

# Hebrews 1:3 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE			DUTY	
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)  
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 1:3 And He is (**PAPMSN**) the [radiance](#) of His [glory](#) and the [exact representation](#) of His [nature](#), and [upholds](#) (**PAPMSN**) [all things](#) by the [word](#) of His [power](#). When He had [made](#) (**AMPMSN**) [purification](#) of [sins](#), He [sat down](#) (**3SAAI**) at the [right hand](#) of the [Majesty](#) on [high](#) (**NASB: Lockman**)

**Greek:** [os on \(PAPMSN\) apaugasma tes doxes kai karakter tes hupostaseos autou. pheron \(PAPMSN\) te ta panta to rhemati tes dunameos autou. katharison ton hamarton poiesamenos \(AMPMSN\) ekathisen \(3SAAI\) en dexia tes megalosunes en hupselois.](#)

**ALT:** who being [the] outshining of His glory and [the] exact expression of His essence, and sustaining all the [things] by the word of His power, having Himself made by Himself a purification [or, purgation] of our sins, sat down at [the] right hand of the Majesty on high,

**Amplified:** He is the sole expression of the glory of God [the Light-being, the out-ricing or radiance of the divine], and He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature, upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power. When He had by offering Himself accomplished our cleansing of sins and riddance of guilt, He sat down at the right hand of the divine Majesty on high ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**BBE:** Who, being the outshining of his glory, the true image of his substance, supporting all things by the word of his power, having given himself as an offering making clean from sins, took his seat at the right hand of God in heaven;

**ICB:** The Son reflects the glory of God. He is an exact copy of God's nature. He holds everything together with his powerful word. The Son made people clean from their sins. Then he sat down at the right side of God, the Great One in heaven. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

**KJV:** Who being the brightness of his 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 on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

**Phillips:** This Son, radiance of the glory of God, flawless expression of the nature of God, himself the upholding principle of all that is, effected in person the reconciliation between God and man and then took his seat at the right hand of the majesty on high ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Who, being the out-ricing [effulgence] of His glory and the exact reproduction of His essence, and sustaining, guiding, and propelling all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

**Young's Literal:** who being the brightness of the glory, and the impress of His subsistence, bearing up also the all things by the saying of his might -- through himself having made a cleansing of our sins, sat down at the right hand of the greatness in the highest,

HEBREWS 1:4-14

JESUS IS

BETTER THAN THE ANGELS:

AS DEMONSTRATED BY

SEVEN OT QUOTATIONS

(All taken from the Septuagint - LXX)

HEBREWS	OT QUOTE	PROVES THAT...
Hebrews 1:5	Psalms 2:7	Jesus is God's only begotten Son
Hebrews 1:5	2Samuel 7:14	God is His Father Jesus is the Son
Hebrews 1:6	Psalms 97:7*	Jesus is to be worshipped by angels
Hebrews 1:7	Psalms 104:4	Angels are His Ministers
Hebrews 1:8, 1:9	Psalms 45:6-7	Jesus Christ is God Forever and ever
Hebrews 1:10, 11,12	Psalms 102:25-27	Jesus is Immutable and Eternal
Hebrews 1:13	Psalms 110:1	Jesus is Honored as Victor over All

\*Psalm 97:7 - Some scholars favor this quotation as from Deut 32:43 which in the Greek (LXX) reads "*Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him!*". Either quote substantiates the writer's main premise.

## AND HE IS THE RADIANCE OF HIS GLORY: hos on (PAPMSN) *apaugasma tes doxes*

- Jn 1:14; 14:9; 14:10 2Co 4:6
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

the Son reflects (see discussion below) the glory of God (ICB)

being the brightness of his glory (KJV)

being [the] outshining of His glory (ALT)

God's Son shines out with God's glory (TLB)

Who is the refulgence of his glory (NAB)

The Son reflects God's own glory (NLT)

He is the sole expression of the glory of God [the Light-being, the out-ricing or radiance of the divine] (Amp)

He brightly reflects God's glory (WNT)

the outraying of divine glory (Vincent)

The Son is superior to the prophets because He is the **radiance of God's glory**. He is more literally "who being" this participle denoting what the Son is continually (present tense) in Himself essentially and independently of His manifestation in time. This transcendent (meaning being beyond our ability to comprehend) idea is conveyed by two metaphorical expressions.

**Radiance** (541) (**apaugasma** from **apaugázo** = emit light or splendor in turn derived from **apó** = from + **augázo** = shine) literally means "off-flashing" and then the brightness beamed forth which describes the effulgence (from Latin *effulgere* = to shine forth and thus radiant splendor or brilliance emanating from an original light body), splendor or light emitted or issuing from a luminous body. It can mean either **reflected** brightness, refulgence (Calvin, Thayer) or **effulgence** as the Greek fathers hold. It is not preceded by the definite article, which makes the term highly descriptive of character or nature.

The **Pulpit Commentary** writes that **apaugasma** "is, so to speak, begotten of the source, and of one substance with it, and yet distinguishable from it; being that through which its glory is made manifest, and through which it enlightens all things. The Person of the Son is thus represented, not as of one apart from God, irradiated by His glory, but as Himself the sheen of his glory." ([The Pulpit Commentary](#) )

**Wuest** adds that "The word **apaugasma** is not preceded by the definite article, which fact makes the term highly descriptive of character or nature." ([Wuest's Commentary on Hebrews](#))

**Expositor's** comments on **radiance** that "In the Arian controversy (Ed note: Arius taught that the Son was a created being, inferior to God the father in nature and dignity though the first and noblest of all created beings) this designation of the Son was appealed to as proving that He is eternally generated and exists not by an act of the Father's will but essentially... As the sun cannot exist or a lamp burn without radiating light, so God is essentially Father and Son." ([Expositor's Bible Commentary. Zondervan Publishing](#))

**Spurgeon** - Shade your eyes, for you cannot look upon this wondrous sight without being dazzled by it. Some commentators say—and it is not an inappropriate analogy, though we must not push any analogy too far—that, as light is to the sun, so is Jesus to the glory of God. He is the brightness of that glory. That is to say, there is not any glory in God but what is also in Christ: and when that glory reaches its climax, when God the Ever-Glorious is most glorious, that greatest glory is in Christ. Oh, this wondrous Word of God—the very climax of the Godhead—the gathering up of every blessed attribute in all its infinity of glory! You shall find all this in the person of the God-man, Christ Jesus.

**Glory** (1391) (**doxa** from **dokeo** = to think) means to give a proper opinion or estimate of something and thus the **glory** of God expresses all that He is in His Being and in His nature, character, power and acts. **Doxa** is used repeatedly in the Greek Septuagint (LXX) to describe the (Shekinah) glory of God.

For example at Mt **Sinai** "the appearance of the **glory** (LXX = **doxa**) of Jehovah was like a consuming fire on the mountain top" (Ex 24:17)

It was there that **God** showed them "His **glory** (LXX = **doxa**) and His greatness" (Dt 5:24).

**Moses** records that upon completion of the tabernacle, "the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the **glory** (LXX = **doxa**) of the LORD filled the tabernacle." (Ex 40:34 see also Nu 14:10, 16:19 16:42).

The prophet Ezekiel described the departure (Ezekiel 10:4) and then foretold of the future return (Ezek 43:4, 43:5) of the **glory** (**doxa**) of Jehovah from the Temple in Jerusalem.

In **Exodus 33** **Moses** asks God "I pray Thee show me Thy **glory** (LXX = **doxa**)!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you... but... "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock and it will come about, while My **glory** is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen." (Ex 33:18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23)

Jewish readers who would be very familiar with these OT descriptions of the **glory** (**doxa**) of Jehovah would have a clear understanding of the intent of the author's description of Jesus as **the radiance of His glory** but unlike Moses could look at the glorious face of God for "the **glory** of God" is "in the face of Christ." (2Co 4:6)

Jesus gives a correct opinion of all that God is, so that to see Jesus is to see God, for in Jesus Himself is the out shining of the majesty of the Father. The Son, being one with the Father ([Jn 10:30](#)), is in Himself, and ever was, the **shining forth** of the **glory**, manifesting in Himself all that God is and does.

**Jesus'** Own testimony was that "he who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me." (Jn 12:45)

**Phillip** queried Jesus "show us the Father and it is enough for us (Jn 14:8)

**Jesus** replied that "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (Jn14:9) Explaining that "the Father is in Me" and "the words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works." (Jn 14:10)

**John** gives us the marvelous description of Jesus as ""the Word (Who) became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His **glory, glory** as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14**note**).

**John** went on to say that "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has **explained** Him." (Jn 1:18-note)

**Comment:** The Greek word for **explained** is **exegeomai** [ek = out + hegéomai = tell, lead forward] means that Jesus as the God Man leads out or provides detailed information in a systematic manner of the glory of the Father. This word exegeomai gives us our English word "exegesis" which describes the exposition of God's word, unfolding the interpretation through teaching. Jesus then is the preeminent "Expositor" declaring the Father's glory thoroughly and particularly. "O come let us adore Him" "fixing our eyes on Jesus" (Heb 12:2-note)

Want to know what God says? Listen to Jesus. Want to know what God does? Watch Jesus. He is God incarnate in man.

Let's give an analogy realizing that it will be imperfect and can even distort the truth of **the radiance of His glory** if pressed too far. Jesus relates to God the way the rays of sunlight relate to the sun. There is no time that the sun exists without the beams of radiance. They cannot be separated. If you put a solar-activated calculator in the sunlight, numbers appear on the face of the calculator. These are energized by the sun's radiance, but they are not what the sun is. The rays of the sun however are an extension of the sun. We see the sun by means of seeing the rays of the sun. So too we see God the Father by seeing Jesus for they are one God.

## AND THE EXACT REPRESENTATION OF HIS NATURE: kai karakter tes hupostaseos autou

- 2Co 4:4; Col 1:15, 16
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

flawless expression of the nature of God (Phillips)

the express image of His person (KJV, NKJV)

the very image of His substance (ASV)

the impress of His subsistence (YLT)  
[the] exact expression of His essence (ALT)  
the true image of his substance (BBE)  
He is an exact copy of God's nature. (ICB)  
the exact reproduction of His essence (Wuest)  
all that God's Son is and does marks him as God (TLB)  
the very imprint of his being (NAB)  
the exact imprint of God's very being (NRSV)  
everything about Him represents God exactly (NLT)  
He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature (Amp)  
stamped with God's Own character (Moffatt)  
the very image (impress) of His substance (Vincent)  
the very representation of the divine essence (Vine)

**Spurgeon** - Whatever God is, Christ is. The very likeness of God, the very Godhead of Godhead, the very Deity of Deity, is in Christ Jesus. Dr. John Owen, who loves to explain the spiritual meaning in the Letter to the Hebrews by the types in the Old Testament, explains the brightness of the Father's glory by a reference to the Shekinah over the mercy seat, which was the only visible token of the presence of God there. An extraordinary brightness is said to have shone forth from between the cherubim. Now, Christ is God manifesting Himself in His brightness. But, on his forehead, the high priest wore a golden plate, upon which was deeply engraved, in Hebrew letters, the inscription, "Holiness to [or of] Yahweh." Dr. Owen thinks there is a reference, in this "representation of his essence"—this cut-out inscription of God, as it were—to that which was on the forehead of the high priest, and which represented the glorious wholeness or holiness of Yahweh, which is His great glory. You see how glorious was His original—the "representation" of His Father's person. How lowly did He become to purge away our sins, and that by Himself, too, using His own body to be the means, by His sufferings, of taking away our guilt. Not by proxy did He serve us, but by Himself. Oh, this is wondrous love!

**Exact representation** (5481) (**charakter** from **charasso** = to engrave and source of our English word **character** which describes one of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual) was used in classical Greek of an engraver who mints coins or an engraving tool, a die, a stamp, a branding iron, a mark engraved, an impress or a stamp on coins and seals. Later it came to mean the impression itself, usually engraved, cut in, or stamped on in the form of a character, a letter, a mark or a sign. This impression or mark with its particular features was considered to be the **exact representation** of the object whose image it bore.

**Charakter** is a die made by an impress, like on a signet ring, the impression being identical although they are **two separate entities**. As a figure of speech **charakter** described a distinctive mark "impressed" on a person, by which he is distinguished from others. It is thus a **characteristic** of that person and was a Greek idiom for a person's features. The author is saying that whatever the Divine essence is, Jesus is the perfect expression and thus affirms the deity of Jesus Christ and alludes to the the plurality of God. Jesus is distinct from God the Father and yet identical with Him. **Charakter** conveys the idea of exact correspondence as when Jesus said that "**He who has seen Me has seen the Father**" (Jn 14:9)

He who had seen Jesus had seen the Father **because** Jesus is the **exact representation**, the exact expression of the Father's attributes, nature, etc so that all that God is, Jesus is, and yet two distinct Persons of the Godhood. Jesus is all that God is, not has been given what He is! God hasn't given Jesus something. He already is! Paul concurs that Jesus "**is the image of the invisible God**" (see **note** Col 1:15)

**Nature** (5287) (**hupostasis** [word study] from **hupo** = under + **histemi** = stand, referring to a foundation, ground on which something is built) is literally that which stands under anything (e.g., the foundation of a building). Hupostasis is setting under and thus describes a support, a confidence, a steadiness, a foundation (refers to ground on which something is built = e.g., the foundation of things for which we hope in Heb 11:1 [note]). Stated another way **hupostasis** is that which underlies the apparent and which therefore is the reality, the essence or the substance. It came to denote essence, substance or the inner nature and as discussed below is used with that meaning in here in Hebrews 1:3. The author is conveying the truth that whatever the divine essence is, Jesus is said to be its perfect expression and in so doing affirms the deity of Jesus Christ. The etymological equivalent of **hupostasis** in English is **substance** or that which stands under a thing and which makes it what it is. The Son is such a revelation of the Father that when we see Jesus, we see what God's real being is. **Hupostasis** is a very common word from Aristotle

on and was used in Greek to describe that which stands under anything such as a building, a contract, a promise. It is common in the papyri in **business documents** as the basis or guarantee of transactions or with the meaning of **atitle deed**.

**Hupostasis** is used 19 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)** and 5 times in the NT...

**2Cor 9:4** (3 But I have sent the brethren, that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case, that, as I was saying, you may be prepared) 4 lest if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to speak of you) should be put to shame by this **confidence**.

**2Cor 11:17** That which I am speaking, I am not speaking as the Lord would, but as in foolishness, in this **confidence** of boasting.

**Hebrews 1:3** And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His **nature** (hupostasis, 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;

**Hebrews 3:14** For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our **assurance** firm until the end;

**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the **assurance** of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Considering these meanings of **hupostasis** in Hebrews 11:1 one could paraphrase this verse as follows...

- Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for.
- Faith is the foundation, the quality of confidence which leads one to stand under, endure, or undertake anything.
- Faith involves the most solid possible conviction, the God-given present assurance of a future reality.

**Robertson** commenting on the use of **hupostasis** in **Hebrews 1:3** writes that "The word hupostasis for the being or essence of God "is a philosophical rather than a religious term" (Moffatt). Etymologically it is the sediment or foundation under a building (for instance). In Hebrews 11:1 hupostasis is like the "title-deed" idea found in the papyri. Athanasius rightly used Heb 1:1-4 in his controversy with Arius. (Robertson, A. Word Pictures in the New Testament)

**Wuest** - The word **substance** deserves careful treatment. It is hupostasis, made up of stasis "to stand," and hupo "under," thus "that which stands under, a foundation." Thus it speaks of the ground on which one builds a hope. **Moulton and Milligan** report its use as a legal term. They say that it stands for "the whole body of documents bearing on the ownership of a person's property, deposited in archives, and forming the evidence of ownership." They suggest the translation, "Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for." The Holy Spirit energized act of faith which a believer exercises in the Lord Jesus is the title-deed which God puts in his hand, guaranteeing to him the possession of the thing for which he trusted Him. In the case of this first-century Jew, his act of faith in Messiah as High Priest would be the title-deed which God would give him, guaranteeing to him the possession of the salvation for which he trusted God. Thus, he would have assurance. Vincent translates, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for." He says that "It is the firm grasp of faith on unseen fact."

**Vincent** commenting on **hupostasis** in **Hebrews 1:3** notes that...

The primary sense of **hupostasis** or **substance** is something which stands underneath; foundation, ground of hope or confidence, and so, assurance itself. In a philosophical sense, substantial nature; the real nature of anything which underlies and supports its outward form and properties. In N. T., 2Cor. 9:4; 11:17; Heb 3:14; 11:1, signifying in every instance ground of confidence or confidence.

In **LXX**, it represents fifteen different words, and, in some cases, it is hard to understand its meaning, notably 1Sa 13:21. In Ruth 1:12 ("*Return, my daughters! Go, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said I have hope, if I should even have a husband tonight and also bear sons*"); Ps. 39:7 ("*And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope [my ground, my foundation... for hope] is in Thee.*"); Ezek. 19:5, it means **ground of hope**: in Jdg. 6:4 ("*So they would camp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance [Lxx - hupostasis + zoe ~ no support or foundation of life] in Israel as well as no sheep, ox, or donkey.*"); Wisd. 16:21, sustenance: in Ps. 39:5 ("*Behold, Thou hast made my days as handbreadths, And my lifetime [Lxx = hupostasis ~ my existence] as nothing in Thy sight, Surely every man at his best is a mere breath. Selah.*"); Ps 139:15, the substance or material of the human frame: in 1Sa 13:23 ("*and the garrison of the Philistines*"); Ezek. 26:11, an outpost or garrison: in Deut. 11:6; Job 22:20 ("*and their abundance the fire has consumed*"), possessions.

The theological sense, person, is later than the apostolic age. In **Hebrews 1:3**, substantial nature, essence. (Adapted and amplified from Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament 4:382-383)

In summary, **the radiance of His glory** speaks of Jesus' oneness or identity with God the Father whereas **the exact representation of His nature** speaks of Jesus' distinctness and thus of the plurality of the Godhead.

**Vine** adds that the essence of this phrase is to explain that "the Son of God is a distinct Person from the Father and yet One with Him in the Godhead. He is His equal, as being the perfect representation of His essence."

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**William Barclay** - The writer to the Hebrews uses two great pictures to describe what Jesus was. He says that he was the **apaugasma** (541) of God's glory. **Apaugasma** (541) can mean one of two things in Greek. It can mean effulgence, the light which shines forth, or it can mean reflection, the light which is reflected. Here it probably means effulgence. Jesus is the shining of God's glory among men.

He says that he was the **charakter** (5481) of God's very essence. In Greek, **charakter** (5481) means two things, first, a seal, and, second, the impression that the seal leaves on the wax. The impression has the exact form of the seal. So, when the writer to the Hebrews said that Jesus was the **charakter** (Greek #5481) of the being of God, he meant that he was the exact image of God. Just as when you look at the impression, you see exactly what the seal which made it is like, so when you look at Jesus you see exactly what God is like.

C. J. Vaughan has pointed out that this passage tells us six great things about Jesus:

(i) The original glory of God belongs to him. Here is a wonderful thought. Jesus is God's glory; therefore, we see with amazing clarity that the glory of God consists not in crushing men and reducing them to abject servitude, but in serving them and loving them and in the end dying for them. It is not the glory of shattering power but the glory of suffering love.

(ii) The destined empire belongs to Jesus. The New Testament writers never doubted his ultimate triumph. Think of it. They were thinking of a Galilaeen carpenter who was crucified as a criminal on a cross on a hill outside the city of Jerusalem. They themselves faced savage persecution and were the humblest of people. As Sir William Watson said of them,

"So to the wild wolf Hate were sacrificed

The panting, huddled flock, whose crime was Christ."

And yet they never doubted the eventual victory. They were quite certain that God's love was backed by his power and that in the end the kingdoms of the world would be the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.

(iii) The creative action belongs to Jesus. The early Church held that the Son had been God's agent in creation, that in some way God had originally created the world through him. They were filled with the thought that the One who had created the world would also be the One who redeemed it.

(iv) The sustaining power belongs to Jesus. These early Christians had a tremendous grip of the doctrine of providence. They did not think of God as creating the world and then leaving it to itself. Somehow and somewhere they saw a power that was carrying the world and each life on to a destined end. They believed,

"That nothing walks with aimless feet;

That not one life shall be destroy'd.

Or cast as rubbish to the void,

When God hath made the pile complete."

(v) To Jesus belongs the redemptive work. By his sacrifice he paid the price of sin; by his continual presence he liberates from sin.

(vi) To Jesus belongs the mediatorial exaltation. He has taken his place on the right hand of glory; but the tremendous thought of the writer to the Hebrews is that he is there, not as our judge but as one who makes intercession for us so that, when we enter into the presence of God, we go, not to hear his justice ([William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

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**AND UPHOLDS ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER: pherôn (PAP) te ta panta tòi rhêmati tês dunameôs autou:**

- Ps 75:3; Jn 1:4; Col 1:17; Rev 4:11
- Eccl 8:4; Ro 1:16; 2Cor 4:7



- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

bearing up also the all things by the saying of his might (YLT)

sustaining all the [things] by the word of His power (ALT)

supporting all things by the word of his power (BBE)

He holds everything together with his powerful word (ICB)

sustaining, guiding, and propelling all things by the word of His power (Wuest)

He regulates the universe by the mighty power of his command (TLB)

He sustains the universe by the mighty power of His command (NLT)

He holds everything together through his powerful words (GWT)

upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power (Amp)

sustains the universe with His word of power (Moffatt)

bearing up all things by the utterance of His power (Rotherham)

the utterance of Divine power (Pulpit Commentary)

## JESUS UPHOLDS ALL (NOT SOME) THINGS!

**Upholds** ([5342](#)) (**phero**) means to bear or carry and was used to describe a ship being carried along, borne or **driven along** by the wind (Acts 27:15) or of the men who wrote Scripture as being "**moved** by the Holy Spirit" (2Pe 1:21-note).

An illustration of this use of **phero** is found in the Septuagint (LXX) where Moses says, "I alone am not able to **carry (phero)** all this people, because it is too burdensome for me," (Nu 11:14) (**Comment:** Here **phero** has in it the idea of the responsibility of the government and guidance of Israel)

The author does not see Christ's work in sustaining creation as if He were an "Atlas-like" figure holding up the universe as a dead weight and otherwise doing nothing. To the contrary **upholds** indicates that He is carrying it along, bearing it toward its final consummation. The picture is that of continuous (**present tense**) active and dynamic involvement by the Creator with His creation, not a passive and static (deistic) involvement. The Lord Jesus holds all things together and in their proper relationship to each other by His own power. The oceans are held in their beds. The rivers run down into the sea. The heavenly bodies are held in their orbits.

**THOUGHT** - You may be experiencing trials and tribulations that are leading you to believe that Jesus is in control of most but not all things (especially not your trials!), but that is fiction not fact! The fact remains that even in the painful times, He is in control. I know, for this past year has been something I never would have foreseen when I was younger (I'm going on 69)! My wife of 45 years developed severe anorexia nervosa and almost died. My youngest son almost died. He called me one day to tell me he loved me. The problem was he called from a cemetery with a rope swung over a tree limb and the other end around his neck. At that moment I absolutely did not believe Jesus upholds all things by the word of His power! That was one year ago. Today that same son is genuinely born again and sober and productive and still married to his first wife. My wife is still suffering the throes of anorexia. But I can testify that Jesus is good and that Jesus truly upholds all things by the word of His power. Beloved, whatever you are experiencing, remember that you have not yet seen the end of the story of your life! Hold on to Jesus -- you can be sure He is holding on to you (whether you "feel" like it or not)! I'll see you in heaven and we can share stories of this truth that transformed our "fiery furnace" of complaints and doubts into a "fragrant altar" for offering worship!

**Vincent** says that this phrase "is concerned, not only with sustaining the weight of the universe, but also with maintaining its coherence and carrying on its development..." and adds that "the Logos is called by Philo the bond of the universe; but the maintenance of the coherence implies the guidance and propulsion of all the parts to a definite end."

The **Psalmist** quotes God as saying "It is I Who have firmly set (the earth's) pillars. Selah." (Ps 75:3).

**Paul** adds that Jesus "is before all things and in Him all things **hold together**." (Col 1:17-note)

The things created by Christ are now being sustained, or conserved, or held together by Him. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being (exist)" (Acts 17:28).



By Him all things were created in the past, by Him all things consist in the present and by Him all things are to be reconciled in the future "for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Ro 11:36-note)

**All things** ([3956](#)) (**pas**) refers to the totality, the universe considered as one whole. Nothing is excluded from the scope of the Son's sustaining, supporting, upholding activity. The author pictures the Son as not only active in creation but then as bearing the all time and space towards the fulfillment of the divine plan.

What an awesome truth that the whole universe hangs on the word of Christ for its moment by moment existence! How this flies in the face of the modern teaching on self-sufficiency. We must see that Christ upholds all things by the word of His power and that **all things** includes the preservation of even our very spirit, soul and body. Our daily existence depends solely upon the word of Christ's power! Therefore as the writer of proverbs exhorts us:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Pr 3:5, 3:6)

Why? **Because He upholds all things by the Word of His power.**

Worship Him today for Who He is, God Himself, and for the profound truth that the Word of His power preserves and assures our very existence.

**Spurgeon** - Just think of it. This great world of ours is upheld by Christ's word. If He did not speak it into continued existence, it would go back into the nothingness from which it sprung. There exists not a being who is independent of the Mediator, save only the ever-blessed Father and the Spirit. "In him all things are held together" (Col 1:17), that is, continue to hold together. Just as the foundations uphold a house, so does Jesus Christ "sustain all things by the word of his power." Only think of it; those innumerable worlds of light that make unbounded space to look as though it were sprinkled over with golden dust, would all die out, like so many expiring sparks, and cease to be, if the Christ who died on Calvary did not will that they should continue to exist. Surely, if Christ upholds all things He can uphold me. If the word of His power upholds earth and heaven, surely, that same word can uphold you, poor trembling heart, if you will trust him.

**The word of His power** -- In other words Christ's spoken word is that by which the Son's power is manifest ([click for one manifestation of this power!](#)). And remember beloved, this is the same "word" He speaks to those who are "His own possession". What has He spoken to you this week in and through His Word? O how we need to remember that it is not just any word but is the **word of His power**, the very word by which His omnipotent power is manifest in and through our life! "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit" of Christ would say to us today!

**Word** ([4487](#)) (**rhema** [**word study**] from verb **rheo** = to speak - to say, speak or utter definite words) refers to the spoken word, especially a word as uttered by a living voice. **Laleo** is another word translated speak but it refers only to uttering a sound whereas **rheo** refers to uttering a definite intelligible word. **Rhema** refers to any sound produced by the voice which has a definite meaning. It focuses upon the content of the communication. For example in Luke we read...

And they understood none of these things, and this **saying (rhema)** was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said. (Luke 18:34)

In the plural **rhema** ("words"), means saying, speech or discourse.

**Rhema** is used to refer to "the thing spoken of", an object, a matter, an affair or an event. For example we read in **Luke 1:65**

And fear came on all those living around them; and all these **matters** [rhema] were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea.

(Compare to) But Mary treasured up all these **things** (rhema), pondering them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)

**Rhema** in the NT can exhibit several nuances of meaning depending on the context --

a **prophecy** ("*that you should remember the words - rhema - spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*" see **note 2** Peter 3:2),

a **charge** against one (Mt 27:14 Jesus "*did not answer him with regard to even a single charge*" - rhema), a message (Ro 10:8 "*But what does it say? 'THE WORD - rhema - IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART'-- that is, the word - rhema - of faith which we are preaching,*"),

a **promise** (Lk 2:29 "*Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thyword*", Lk 1:38 "*And Mary said, 'Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.'*" And the angel departed from her.),

a **command** (Mt 4:4 "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every **word** - rhema - that proceeds from the mouth of God"; Luke 5:5 And Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but at Your bidding - rhema - I will let down the nets.")

**Rhema** as used here in Hebrews 1:3 to refer to active and powerful word. **r Rhema** is the same **word** that spoke all that did not exist into existence...

By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the **word (rhema)** of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. (see note Hebrews 11:3).

God the Son spoke and created but He still speaks and sustains. As we listen and obey what God says in His Son (in His Word, the Scripture), He will sustain us through any trial, bringing us to the desired end He has for us --to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. The "word" is not empty. It has force. It does things.

**Power** (1411) (**dunamis** from **dunamai** = to be able) refers to inherent power residing in something by virtue of its nature. Click word study of dunamis.

Luke gives us a correct sense of the **power** of God's word declaring that

No (absolute negation) word (rhema - spoken word) from God shall be void of power. " (Lk 1:37ASV, Lk 1:37KJV)

An illustration of this principle is found in Romans where Paul explains that

the **gospel**... is the **power (dunamis)** of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." (Ro 1:16-note)

Thus the Son's Word, the Word of God, is unlike any other word for it has an inherent **power** because it is God speaking. Are you listening?

Jesus sustains all things by His **Word**, and that **Word** has a divine **power**. The various parts of the physical universe are not held together and regulated merely by laws of nature but these very laws are His laws, and operate by His decree. He can interfere with them at any time, and will do so in the way appointed by Him. Are you trusting in the **word of His power** to uphold you in whatever difficult circumstance or affliction you are currently experiencing?

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**'A Jesus Nut'** - By Vernon C. Grounds - A Navy pilot was describing his complex helicopter to his parents one day. He told them that a small hexagonal nut held the main rotor to the mast of the helicopter.

"Guess what we call that nut?" he asked his mother. She could only shrug her shoulders. With a smile, the pilot answered his own question: "It's called a Jesus nut."

That may sound irreverent, but here's an explanation. If that small piece of metal ever came off, the helicopter would not be able to stay in the air but would come crashing to the ground. So it's understandable why pilots in the Vietnam War gave that little part the name "Jesus nut."

The writer to the Hebrews said that Jesus, who made the world, upholds "all things by the word of His power" (Heb 1:3). Because of Him, we inhabit a created cosmos, not a chaotic accident. He who made all reality keeps it from collapsing.

We also need Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin and as Lord of our everyday lives. He is the One who can lift us above the degrading forces of evil in our world.

If you feel as if your life is crashing down around you, remember that it's Jesus who holds all things together—even your life.

Beneath His watchful eye  
His saints securely dwell;  
That hand which bears all nature up  
Shall guard His children well.  
—Doddridge

**For time and eternity, Jesus is all we need.**

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**Unlimited Power** - Why don't the stars fall down?" A child may ask that question, but so does an astronomer. And they both get essentially the same answer: A mysterious power or energy upholds everything and prevents our cosmos from collapsing into

chaos.

Hebrews 1:3 tells us that it is Jesus who upholds all things by the word of His power. He is the source of all the energy there is, whether the explosive potential packed inside an atom or the steaming kettle on the kitchen stove.

That energy is not simply a mindless force. No, God is the personal power who created everything out of nothing, including the stars (Genesis 1; Isaiah 40:26); who divided the Red Sea and delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 14:21, 22); who brought to pass the virgin birth of Jesus (Luke 1:34, 35); and who raised Him from the dead and conquered death (2Timothy 1:10). Our God, the one and only true God, has the power to answer prayer, meet our needs, and change our lives.

So when life's problems are baffling, when you face some Red Sea impossibility, call upon the wonder-working God who upholds all things. And remember that with our almighty God, nothing is impossible.—Vernon C Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thou art coming to a King—  
Large petitions with thee bring;  
For His grace and power are such  
None can ever ask too much. —Newton

### God is greater than our greatest problem

#### WHEN HE HAD MADE PURIFICATION OF SINS: poiesamenos (AMPMSN) katharismon tôn hamartiôn:

- Heb 7:27; 9:12; 13, 14, 16, 26, Jn 1:29; 1Jn 1:7; 3:5
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

through himself having made a cleansing of our sins (YLT)

when He had by Himself purged our sins (KJV)

having given Himself as an offering making clean from sins (BBE)

The Son made people clean from their sins (ICB)

effected in person the reconciliation between God and man (Phillips)

He is the one who died to cleanse us and clear our record of all sin (TLB)

After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin (NLT),

After achieving forgiveness for human sins (TEV)

When He had by offering Himself accomplished our cleansing of sins and riddance of guilt (Amp)

As **Matthew Henry** so eloquently puts it "From the glory of the person of Christ he proceeds to mention the glory of his grace."

**Spurgeon** - There was never such a task as that since time began. The old fable speaks of the Augean stables, foul enough to have poisoned a nation, which Hercules cleansed—but our sins were fouler than that. Dunghills are sweet compared with these abominations; what a degrading task it seems for Christ to undertake—the purging of our sins! The sweepers of the streets, the scullions of the kitchen, the cleansers of the sewers, have honorable work compared with this task of purging sin. Yet the holy Christ, incapable of sin, stooped to purge our sins. I want you to meditate upon that wondrous work, and to remember that He did it before He went back to heaven. Is it not a wonderful thing that Christ purged our sins even before we had committed them? There they stood, before the sight of God, as already existent in all their hideousness. But Christ came and purged them. This, surely, ought to make us sing the song of songs. Before I sinned, He purged my sins away; singular and strange as it is, yet it is so.

**Had made** (4160) (poieo) can be translated make, produce, bring about or cause, referring to any external act as manifested in the production of something tangible or obvious to the senses. **Poieo** is **aorist tense** which indicates a once-for-all-time, past completed and effective action (cf Christ's triumphant cry from the Cross "It is finished" Jn 19:30).

The author amplifies on this truth writing that Jesus functioned as both the Sacrifice (Offering) and the Sacrificer ("Offerer" or High Priest), Who

"does not need daily, like those high priests (Levitical priests under the Old Covenant), to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this **He did once for all when He offered up Himself.**" (see **notes** Hebrews 7:27; 9:25; 9:26)

**Poieo** is in the **middle voice** which signifies that the subject either acts upon himself or in his own interest and thus it conveys a reflexive sense (often translated by adding the reflexive English pronoun "himself").

The phrase can thus be translated **He Himself had made** indicating that when the Son of God made **purification** of sins, He did so by Himself, acting upon Himself, offering Himself as the Sacrifice for sin (Heb 9:26-note; He 10:12-note), and for Himself, acting in His own interest. To say it another way the work of **purification** was done by Christ personally, and was not something which He designated to be done by some other agent. The author emphasizes this truth later writing that "now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin **by the sacrifice of Himself.**" (He 9:26-note cf other uses in Hebrews of this key idea of "Himself" = Heb 2:14, 9:14, 9:25, 26- see notes He 2:14, 9:14; 9:25; 26)

**Vincent** notes that "In carrying on all things toward their destined end of conformity to the divine archetype, the Son must confront and deal with the fact of sin, which had thrown the world into disorder, and drawn it out of God's order. In the thought of **making purification of sins** is already foreshadowed the work of Christ as High Priest, which plays so prominent a part in the epistle."

**Purification** (2512)(**katharismos** from from **katharizo** = to cleanse and our English word **catharsis** which Webster's defines as purification or purgation that brings about spiritual renewal or release from tension) describes the process of making clean, cleansing, purifying, freeing from filth. Although the cleansing could refer to literal cleansing from physical stain or contamination, all NT uses refer to cleansing either from the "stain" of sin, an "inward contamination" (Heb 1:3+, 2Pe 1:9+) or ritual cleansing as prescribed in the law of Moses (Mk 1:44+, Lk 2:22+, Lk 5:14+) or by Jewish customs (Jn 2:6+). In Classic Greek it refers to the process of purification, the sacrifice of purification. **Katharismos** is used in the Septuagint of the ritual cleansing of lepers (Lev 14:2; Ex 29:36), and of the ritual cleansing of sins by means of blood (Ex 30:10; Nu 14:18). **Zodhiates** - The baptism both of John and the Lord Jesus is designated as **katharismós** in John 3:25+, not that the ritual of physical baptism brought about spiritual results or spiritual purification, but only as a parallel in its results. As water cleanses the body in baptism, the grace it symbolizes cleanses the soul. Its designation as a "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 2:38) means an identification with the forgiveness of sins. In Heb. 1:3, the word denotes the objective removal of our sins by Jesus Christ (see Heb. 9:22, 23; Sept.: Ex. 30:10; Job 7:21). In 2 Pet. 1:9, it refers to the actual purification accomplished in man, while in Heb. 1:3 to the propitiation provided by the Lord Jesus. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)

The import of the use of the word **katharismos** would not be lost on the first century Jewish readers, who would be familiar with the cleansing ritual on the **Day of Atonement** (see use in Ex 30:10 below) as described in Leviticus 16 (Lev 16:29+) which concludes with the statement that "on this day that atonement shall be made for you to **cleanse** (or purify) (LXX uses **katharizo** the root of **katharismos**) you You shall be **clean** (LXX = **katharizo** ) from all your sins before the LORD. (Lev 16:30+) **Katharismos** is used twice in Exodus

Ex 29:36 "And each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement, and you shall **purify** (Lxx = **katharismos**) the altar when you make atonement for it; and you shall anoint it to consecrate it.

Ex 30:10 "And Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year (**Yom Kippur**); he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement (Lxx = "the blood of purification" = **katharismos**) once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

**Katharismos** - 7x in 7v - **NAS** = cleansing(2), purification(5). ,

Mk 1:44+ and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your **cleansing** what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Lk 2:22+ And when the days for their **purification** according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord

Lk 5:14+ And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your **cleansing**, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Jn 2:6+ Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of **purification**, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.

Jn 3:25+ Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about **purification**.

Heb 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,

2Peter 1:9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his **purification** from his former sins.

**Katharismos** - 11x in the **Septuagint** - Exod 29:36; 30:10; Lev 14:32; 15:13; Num 14:18; 1 Chr 23:28; Neh 12:45; Job 7:21; Ps 89:44; Prov 14:9; Dan 12:6

**Sins** (266) (**hamartia**) brought death to man and separation from fellowship and communion with God. Sinful man needed **purification of sins** which in the Old Testament system required a priest to carry out the purification ritual. Thus the author adroitly introduces the idea of the Son, Christ Jesus, as the High Priest Who effects **purification of sins** by offering up the Sacrifice of His body on the Cross as a payment for man's sin. In the Old Testament the priests had to make sacrifices day after day and year after year not only for the **purification** of the people but also for themselves. Jesus made but one sacrifice when He offered Himself and because His sacrifice is **unblemished and spotless** (1Pe 1:18, 19-notes), He can purify our sins, something that all the Old Testament sacrifices together could never accomplish

The writer of Hebrews goes to great lengths to explain Christ's sacrificial role and how His sacrifice made the Old Covenant sacrifices obsolete...

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (He 10:4-note), "but when Christ appeared as a High Priest... He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle (in contrast to the earthly tabernacle and the Holy of holies that the Levitical priests entered once a year on the Day of Atonement) and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood... (into) the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, **cleanse** (or "purify" - katharizo) your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ... but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (see **notes** Hebrews 9:12; 9:13; 9:14; 9:26).

**MacArthur** - This truth must have seemed especially remarkable to those to whom the book of Hebrews was first written. The cross was a stumbling block to Jews, but the writer does not apologize for it. Instead, he shows it to be one of the seven excellent glories of Christ. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

**MacDonald** nicely summarizes the purifying work of the Son writing that "The Creator and the Sustainer became the Sin-bearer. In order to create the universe, He only had to speak. In order to maintain and guide the universe, He only has to speak... but in order to put away our sin once for all, He had to die on the cross of Calvary. It is staggering to think that the sovereign Lord would stoop to become the sacrificial Lamb. "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all," as Isaac Watts' hymn says." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**HE SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH: ekathisen (3SAAI) en dexia tes megalosunes en hupselous:**

- Hebrews 4:14; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; Ps 110:1; Mk 16:19; Lk 20:42;43 Acts 2:33; 7:56; Ro 8:34; Ep 1:20;21, 22, Col 3:1; 1Pe1:21; 3:22; Rev 3:21
- Majesty 1 Chr 29:11; Job 37:22; Mic 5:4; 2Pe 1:16; Jude 1:25
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

sat down at the right hand of the greatness in the highest (YLT)

Then he sat down at the right side of God, the Great One in heaven (ICB)

then sat down in highest honor beside the great God of heaven (TLB)

He sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven. (NLT)

He received the highest position, the one next to the Father in heaven (GWT)

He sat down in heaven at the right-hand side of God, the Supreme Power (TEV)

**Matthew Henry** again puts it eloquently writing that "From the glory of his sufferings we are at length led to consider the glory of his exaltation... Having assumed our nature, and suffered in it on earth, He has taken it up with Him to heaven, and there it has the high

honor to be next to God, and this was the reward of His humiliation.

**Spurgeon** - There is an allusion here, no doubt, to the high priest who, on the great day of atonement, when the sacrifice had been offered, presented himself before God. Now Christ, our great High Priest, having, once for all, offered Himself as the sacrifice for sin, has now gone into the most holy place, and there He sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Notice that this implies rest. When the high priest went within the veil, he did not sit down. He stood, with holy trembling, bearing the sacrificial blood, before the blazing mercy seat. But our Savior now sits at His Father's right hand. The high priest of old had not finished his work; the next year, another atoning sacrifice would be needed. But our Lord has completed His atonement, and now, "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" (Heb 10:26), for there no longer remains sin to be purged. "But this one, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, from now on waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet. For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy" (Heb 10:12-14). There He sits, and I am sure He would not be sitting if He had not finished the salvation of His people. Notice that Christ sits in the place of honor. Of course, we are talking figuratively now, and you must not interpret this literally. Jesus sits on the right hand of his Father; He dwells in the highest conceivable honor and dignity. All the angels worship Him, and all the blood-washed host adore Him day without night. The Father delights to honor Him. Not only does Jesus sit in the place of honor, but He occupies the place of safety. None can hurt Him now; none can stay His purposes or defeat His will. He is at the powerful right hand of God. In heaven above, and on the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, and on every star, He is supreme Lord and Master. They that will not yield to Him shall be broken with a rod of iron; He shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. So His cause is safe; His kingdom is secure, for He is at the right hand of power. Christ at the right hand of God signifies the eternal certainty of His reward. It is not possible that He should be robbed of the purchase of His blood. Christ will have what He bought with His own blood, especially as He lives again to claim His purchase. He shall never be a defeated and disappointed Savior. He "loved the church, and gave himself for her" (Eph 5:25); He has redeemed His loved ones from among men, and He shall have all those whom He has purchased.

**Sat down** (2523) ([kathizo](#)) represents a formal and dignified act and is a reference is to the Son's glorification and ascension and His regal position as King. The Son seated at the right hand is never used of **Christ's pre-existing state** co-equal with the Father, but always of **His exalted state** as Son of man after His sufferings. Now as our Mediator He "intercedes for us" in the presence of God. (see **note** Romans 8:34).

**Hughes** remarks that this "thought is utterly sublime but true—this glorious Cosmic Being at the apex of His splendor is praying for you and me! Can it really be? Yes! God's Word says it is so. Wonder of wonders!" ([Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul](#))

**Vine** adds that "this position was a ratification of the perfect fulfillment of all that He had accomplished in His expiatory (making atonement) sacrifice for sins." ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine](#))

The seated posture is one of of rest and yet in His exalted state Jesus is still bearing on all things toward their destined consummation, and is still dealing with sin as the Great High Priest, saving believing sinners in His precious blood and cleansing saints from the daily defilement of sin. This is not the rest following toil, but the rest of satisfaction in a finished work (cf "once for all" or "for all time" in the following verses - Heb 7:27-note; He 9:12-note, He 10:10-note, He 10:12-note; He 10:14-note John 19:30)

This posture indicates that the work of redemption has been completed. The seated posture of the High Priest Jesus Christ is in contrast to the Levitical priests who never sat down so far as their tabernacle work was concerned because their work was never finished, because

the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near" (see **note** Hebrews 10:1)

Why? Because

it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." (see **note** Hebrews 10:4)

In the OT David prophesies and quotes the Father inviting the Son to

Sit at My right hand until I make Thy enemies a footstool for Thy feet." [Ps 110:1](#))

While on earth our Lord applied the Psalm to Himself stating that

from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD." (Lk 22:69).

We see the fulfillment in Hebrews where the author says that

"the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (see **notes** Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 12:2)



Paul explains the significance of Jesus' present Kingly and Priestly position writing that God

raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church" (see **notes** Ephesians 1:20; 1:21; 1:22)

Peter adds that Jesus is

at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him." (see **note** 1 Peter 3:22)

Luke tells us that after Jesus had

"been exalted to the right hand of God, and (had) received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear (the Spirit at Pentecost)" ([Acts 2:33](#))

Finally John offers this encouragement to all believers quoting Jesus Who is presently seated

"at the right hand of the majesty on high" promising that to Him "who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." (see **note** [Revelation 3:21](#))

And in one of the most incredible invitation every given, we as believers have been given the awesome invitation to

"draw near with confidence to the **throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need." (see **note** Hebrews 4:16)

Do you need grace to make it today? I do. Let us draw near with holy boldness.

**Majesty** ([3172](#)) (**megalosune** from **mégas** = great, strong) refers to a state of greatness, importance, prominence and specifically as here is a title for God Who is characterized by majesty and greatness. The use of **Majesty** as a title for God may be rendered in some languages as 'the one who is truly great' or 'truly important.'

**Right** ([1188](#)) (**dexios**) as opposed to left and when giving or receiving, preference is given to right hand (Christ is God's literal "Right hand Man") and so the right-hand position is the place of honor. It was the custom of ancient kings in the East to place at their right hand the son whom they associated with themselves in the prerogatives of royalty. It is also a place of delight for the psalmist says

In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever." (Ps 16:11 [note](#)).

Clearly this is also the position of privilege for the author of Hebrews asks in this same chapter

"which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET"? (see **note** Hebrews 1:13)

This Old Testament quotation in the preceding verse is from [Ps110:1](#) which reads

(A Psalm of David.) The LORD (**Jehovah**) says to my Lord (**Adonai**): "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.

Jesus taking His seat at the right hand of God is taken from **Ps 110:1** [note](#) where David writes...

The LORD (God the Father) says to my Lord (God the Son): "Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." (**Comment:** Literally this begins "*Jehovah said to Adonai*". David records a remarkable conversation between two Persons of the Godhead. This Messianic psalm is quoted as such at least 12 times in the NT. In Mt 22:43, 44, 45 Christ specifically applies Psalm 110:1 to Himself claiming that He is not just the son of David but David's Lord. In short, Psalm 110 pictures the Messiah as King, Priest and victorious Warrior.

**Psalm 110:1** is quoted 5 times in the NT -- Mk 12:36, Lk 20:42; Acts 2:34, Heb 1:13 and Heb 10:12. There are 15 other Scriptural references to Christ seated at the right hand of God:

Ps 16:11 [KJV "at Thy right hand"], Mt 26:64; Mk 14:62; 16:19; Lk 22:69; Acts 7:55,56, Ro 8:34 [note]; Eph 1:20 [note]; Col 3:1 [note]; 1 Pet 3:22 [note] and the 4 verses in Hebrews - see below.)

The writer of Hebrews obviously considers this teaching about the position of Christ Jesus our Great High Priest at the right hand of His Father as very important for he records this truth four times, at the beginning, in the middle and toward the end of his epistle...



**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

**Hebrews 1:13** But to which of the angels has He ever said, **'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET'**?

**Hebrews 8:1** Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a High Priest, **Who has taken His seat at the right hand** of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens

**Hebrews 12:2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and **has sat down at the right hand** of the throne of God.

**Marvin Vincent** paraphrases this verse as "be associated with Me in My royal dignity."

Christ's seated position at right hand of God, a place of privileged honor, is mentioned 5x in Hebrews clearly making it **key phrase** (click Heb 1:3) the author wants his readers to fully comprehend.

In Mt 22:41-46 Jesus specifically applies Ps 110:1 to Himself. Matthew records that

"while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" (Whose Son is the Messiah? Note He did not ask them as He had His disciples "Who do you say that I am" Mt 16:15 for the Pharisees were neither sympathetic or honest in their assessment of His credentials) They said to Him, "The son of David." (the Pharisees knew that the Messiah must come from the line of David as His "son" and no doubt they could have quoted several OT passages to support their answer as eg 2Sa 7:12-13) He said to them (and in Jesus' second question He quotes Ps110:1 which every orthodox Jewish scholar interpreted as a reference to the Messiah. Only the Messiah could sit at the right hand of Jehovah God) "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I put Thine enemies beneath Thy feet" '? "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question." "If Messiah is David's Son," Jesus asked, "then how could Messiah also be David's Lord?"

There is only one answer to this question. As God, Messiah is David's Lord but as man, He is David's Son. He is both "the root and the offspring of David" (Rev 22:6-[note](#)). Ps 110:1 teaches the deity and the humanity of Messiah. He is David's Lord and He is David's Son. The rulers had heard the multitudes proclaim Him as "Son of David" when He rode into Jerusalem. The fact that He accepted this title is evidence that Jesus acknowledged Himself to be the Messiah, the Son of God. So once again the writer of Hebrews proves the superiority of Jesus for there was never an angel to which God said "Sit at My right hand..." "

Christ has been exalted to the place of greatest eminence, power and authority. Sitting at God's right hand, is also a way of saying that Christ's saving work is done and that he is now in the place of highest honor. To a Jews, the description of Christ at God's right hand would be more persuasive as a symbol of Christ's authority and power than even the Resurrection. This is why Jesus spoke these words to Caiaphas just prior to his death and resurrection that hereafter he would

see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN. (Mt 26:64)

**High** ([5308](#)) (**hupselos** from **hupsos/hypsos** = height, elevation) means elevated or lofty and was for example to refer to a mountain.

The psalmist writes that

More than the sounds of many waters, than the mighty breakers of the sea, the LORD on high (Greek LXX uses hupselos) is mighty." ([Ps 93:4](#))

The fact that Jesus has made full and final purification for our sins and is now seated at the right hand of the Father should make you strong, steadfast and unshakable against the terrible temptations that cause you to doubt that your sins, regardless of how seemingly mundane or atrociously heinous, can be completely and irrevocably forgiven. The resurrection, glorification, ascension and enthronement of Christ at the right hand of God is meant to make you confident in the hour of trial and in the hour of death that the purification of your sins is sure, real and sufficient to give you unhindered entrance into heaven. Meditate on the Biblical reasoning that Christ reigns today in heaven because while on earth He made purification for sins once for all time and available to all who call upon the Name of the Lord (see **note** Romans 10:3). Good news indeed for those who by faith receive it as a gift and not by trying to earn it. (see **notes** Ephesians 2:8; 2:9)

**MacDonald** summarizes this section by noting that "In following the pathway of our Lord from creation to Calvary and then to glory,

it seems we have quite lost sight of the prophets. Illustrious though they were, they have receded into the shadows. They bore witness to the coming Messiah ([Acts 10:43](#)). Now that He has come, they gladly retire from view." [Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#) )

F B Meyer in the Way Into the Holiest has the following chapter on Hebrews 1:3,4...

## THE DIGNITY OF CHRIST

"Who being the brightness of his 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 on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Being made so much better than the angels." HEBREWS 1:3, 4.

**SON.** He hath spoken unto us in his Son." God has many sons, but only one Son. When, on the morning of his resurrection, our Lord met the frightened women, he said, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God." But, as he used the words, they meant infinitely more of himself than they could ever mean of man, however saintly or childlike. No creature-wing shall ever avail to carry us across the abyss which separates all created from all uncreated life. But we may reverently accept the fact, so repeatedly emphasized, that Jesus is "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John i. i8). He is Son in a sense altogether unique.

This term, as used by our Lord, and as understood by the Jews, not only signified divine relationship, but divine equality. Hence, on one occasion, the Jews sought to kill him, because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (John v. i8). And he, so far from correcting the opinion-as he must have done instantly, had it been erroneous, went on to confirm it and to substantiate its truthfulness. The impression which Jesus of Nazareth left on all who knew him was that of his extreme humility; but here was a point in which he could not abate one jot or tittle of his claims, lest he should be false to his knowledge of himself, and to the repeated voice of God. And so he died, because he affirmed, amid the assumed horror of his judges, that he was the Christ, the Son of God. "He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God." It was his right.

His dignity is still further elaborated in the words which follow.

**He is THE BEAM OF THE DIVINE GLORY,** for so might the word translated effulgence be rendered. We have never seen the sun, but only its far-traveled ray, which left its surface some few minutes before. But the ray is of the same constitution as the orb from which it comes; if you unravel its texture, you will learn something of the very nature of the sun; they live in perpetual and glorious unity. And as we consider the intimacy of that union, we are reminded of those familiar words, which tell us that though no man hath seen God at any time, yet he has been revealed in the Word made flesh. We hear our Master saying again the old, deep, mysterious words: "I and my Father are one. We will come and make our abode." And we can sympathize with the evening hymn of the early Church, sung around the shores of the Bosphorus:

Hail! gladdening Light, of his pure glory poured,

Who is the Immortal Father, Heavenly, Blest.

**He is also THE IMPRESS OF THE DIVINE NATURE.** The allusion here is to the impression made by a seal on molten wax; and as the image made on the wax is the exact resemblance, though on another substance, of the die, so is Christ the exact resemblance of the Father in our human flesh. And thus he was able to say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The Life of Jesus is the Life of God rendered into the terms of our human life; so that we may understand the very being and nature of God by seeing it reproduced before us, so far as it is possible, in the character and life of Jesus. These two images complete each other. You might argue from the first, that as the ray is only part of the sun, so Christ is only part of God; but this mistake is corrected by the second, for an impression must be coextensive with the seal. You might argue from the second, that as the impression might be made on a very inferior material, so Christ's nature was a very unworthy vehicle of the divine glory; but this mistake is corrected by the first, for a beam is of the same texture as the sun. Coextensive with God, of the same nature as God; thus is Jesus Christ.

**He is, therefore, superior to angels** (Heb 1:4).-Lofty as was the esteem in which Hebrew believers had been wont to hold those bright and blessed spirits, they were not for a moment to be compared with him whose majestic claims are the theme of these glowing words.

**He surpasses them in the glory of Divine Nature.** Turn to Psalm 2. -one of the grandest miniature dramas in all literature. Probably composed on some marked episode in the reign of David, there is a glow, a sublimity, in the diction which no earthly monarch could exhaust. We are not, therefore, surprised to find the early Church applying it to Christ (Acts 4:25). In reading it, we

first hear the roar of the mob and the calm decision of the throne; and then our attention is centered on him who comes forward, bearing the divine autograph to the decree which declares him Son. Nothing like this was ever said to angel, how-ever exalted in character or devoted in service. It is only befitting, then, that the un sinning sons of light should worship him; and as we hear the command issued, "Let all the angels of God worship him," we are still further impressed by the immense distance between their nature and his.

**Do we worship him enough?** During his earthly life he was constantly met by expressive acts of homage, which, unlike Peter in the house of Cornelius, he did not repress. The almost instinctive act of the little group, from which he was parted on the Mount of Olives in his ascension, was to worship him (Luke 24:52). And no sooner had he passed to his home than there burst from the Church a tide of adoration which has only become wider and deeper with the ages. The Epistles, and especially the Book of Revelation, teem with expressions of worship to Christ. And the death-cries of martyrs must have familiarized the heathen mind with the homage paid to Christ by Christians. Of the worship offered him in catacombs, or in their secret meetings, amongst dens and caves, paganism was necessarily ignorant. But the behavior and exclamations of the servants of Jesus, arraigned before heathen tribunals, and exposed to the most agonizing deaths, were matters of public notoriety.

Some years ago, beneath the ruins of the Palatine palace, was discovered a rough sketch, traced in all probability by the hand of a pagan slave in the second century. A human figure, with the head of an ass, is represented as fixed to the cross; while another figure, in a tunic, stands on one side, making a gesture which was the customary pagan expression of adoration. Underneath this caricature ran the inscription, rudely written, Alexamenos adores his God. But what a tribute to the worship paid in those early days to our Saviour, amidst gibes and taunts and persecution!

The hymns which have come down to us ring with the same spirit. Pliny writes to tell the Emperor that the Christians of Asia Minor were accustomed to meet to sing praise to Christ as God. As each morning broke, the believer of those primitive days repeated in private the Gloria in Excelsis, as his hymn of supplication and praise: "Thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father." The early Church did not simply admire Christ, it adored him.

Is not this a great lack in our private devotions? We are so apt to concentrate our thoughts on ourselves; and to thank for what we have received. We do not sufficiently often forget our own petty wants and anxieties, and launch down our tiny rivulet, until we are borne out into the great ocean of praise, which is ever breaking in music around the person of Jesus. Praise is one of the greatest acts of which we are capable; and it is most like the service of heaven. There they ask for naught, for they have all and abound; but throughout the cycles of glory the denizens of those bright worlds fill them with praise. And why should not earthly tasks be wrought to the same music? We are the priests of creation; it becomes us to gather up and express the sentiments which are mutely dumb, but which await our offering at the altar of God.

Let a part of our private and public devotion be ever dedicated to the praise of Jesus; when we shall break forth into some hymn, or psalm, or spiritual song, singing and praising Christ with angels and archangels and all the hosts of the redeemed. On that brow, once thorn-crowned, let us entwine our laurels. Upon that ear, once familiarized with threats and scorn, let us pour the fullness of our adoring devotion. So shall we gain and give new thoughts of the supreme dignity of the Lord Jesus. "Thou art worthy to receive... honor."