

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**First Quarter 2022: *In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews***  
**Lesson 3 “The Promised Son”**

**Read for this week’s study**

Isaiah 2:2, 3; Hebrews 1:1–4; Exodus 24:16, 17; Isaiah 44:24; Hebrews 1:10; Luke 1:31, 32; Hebrews 1:5.

**Memory Text**

“But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being” (Hebrews 1:2, 3, NIV).

**Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. In These Last Days
- III. God Has Spoken to Us by His Son
- IV. He Is the Radiance of the Glory of God
- V. Through Whom He Made the Universe
- VI. Today I Have Begotten You
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. For Jews in the First Century, the prophetic word of God had not been heard in a long time, since the prophet Malachi. Read Hebrews 1:1-4. What is the central idea of these verses? How did God reveal Himself in Old Testament times? How does the revelation available in the Old Testament prophets compare with that available from God’s “Son”? Why does the author of Hebrews feel the need to assert the superiority of that Son in comparison with the angels? (Monday’s Lesson)
2. Read Hebrews 1:5-6. Why does the author of Hebrews speak about the Son as “begotten” here? Once again, why so much focus on comparison with the angels here? The concept of a divine adoption of a ruler was common in the Greco-Roman world, especially in the East. The concept of God’s Son being “begotten” has nothing to do with the nature of Christ, but rather with His role in the plan of salvation. (Thursday’s Lesson)

3. The concept of Sonship is central to the book of Hebrews because it is a major theme of Scripture as a whole. Let's explore the biblical background of this concept. Read Genesis 1:26-27 and 5:3. What two things about the creation of humanity were different than that of the angels? What was God's purpose in doing that? Read Genesis 3:1-5 and 3:15. How did God's plan for the human race become disrupted and what intervention would be needed to fix the disruption? Read Exodus 4:22-23 and 19:5-6. How did God describe Israel and what was His purpose for them? Read Psalms 89:19-27 and 2:1-7. What is David called here? Read 2 Samuel 7:12-15. Who else is included in the special sonship God had in mind?
4. Read Luke 3:21-22; Matthew 1:1; Luke 3:38 and 1:34-35. How is the divine Sonship of Jesus built on the earlier "sons" of God? How do these verses fulfill the promise of Genesis 3:15? What do John 3:16 and Romans 8:29 tell us about the restoration God was fashioning in Jesus Christ?
5. Now we come back to Hebrews. Read Hebrews 1:5-6 again. Which Old Testament context is echoed in this passage? Read Hebrews 2:5-9. What additional information can we glean from 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 3:21? How do all these New Testament texts build on God's purpose for the human race as described in Genesis? How did the Sonship of Jesus impact that purpose? What does all this tell us about God and the role human beings will have in securing the universe forever?
6. Read Numbers 24:14-19 and Isaiah 2:2-3. What did God promise He would do for His people the "latter days"? Have the latter days promised here begun or are they still future? (Sunday's Lesson)
7. Read Hebrews 1:3, Exodus 24:16-17, and Psalm 36:9. What is "the radiance of the glory of God"? In what way is the "image of God" that Jesus bears similar or different from the image of God originally given to Adam? (Tuesday's Lesson)
8. Read Isaiah 44:24, 45:18 and Nehemiah 6:9. How can we reconcile the concept that the God of the Old Testament is the "only God" and the sole Creator of the universe with the claims regarding Jesus in Hebrews 1? (Wednesday's Lesson)
9. What would be lost if we came to believe that Jesus was just a created being like us? How would our understanding of the cross be different? (Friday's Lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

If the one who came was not really God, then all we've said goes down the drain. Do you mean he was the first-born of all creation? Then we don't know about God. Someone very kind was willing to come, or maybe he made him come, to clear up these matters. What do you do with the "first-born of all creation?" I'd really want to put with that verse 18, "He's the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead," first-born, "that in

everything he might be pre-eminent.” Is that how he’s first-born? First-born doesn’t mean the first one born, necessarily, but the first in position, in rank, and in authority.

For example, Isaac was Abraham’s first-born, his only-begotten son. But he’d had a boy before, hadn’t he? But he didn’t inherit the estate. So this is in that sense of rank and position. Isn’t this whole passage here in Colossians 1 to the effect that the one who came has never had a beginning. He’s the first. He’s the creator of all things. And didn’t John say the same? Nothing was created without him. And Hebrews 1 is going to say God told the angels to worship him, and you don’t worship a created being.

And I think that Paul’s great concern here in Colossians is that the one who came to clear up all the questions about God was God himself, or our questions have not really been answered. Because our questions are not about the second in command. They’re not about an angel. Our questions are about God. So those who believe that someone less than God came have either different questions or they don’t have the answers.

But if we really want to know about God, what God is really like, then it would mean everything in the world to believe and understand that the one who came to this earth and walked among us was that God. And so, when Jesus was here, and we realize it’s God, and you watch him treat sinners so graciously, did anybody intercede with Jesus to forgive somebody? No. Nobody had to plead with him to forgive, ever. It was in his heart to forgive. No one had to plead with him. But somebody has to plead with the Father, right? If Jesus is fully God, as emphasized in all these passages, and nobody had to intercede with him, then we know no one has to intercede with God. And yet they weren’t getting that point. And so Jesus had to say, in John 16:26, “You know that if you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the Father. And you realize the implications of this? There’s no need for me to intercede with the Father when I get up there, for the Father’s just like me. In fact, I am God.”

What about Isaiah 9:6? What are the names of the Son, but the “everlasting Father, the almighty God,” you remember? So on this earth, the angels saw God, “than whom there is none greater,” treating people the way he did. And nobody had to plead with Jesus to forgive. So if we suggest somebody needs to plead with the Father but not with the Son, we’ve driven a wedge between the two, or we suggest; maybe, the Son is not fully God. Whatever God did for sinners, I mean God the Son, God the Father would do, for they are equally God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Ephesians and Colossians*, recorded May 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/67MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/68MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Think of the picture of God in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Not that it was new. The whole Old Testament had born witness to this truth about God. Look at Jeremiah's picture, and Isaiah, and Hosea, and Amos, and Micah, and others in the Old Testament. But now Jesus has come, and has clearly demonstrated, at risk of life, the truth about our heavenly Father. And you think of what the disciples are now privileged to take out to the world. Now they knew what God was like. They were not that clear when Jesus began, were they? You remember they asked him, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" And, "Do you wish that fire would come down from heaven and consume your adversaries?" They didn't know God that well.

But they had been together in the upper room and heard Jesus say, "If you have seen me, you've seen the Father. And there's no need for me to intercede with the Father for you, for the Father loves you himself. And in the judgment, you'll actually just be judged by the truth. That's all. Nothing arbitrary about it." And they'd seen him feed the hungry, and heal the sick, and cry at the funeral of one of his friends, and all those things. And now they were to go out and spread the good news. You'd think the world would be thrilled, but it was no more thrilled to hear them than it was to hear Christ.

In fact, from whom did the strongest opposition come? Hasn't that always been the history? Yes, God's professed people opposed this picture. In chapter 13:50, did you notice that even the devout women opposed. Not all of them, but some. "But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men [they were together], of the city, and stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district." So even the devout women were opposed. But look who incited them. The Jews! God's own family had rejected his Son, and now they were making sure that nobody would accept the truth that Jesus had come to reveal. Why do you think again, at this stage, the Jews did not like what they had heard? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Acts, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/59MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/60MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

But in the larger great controversy setting, the gospel is the truth about our gracious God; the truth that ends the war, and confirms the loyalty of the universe, and wins some of us back to repentance and to trust. I believe (more strongly than I believe anything) that the most important of all our beliefs is the truth about our God. God is not the kind of person his enemies have made him out to be—arbitrary, vengeful, and severe. He is instead precisely as his Son revealed him to be. We believe the testimony of Jesus when he said, "If you have seen

me, you have seen the Father.” God is just as loving and gracious as his Son; just as willing to forgive and heal.

Could there be any better news than that? To me, that’s the everlasting good news that holds the loyalty of the universe. And wins us back, and will hold our loyalty and trust for the rest of eternity. And this is the message we have the high privilege of sharing with people all over this planet, who may not know they are members of God’s family, but who deserve to know, and who deserve to hear this truth. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #1, “The Conflict in God’s Family” recorded January 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>

I believe that to pray in Jesus’ name is simply a grateful recognition that if the Son had not come to reveal the truth about his Father we wouldn’t know how to approach the Father. We’d be afraid to. Might not even want to. So to pray in his name is an acknowledgment of all that the Son has done, and the Father through him, to make us even want to pray, and to approach the throne with confidence, and so on. So it has to be meaningfully done, or it’s almost an insult just to mean “I’m nearly done, God,” when up in heaven the Father hears you say, “For we ask this in Jesus’ name”, he knows you’re nearly through, and when you say “Amen” he knows you’re done and he can start listening to another one. It seems sad, but often down here “Amen” means it’s time for the choir to begin the response. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, recorded May 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/71MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/72MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

The enemy can never take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus! {SD 351.4}

The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God. {Ed 126.4}

Promises are estimated by the truth of the one who makes them. Many men make promises only to break them, to mock the heart that trusted in them. Those who lean upon such men lean upon broken reeds. But God is behind the promises He makes. He is ever mindful of His covenant, and His truth endureth to all generations (MS 23, 1899). {7BC 942.12}

The Son of God came to this earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth. He came to sow the world with truth. He held the keys of all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. The Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, every phase of truth was evident to Him. {CT 28.2}

What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God. Divinity flashed through humanity in softening, subduing light. He was the embodiment of the law of God, which is the transcript of His character (MS 77, 1899). {5BC 1131.6}

Jesus came into the world to illustrate the character of God in His own life, and He swept back the misrepresentations that Satan had originated, and revealed the glory of God. It was only by living among men that He could reveal the mercy, compassion, and love of His heavenly Father; for it was only by actions of benevolence that He could set forth the grace of God. The unbelief of men was deep seated, and yet they could not resist the testimony of His God-like example, and His deeds of love and truth. {SD 139.3}

Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.—SC 11 (1892). {1MCP 250.1}

In the Teacher sent from God, heaven gave to men its best and greatest. He who had stood in the councils of the Most High, who had dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal, was the One chosen to reveal in person to humanity the knowledge of God. {Ed 73.2}

There was but one hope for the human race—that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be cast a new leaven; that there might be brought to mankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world. {Ed 76.1}

Christ came to restore this knowledge. He came to set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness. {Ed 76.2}

Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. Sweeping away the exactions which had encumbered the law of God, He showed that the law is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of mankind, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. {Ed 76.3}

So far from making arbitrary requirements, God's law is given to men as a hedge, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Fidelity to God involves fidelity to man. Thus the law guards the rights, the individuality, of every human being. It restrains the superior from oppression, and the subordinate from disobedience. It ensures man's well-being, both for this world and for the world to come. To the obedient it is the pledge of eternal life, for it expresses the principles that endure forever. {Ed 76.4}

Christ came to demonstrate the value of the divine principles by revealing their power for the regeneration of humanity. He came to teach how these principles are to be developed and applied. {Ed 77.1}

Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men. {5BC 1131.1}

Christ alone was able to represent the Deity. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. No verbal description could reveal God to the world. Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, God Himself must be revealed to humanity. In order to do this, our Saviour clothed His divinity with humanity. He employed the human faculties, for only by adopting these could He be comprehended by humanity. Only humanity could reach humanity. He lived out the character of God through the human body which God had prepared for Him. He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God, thus showing that He had the power to unite humanity to divinity (RH June 25, 1895). {7BC 924.6}

Jesus, the express image of the Father's person, the effulgence of His glory; the self-denying Redeemer, throughout His pilgrimage of love on earth, was a living representation of the character of the law of God. In His life it is made manifest that heaven-born love, Christlike principles, underlie the laws of eternal rectitude. {MB 49.2}

Christ came to reveal to a fallen race the love of God. He, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of the brightness of His divinity, and came to live on this earth as a man

among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. No man has seen God at any time, except as He is revealed through Christ. {UL 334.5}

God created the earth to be the abode of holy, happy beings. That purpose will be fulfilled when, renewed by the power of God and freed from sin and sorrow, it shall become the eternal home of the redeemed. {AH 540.3}

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. {MH 415.1}

The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. It is not as the result of a mechanism, that, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is the continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God. {6BC 1062.5}

Christ had not exchanged His divinity for humanity; but He had clothed His divinity in humanity (RH Oct. 29, 1895). {5BC 1128.3}