ultimate Spoken Word of God. God spoke (through Jesus) and the apostles wrote and we have the NT. Do you believe this. Jesus is the greater Word about God. He is God’s Word in the flesh!

### 2. Because Jesus is the one and only Son of God.

**EXP:** (2-12) Notice the word “Son.” It’s there 4 times (2, 5, 8). This speaks not of a biological relationship, but a spiritual one. The Son of God is one with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. He is the 2nd person of the Trinity. The name: “Son” speaks of His divinity and also His relationship in the Godhead. As the early church summarized in 325 AD in the Nicene Creed: “We believe in ... one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the begotten of God the Father, the Only-begotten, that is of the substance of the Father. God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten and not made; of the very same nature of the Father...”

**Seven Statements for the Superiority of Jesus:**

1. HEIR (2) “Appointed the heir of all things.” What Adam lost, the 2nd Adam has inherited.
2. CREATOR (2) “Whom also he created the world.” Christ is the agent of creation (John 1:2, Col. 1:16)
3. REVEALER (3) “Radiance of the glory of God.” (ἀπαύγασμα, *apaúgasma*) “brightness from a source.”
4. DIVINE CHARACTER (3) Exact imprint of his nature.” (χαρακτήρ, *charaktér*) “Same nature and character.” A word used in reference to an engraved character on a coin. Not counterfeit. Same.
5. SUSTAINER (3) “He upholds the universe by the word of his power.” “In Him all things hold together” (Col. 1:17). He is not an absentee Creator who wound up the clock and went away.
6. REDEEMER (3) “Making purification for sins.” OT sacrificial language describing the cross of Christ.
7. RULER (3) “He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Christ’s current ascended position.

“**Superior**” (4) (κρείττων, *kreittōn*) - better, best, greater. “**more excellent**” (4) (διάφορος, *diaphoros*) - different in kind and therefore surpassing in comparison.

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**“Angels”** (4, 5, 6, 7, 13) (ἄγγελος, *angelos*) - 6x. Lit., “messengers.” 1st-century Jews were caught up in the study and veneration of angels and had even created a hierarchy of angels, giving them names not found in the Bible (only 3 are named Michael, Gabriel and Lucifer).

**Seven Scriptures showing the Superiority of Jesus over angels:** (All from the Septuagint)

1. Psalm 2:7 (5) “You are my Son” - God never calls His angels sons.
2. 2 Sam. 7:14 (5) “I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son” - Nor Himself their Father.
3. Deut. 32:43 (6) “Let all angels worship him” - Angels will worship Jesus, not vice versa.
4. Psa. 104:4 (7) “He makes His angels winds and ministers” - Angels are created beings. Christ is not.
5. Psa. 45:6-7 (8-9) “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever” - Christ is the eternal God and ruler.
6. Psa. 102:25-27 (10-12) “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth” - Christ is Creator. He made angels.
7. Psa. 110:1 (13) “Sit at my right hand” - Christ is ruler. Angels are servants.

**ARG:** **“Only begotten”** (μονογενής, *monogenēs*) means **“single of its kind, one and only, unique.”**

John 3:16 (NIV) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**He that has seen Jesus has seen the Father.**

John 14:8-9 (ESV) <sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

**ILL:** **Mormons** believe Jesus was the spirit child of Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother. The Son of God was the product of divine procreation—the firstborn of many spirit children made by heavenly parents. Mormons believe Jesus became the Redeemer because he had a better strategy than his brother, Lucifer.

**Jehovah’s Witness** believe that Jesus was created by Jehovah as the archangel Michael before the physical world existed, and is a lesser, though mighty, god. They believe that when Jesus was born on earth, he was a mere human and not God in human flesh. (“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.”—John 1:1, New World Translation)

**Muslims** believe that Jesus was a great prophet, but not the Son of God. They affirm the virgin birth and the miracles of Jesus, but they soundly reject any idea that He is the Son of God, considering it blasphemy to equate Jesus with Allah in any manner.

**Agnostics** believe that Jesus was a good person, a good teacher, but not divine. (Lord, Liar, Lunatic).

**APP:** Are you convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, very God of very God? You may not have a problem with putting angels ahead of Jesus, but what about other things. What else are you putting as greater than Him?

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## 3. Because Jesus is the only Savior of the world.

**EXP:** (3, 14) Look at v. 3 again, “After making purification for sins.” This is Jesus in His priestly role. Then look at v.14 “those who are to inherit salvation.” That’s us. And what is the angelic role? “Ministering spirits sent out” for our sake! Angels are servants of Christ that He sends to minister to us.

**ARG:** **Jesus is the Savior of the world.**

1 John 4:14 (ESV) And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

**Jesus is the “only” name by which we may be saved.**

Acts 4:12 (NIV) Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

**The name “Jesus” (Hebrew: “Joshua” from “Jehovah + shua”) means the “LORD saves!”**

Matthew 1:21 (NKJV) And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

**ILL:**

**APP:** Have you trusted Jesus as your Savior? Asking Him to forgive you for your sins?

## 4. Because Jesus is the supreme Sovereign over all.

**EXP:** (4, 8, 13) That Jesus is appointed by God to be the supreme Sovereign over all is clear. This is Jesus in His Kingly role.

“**Right hand of the majesty**” (3) - Jesus is ruler by the Father’s appointment.

“**Throne...scepter...kingdom**” (8) - Jesus is the Son that sits on the throne.

“**Anointed**” (9) - (χρίω, *chrīō*) - anointed, Christ, Messiah in Hebrew.

“**Sit at my right hand**” (13) - The Father has anointed Jesus as Supreme Sovereign.

**ARG:** **Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords**

Revelation 17:14 (ESV) They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

**Jesus is the name above every name!**

Philippians 2:5-11 (ESV) <sup>5</sup> ...Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**ILL:**

**APP:** Have you confessed Jesus as Lord, as King over your life?

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## **CONCLUSION:** Jesus is all we need from A to Z! (Skip this if long on time)

He's our Alpha, our Adonai, Advocate, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

He is the Babe of Bethlehem, the Bridegroom, the Bread of life, the Bright and Morning Star.

He is the Christ, the Creator, the Cornerstone, the Chosen One, the Chief Shepherd.

He is the Door, the Daystar, our Delight and our Deliverer.

Jesus is Emmanuel, the Exalted One, from Everlasting to Everlasting.

He is the First Fruits of the Resurrection, the Fountain of life, the Foundation of the church, the Friend of sinners.

He is our Guide, the Good Shepherd, the Great Physician.

He is our Hope, our Help, our Healer, our Great High Priest.

He is the great I Am, our Inheritance, the Immortal One.

He is our Joy, our Justifier.

He is the King of Kings, the King of Glory.

Jesus is the Lord, the Life, the Love, the Light of the world, the Living Water, the Lamb of God.

He is the Messiah, the Master, the Mediator, the Messenger, the Man of Sorrows.

He is the Nazarene, the New Wine, the New Covenant, the Name that is above every name.

He is the Omega, our Offering for sin, the Only begotten of the Father.

He is the Prophet, the Priest, our Passover, the Propitiation for our sin, the Prince of Peace.

He is the Quieter of the storms of life and our Quickening Spirit.

He is our Redeemer and the Rock of our salvation, the Rose of Sharon, the Resurrection and the Life.

He is the Savior, the Shepherd, the Suffering Servant, the Son of God.

He is the Truth, and our Teacher and our great Treasure

He is the Upholder of all things and the Unblemished Lamb of God.

He is the Vine, the Vicarious Sacrifice, the Victor over the grave.

He is the Way, the Word made flesh, the Wisdom of God, our Wonderful Counselor.

He is the Expected Messiah of the Old Testament and the Exalted Lord of the New Testament.

He is our Yokefellow and Yes and Amen.

Jesus is the Zeal of the Lord of Hosts and Zion's Holy King.

Jesus is greater and His name is greater. The name of Jesus is greater because He is...

- 1) The ultimate Spoken Word of God,
- 2) the one and only Son of God,
- 3) the only Savior of the world and
- 4) the Supreme Sovereign over all.

Will you call on His great name today? He promises that:

John 14:13 (ESV) Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

**Sing:** THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THAT NAME (Words and music by Gloria and Bill Gaither; 1970)

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus; there's just something about that name.

Master, Savior, Jesus, like the fragrance after the rain;

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, let all Heaven and earth proclaim;

Kings and kingdoms will all pass away,

But there's something about that name.

The name of Jesus is greater than whatever you're facing today!

Let's pray.