

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 3
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The Visitation by Antonio Bellucci Cir 1700

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Three

CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO ALL CELESTIAL BEINGS

November 26, 2017

Daniel E. Woodhead

Hebrews 1:10-2:8

¹⁰ And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: ¹¹ they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; ¹² and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. ¹³ But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit, on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? ¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation (KJV)?

THE CREATOR HAS LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH

Hebrews 1:10

¹⁰ And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands (KJV):

The text now continues to describe the creator and His handiwork expressed in Psalm 102:25-27. The Jewish person to whom our text was written would know the Psalms. The Psalms though affirm the creation account in Genesis. Only God can create. Mankind is not able to do this. He can manage, rearrange and form. He cannot create matter out of nothing *ex nihilo*. This is the Latin meaning for “out of nothing.” In the beginning is a direct reference to the creation of the physical property of time. When we ponder the concept of time we find it impossible to arrive at a suitable definition. Time is not uniform: It is a physical property that varies with mass, acceleration and gravity, among other things. Particle physicists insist that we exist in more dimensions than we are aware of. These are all products of the time domain. What is important to understand is that time had a beginning is in existence now, is changing its properties, and will have an end. These are concepts the human cannot fully understand. Consider our awareness spectrum while we are in these bodies. We are aware of events transpiring at the present. We can remember the past. We cannot predict the future because we cannot see it. Now God who lives outside of time (not where there is a lot of time) knows the future. In fact, one might say “God Remembers Tomorrow!” Such is the unique characteristic of time and the limitation of knowing it that God has placed upon us.

The unity of the three components of our existence, time, matter and space are all independent and coterminous with the whole. The universe is not part time, matter and space. It is rather all space, time and matter.

Clearly God has given us multiple characteristics of what we cannot see. Nachmonides a Jewish rabbi from Spain in the 13th century taught that there are ten dimensions. Four are knowable such as the three spatial (height, width & depth) as well as time. The other six are “curled” into the four we are able to detect while in our bodies. We will see them all when we are released from these bodies at death when the angels come for us (Luke 16:22) or if the Lord comes for us first (I Thessalonians 4:14-17).

The use of the Hebrew word to create, *Bara* in Genesis 1:1 means that at some point God spoke the creation into being. God alone is infinite and omnipotent. God is the Creator who came to earth in the person of Jesus of Nazareth who the Bible says created all things (John 1). God also created the heavens. The heavens here refer to space. So, the beginning of time was then followed by the space of the universe. Our entire universe only consists of three components. They are space, time and matter. The Hebrew word *shamayin* is that used of the space component of the basic space-time-mass universe. This is followed by the Hebrew word *erets*, which is translated as earth but primarily refers to matter. Matter of course is anything that has weight and takes up space. At the time that matter was created there were no bodies in the heavens. They were created on the fourth day of the creation account in Genesis one. On the fourth day of creation God made the stars in the heavens.

Genesis 1: 14-18

*¹⁴And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; **and let them be for signs,** and for seasons, and for days and years: ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. ¹⁶And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. ¹⁷And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good (ASV, 1901).*

One of the reasons for making the stars in the heavens was for a sign. A sign signifies or represents something. One dictionary defines a sign as:

An object, quality, or event whose presence or occurrence indicates the presence or occurrence of something else

Signs therefore, are meant to lead one to something else. The sign itself is not the end meaning. It is the method employed to direct our attention to something else. In the stars God is the direct object the signs point to. We should realize that His entire creation which theologians call “general revelation,” speak to Him and coming from Him. In fact, God charges all mankind to know Him through the ‘signs’ He has provided.

Romans 1: 20

²⁰ For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse (KJV):

The heavenly bodies are the handiwork of God. God is trying to tell us things about Himself through the stars in the heavens. The heavens declare His creative output.

Psalm 19: 1-6

¹The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork.²Day unto day uttereth speech, And night unto night showeth knowledge.³There is no speech nor language; Their voice is not heard.⁴Their line is gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,⁵Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, And, rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.⁶His going forth is from the end of the heavens, And, his circuit unto the ends of it; And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof (ASV, 1901).

This psalm of David announces that the heavens declare the glory (splendor) of God's handiwork. Verse one is a summary statement: the majestic Creation is evidence of the even more majestic Creator-God. The heavens continually (every day and every night) display the fact that there is a Creator. Even though Creation does not speak audibly as humans do its message goes out for all the earth to witness. The message from nature about the glory of God reaches all nations, and is equally intelligible to them all. It is a universal language.

THE CREATION IS TEMPORARY WHILE GOD IS ETERNAL

Hebrews 1:11-12

¹¹ they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; ¹² and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail (KJV).

The Son is exalted above all.

Here Paul again quotes Psalm 102:25–27. He states six concepts from the Psalm.

1. Jesus is superior in His basic existence.
2. He is the Creator of the universe.
3. The Son is sovereign over the changes in the universe.
4. The Son is the unchangeable Lord in the midst of a changing universe.
5. The Son is eternal.
6. Jesus the Creator is eternal, the universe will someday be discarded like an old piece of cloth. In the words of Revelation 6:14: *You will roll them up.* In 2 Peter 3:10, the

universe is *destined to be dissolved*. So, while He is eternal, the universe is temporary and a large portion of the matter will be destroyed (*dissolved*) in the Great Tribulation.

Our universe is comprised of only three components. They are matter, space and time. Since the Fall each of these are gradually dissolving due to entropy (gradual decay) that entered the creation. Peter is teaching that God is not bound by the time domain like we are.

The day of the Lord will hit the unbeliever with the suddenness and unexpectedness of a thief in the night. During the Great Tribulation, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise. The Old Testament passages to this statement are from Isaiah 3:13 and 34:4. Each of these Isaiah passages mention the same occurrence. Jesus spoke of these same things in His Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:29). While the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the earth will be burned up by the judgments of the Great Tribulation. Many of these are fiery judgments. For example, in the Trumpet Judgments of Revelation 8–9, the first, second, third, and sixth Trumpet Judgments are judgments of fire. In the Bowl Judgments of Revelation 16, the fourth Bowl Judgment is a judgment of fire. During the Great Tribulation, there will be a burning of the earth. In fact, somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters of the earth's surface will be destroyed during the Great Tribulation. In this case, Peter is not dealing with the total destruction of the globe by fire; he is referring to the surface of the earth. Contrary to the evolutionists claims, the earth is not eternal. This is the destruction of the matter spoken of by the Hebrews 11:11 passage.

Time has been decaying since the Fall after creation. Einstein came close in his quest to understand the basic fundamentals of energy in the universe. His general theory affirmed that there is no distinction between time and space. He saw time as bending, having a velocity and decaying. Time is not uniform: It is a physical property that varies with mass, acceleration, gravity, and light among other things. The speed of light similarly has been slowing down over the centuries since the Fall. The velocity of light has been measured 164 times by 16 different methodologies over the last several hundred years. The net result of all these measurements is that light is slowing down over time. So, we can infer that if light has been slowing down for the last several centuries, then it must have been slowing down since the origin of time. For example, using the same regression as observed by the physicists we can surmise that light was 10-30% faster during the time Christ was on the earth (Cir. A.D. 33). We can then believe that light was 2 times faster during the time of Solomon (Cir. 900 B.C.) If we go back further with the same regression to the time of Abraham (Cir. 2350 B.C.) light could have been 4 times faster than now. Using the same regression and understanding the decay caused by the "Fall" light could well have been 10 Million times as fast at the time of the creation and therefore light was able to be so fast as to travel almost instantaneous at creation so as to be at the origin (stars) and the earth almost at once.

Space also has properties which God controls. This Hebrew word *rakeeah* means to spread out or stretch. Some other places in Scripture where this same expression is used are:

1. Job 9:8 He alone stretches out the heavens.
2. Psalm 104:2 The heavens are stretched out like a tent curtain.

3. Isaiah 40: 22 God stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.
4. Jeremiah 10: 12 The Lord has stretched out the heavens.
5. Zechariah 12:1 God stretched out the heavens.

These usages of the Hebrew word for stretch (*rakeeah*) are not quaint poetic hyperbole or exaggerations. They mean to express the properties of the heavens that we cannot see or fully understand. Space is not an empty vacuum. We have difficulty defining space and understanding the concept of the property of space. Scripture gives us some insight as to some of its properties.

1. Space can be torn (Isaiah 64: 1);
2. It can be worn out like a garment (Psalm 102: 25),
3. It can be shaken (Hebrews 12:26; Haggai 2:6; Isaiah 13:13).
4. It can be burnt up (II Peter 3:12).
5. It can be split apart like a scroll (Revelation 6:14);
6. It can be rolled up like a mantle (Hebrews 1:12) or scroll (Isaiah 34: 4).

So just like a garment space can be rolled up, folded and put away. But, God exists outside of time. We have a tendency to call this eternity. In the first verse in the Bible we are told that God existed before the beginning or to say it another way before the beginning of *time* began. In fact, the apostle Paul writing to Timothy stated the same thing in:

II Timothy 1: 9a

⁹For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time (NLT)

We need to realize that the New Testament affirms one component of Genesis 1: 1 by stating that God acted *before time* began. God was in existence before any creation efforts were put forth. It has often been pointed out that coming to an understanding of the early chapters of Genesis and *believing* them makes the rest of the Bible easy to understand and believe. These early verses demonstrate the degree of control over all things that God has and exercises. Paul is affirming these things with verse 12 when he says, “*but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.*” All things are in a state of decay until the Lord returns and establishes His Kingdom on this earth. At that time, the earth will receive a renovation. The speed of light will increase seven-fold (Isaiah 30:26), which will be a major factor in the renovation of the earth. In fact, with the light speeding up time will also change. One observation the Scripture gives us to affirm that is the longevity of the human during the Messianic Kingdom. The Land will be well watered, produce abundant food and have a major (Seven-fold) increase in light. All physical infirmities will be healed. The speed of light has been significantly faster closer to the creation than it is now. This will be the reason for an increase in life longevity in the Millennium. Again, God says:

Isaiah 65: 20

²⁰ There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed (ASV, 1901).

THE ANGELS ARE SERVANTS

Hebrews 1:13-14

¹³ But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit, on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? ¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation (KJV)?

This is a quote from Psalm 110:1 which the Jewish people of the first century considering the claims of Christ and those who being born again entered the Church knew well. Essentially, angels function as priestly messengers especially *for them who shall be heirs of salvation*.

Their activities can be summarized as that of:

1. The worship of God (Isaiah 6:3; Rev. 4:8)
2. As messengers of God (Daniel 9:22; Luke 1:11, 26; 2:9; Revelation 1:1)
3. As soldiers in spiritual combat (Daniel 10:13f; Revelation 12:7)
4. As ministers to God's people (Hebrews 1:14)

In their service to God, they are seen as attendants around His throne, waiting to serve Him and do His bidding (Psalm 103:20; Isaiah 6:1f; Job 1:6; 2:1; Revelation. 5:11; 8:1f), as worshippers in praise of Him (Isaiah 6:3; Psalm 148:1-2; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 5:12), as observers who rejoice over what He does (Job 38:6-7; Luke 2:12-13; 15:10), as soldiers in battle with Satan (Revelation 12:7), and as instruments of His judgments (Revelation 7:1; 8:2). In relation to the nation of Israel, Michael, the archangel, functions as their guardian (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9). In relation to other nations, they watch over rulers and nations (Daniel 4:17) and seek to influence their human leaders (Daniel 10:21; 11:1). In the Tribulation, they will be the agents God uses to pour out His judgments (Revelation 8-9 and 16).

With the plan of God centering in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, they naturally perform many services for the Savior.

They predicted His birth (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:26-28), and then announced his birth (Luke 2:8-15). An angel warned Joseph to take Mary and the baby Jesus and flee into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15), and an angel directed the family to return to Israel after Herod died (Matthew 2:19-21).

In relation to His suffering, angels ministered to Him after His temptation (Matthew 4:11), in His stress in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43), and Jesus said He could have called a legion of angels who stood ready to come to His defense if He so desired (Matthew 26:53).

In relation to His resurrection, an angel rolled away the stone from the tomb (Matthew 28:1-2), angels announced His resurrection to the women on that Resurrection morning (Matthew 5-6; Luke 24:5-7), and angels were present at His ascension and gave instruction to the disciples (Acts 1:10-11).

In relation to His coming again, the voice of the archangel will be heard at the translation of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16), they will accompany Him in His glorious return to earth (Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7) and they will separate the wheat from the tares at Christ's second coming (Matthew 13:39-40).

In Relation to the Church: Hebrews 1:14 describes their ministry as "ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation." In this, however, Scripture points to a number of specific ministries: they bring answers to prayer (Acts 12:5-10), they help in bringing people to the Savior (Acts 8:26; 10:3), they may encourage in times of danger (Acts 27:23-24), and they care for God's people at the time of death (Luke 16:22).

In all of these activities in which the celestial beings engage, Jesus the Creator is Superior.....

Next message: The Book of Hebrews Chapter Two

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