

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

“New and improved.” That is a common sales tactic. Consumers are always looking for better products. Scientific discovery and technological advancement help us save time, increase efficiency and live healthier. “Better” is also a recurring theme in the book of Hebrews. Today, we will begin a new series of studies on the book. Hebrews helps us understand the identity and work of Jesus. Unlike the letters written by Paul, Hebrews does not specify its author and its recipients. As the name suggests, the book was addressed to people of Jewish origin. We find descriptions about the Old Testament Law, animal sacrifice and history of the Israelites. The author assumed that his readers knew those subjects, and so he did not even elaborate on the background. The letter could be written for some Jewish Christians. They were Jews by birth but later converted to Christianity. They faced persecutions from the Romans and their Jewish peers. The Romans accused Christians for showing allegiance to a King other than the Caesar. The Jews claimed that Christians worshipped another God. Those believers could have avoided many hardships if they went back to their traditional Jewish beliefs. But doing so would be denying Jesus as their Lord. Just like those Christians had to deal with, we live in a world that does not believe in Jesus as the one true God. We will prevent some inconvenience if we do not tell others than we are Christians. After all, the world says religion is a personal thing. Do not let your beliefs affect friendship and work relationship. But the Bible tells us that we will always go against the flow. God calls us to reflect His light to the fallen world. We must protect and profess what we believe to be the truth. The book of Hebrews affirms that Jesus Christ is God. Chapter 1 tells us that Jesus is better than all else because He is the superior Son of the Heavenly Father.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 密切的關係 Intimacy with The Father

First, Jesus is superior because He has an intimate relationship with the Father. Verses 1 to 4 tell us that Jesus is God’s unique Son. God spoke to His messengers in an audible voice, or through miracles and dreams. They wrote down their experience and became part of the Old Testament. When Jesus came, God revealed Himself in a more direct way. Jesus became a man and He was born into the world. The apostle John describes Jesus as the “Word” in his gospel. It can refer to a message, a pathway or a process. Jesus brought us God’s truth. He is the only way to reconcile with the Father. He died on the cross to pave the way for us. Jesus is not only the Word, He is also God’s Son. By the title “Son,” Jesus is the heir for all things. But what will Jesus get from the Father, and when? Jesus willingly laid aside His authority as God when He became a man. He identified with us physically and emotionally. For example, Jesus could only be in one place at a time. He got tired and hungry. He shed tears and felt pain. His death on the cross was also real. However, Jesus rose again on the third day. He went back to heaven after His resurrection. He regained all the power and glory He originally had. The Bible tells us that one day Jesus will return to judge the world. He will receive worship from His people throughout eternity. All those are His inheritance. Then the author also says Jesus is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.” This “radiance” can refer to a reflection from a light source. But

here it means illumination. Jesus is more like the sun, not the moon. At His transfiguration, Jesus glowed with glory before three disciples. He showed His radiance. Then Jesus is also the exact representation of God. The phrase refers to an imprint. For example, an image on a coin shows the likeness of a person. Jesus whom the Jews saw was God Himself! In John chapter 14, Jesus said farewell to His disciples because He was going to the cross. Philip asked the Lord to show him the Father. Jesus responded in 14:9 – ... **“Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”** No one in his sinful body can gaze at God. But seeing Jesus will be the same as seeing the Father. He and the Father are the same. The author of Hebrews also compares Jesus to the angels. God gave angels certain power. For example, they carried out God’s orders to destroy wicked cities and people. Even though angels are superior to humans, they are only God’s servants. In comparison, only Jesus received the exclusive title as God’s Son. In our human logic, a son is inferior to his dad. My sons are smarter than me in some areas. But I still pay their bills because I am richer than them. The Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses argue that Jesus is lower than the Father. They claim that Jesus is only a created being or an elevated angel. But we cannot develop our doctrines based on one or a few verses. We must read through the whole Bible. Even in Hebrews, there are many proofs that Jesus is God. We will share more later in this message and in subsequent studies. The status of Son does not convey a secondary position. Again, it ties into the intimate relationship between Jesus and the Father, much like the closeness between kids and their parents. Being the Son, Jesus submitted to the Father. For instance, Jesus says in John 6:38 – **“For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.”** Jesus completely obeyed the Father. Jesus had real struggles when He prayed at the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew the coming shame and pain when He approached the cross. Those physical and emotional sufferings were real. He pleaded earnestly to the Father that He could skip the cross if there was an alternative. But at the end, Jesus surrendered Himself to the Father’s will. Jesus is the perfect example for our submission. Following God may not be easy. We often have to let go of our preference and our face. But ultimately, God will receive glory from us and we get His joy.

## 2. 崇高的名份 Supremacy in His Name

Jesus does not only enjoy intimacy with the Father. Secondly, He also possess supremacy in His name. The term “supremacy” has become a buzz-word these days. It means what we are told in the news. Jesus is superior to all things. Jesus is compared to angels in this chapter. Verse 4 says: **So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.** “Angel” in Greek means a messenger. Angels are heavenly agents created by God. What is the “name” mentioned here? From the context, it refers to Jesus’ title as the Son. In the Bible, a person’s name speaks about his/her character. For example, Sarah means “princess” and John means “God is gracious.” Chinese parents want their daughters to be beautiful or wise, and sons to be strong or mighty when giving them names. Glory, power and majesty come with Jesus’ title. Jesus is not only the Son, He is also Lord. Paul writes in Philippians 2:9-11 that: **9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** The Jews understood that the title “Lord” is equivalent to God in the Old Testament. Jesus is the Lord over all things. His name is superior to any other name. All created beings will bow down to Jesus and

everyone will acknowledge Him as Lord in eternity. Today, we do not remember the dead founder of a religion. We worship the risen Lord. The Hebrews passage says that even angels worship Jesus. We see in the Bible that sometimes people mistakenly bowed down to angels. For example, in Revelation 22:8-9 – **8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. 9 But he said to me, “Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and with all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!”** John was marveled by the visions the angel showed him. John did not only kneel before the angel to thank him. He wanted to worship the heavenly agent. The angel quickly stopped John, because both of them are just servants of God. Only God deserves our worship. The message cannot be clearer. Unfortunately, throughout history people choose to worship some created beings but not the Creator. Even today, many people worship angels. They think that angels are gentle and kind, not as harsh and angry like God. It is like bribing a janitor to open a backdoor for you, rather than bothering a mean CEO. But they are wrong about angels. The Bible records that angels are heavenly warriors that fight against Satan’s agents. We should only worship God. Verse 8 of the Hebrews passage gives us another reason for worshipping Jesus: **But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.”** The author was quoting from Psalm 45. It is one of the so-called “Messianic psalms” that foretell about Jesus. Here, it depicts Jesus as a righteous King. His Kingdom lasts forever. It is difficult for us to comprehend what eternity looks like. We live in a finite world. We often get frustrated when machines malfunction or our health deteriorates. That should prompt us to long for something everlasting. Only God is eternal. Jesus’ name is superior. It carries power and glory. When we pray, we pray in the name of Jesus. Our Father listens to us and answers us because Jesus is our Mediator to the throne of grace. We worship Jesus as the Lord of the universe and the Lord of our life.

### 3. 關鍵的工作 Primacy of His Work

The author talks about the intimacy of Jesus with the Father and the supremacy of Jesus’ name. Thirdly, he also tells us the primacy of Jesus’ work. Three important works of Jesus are listed in this chapter. First, His creation. Look at verse 10: ... **“In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.”** The author is quoting from Psalm 102, yet another Messianic psalm. The author describes Jesus as a construction worker building a house. Of course, Jesus did not need any raw material. He created the whole universe from nothing. The book of Genesis tells us that God called everything into existence. Jesus was the Creator behind this huge project. Paul also tells us in Colossians 1:16-17 – **16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.** Regardless of location or status, every being was created by Jesus. Paul also mentions about those who are in a ruling position. That include kings, as well as angels and demons. Jesus did not only create all things, He also holds them together. A similar idea appears in verse 3 of the Hebrews passage. Jesus sustains all things by His powerful word. That is the second thing that shows primacy in His work. The Greek word for “sustain” means bringing forward. In other words, Jesus did not just create the world and let it run on its own like some theologians suggest. He continues to guide the trajectory of the world to accomplish His will. Think of it like an assembly line in a car manufacturing plant. While the

conveyer belt is moving, robots or workers add various panels or modules. Gradually, a car will take shape. Likewise, Jesus has a purpose in His creation. The world seems to be running wild. Leaders of nations seem to be helpless when chaos occur. But God has never lost control. He uses His word to maintain and guide the world. The Old Testament Law dictates the lives of the Israelites. It governs their relationship with God and with each other. Everything we need to know about God's general will is in the Bible. We will be blessed when we trust Him and obey His Word. Actually, the laws of every country also finds their foundation in the Bible. Humans have much higher dignity and value than animals because we are created in God's image. It is wrong to take away people's lives or their God-given rights. The third area that shows the primacy of Jesus' work is in His atonement for sin. The second half of verse 3 reads: ... **After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.** The word "purification" is used in the Old Testament sacrifice. The priests burned animals on an altar to make up for people's sins. The ceremony foretells the salvation work of Jesus. This topic is elaborated further in later chapters. Jesus was the great High Priest who offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice on the cross. Jesus is the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the mankind. His purification was so complete that it does not have to be repeated. That is why Jesus could sit down. There was no chair in the tabernacle or in the temple. The priests went in there to work, not to rest. They had to repeat animal sacrifice day after day. But Jesus is now sitting at the right hand of the Father. That is an honorable position to the Jews. I was born left-handed. But my dad forced me to eat and write with my right hand. He sees left-handed people as somehow inferior. But studies show that most left-handed people have higher artistic skills. I cannot paint, but at least I can act like I can sing. But Jesus does not have to fight for His glory. He owns all the glory and honor! Jesus deserves our worship because He created the world, He died for us and He continues to direct the world by His power. Human history and our experience are not random and meaningless events. Nothing will happen apart from God's will. He will accomplish everything according to His plans.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Jesus is better than all else because He is the superior Son of the Heavenly Father. Jesus has an intimate relationship with the Father. His name is high above all names. Jesus completed great works for us. He continues to orchestrate everything in the world and in our lives to fulfill His plans. Jesus Christ is better in every way because He is the best. Christianity is not a man-made religion. We do not believe in some ancient myths. No one can comprehend how God looks like. But God sent His Son to tell the world that He is the one true God. Jesus brings us the good news that He is the only way for salvation. Two thousand years had passed, today we share the same good news to those who do not know Jesus. The gospel does not need any revision. God's Word lasts forever.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

「更新和改良的。」這是一種常見的銷售策略。消費者總是在尋找更好的產品。科學發明和技術進步幫助我們節省時間、提高效率和生活得更健康。「更美」也是希伯來書中反復出現的主題。今天我們開始一個新的系列來查考這卷書。希伯來書幫助我們了解耶穌的身份和工作。與保羅所寫的書信不同，希伯來書沒有指明作者和收信人。顧名思義，這本書是寫給猶太血統的人的。我們在書中找到有關舊約律法、動物獻祭和以色列人歷史的記載。作者假設他的讀者熟悉這些主題，因此他甚至沒有詳細說明背景。這封信可能是寫給一些猶太基督徒的。他們出生是猶太人，但後來接受了基督信仰。他們面對來自羅馬人和他們的猶太同胞的逼迫。羅馬人指責基督徒效忠凱撒以外的另一位王。猶太人聲稱基督徒敬拜另一位神。如果這些信徒回到他們傳統的猶太信仰中，他們可以避免許多麻煩。但這樣做便等於否認耶穌是他們的主。就像那些基督徒面對的情形一樣，我們生活在一個不相信耶穌是獨一真神的世界中。如果我們不告訴別人我們是基督徒，我們會避免了一些不方便。畢竟，世界告訴我們宗教是個人的事情。不要讓你的信仰影響友誼和工作關係。但聖經告訴我們，我們永遠都是跟潮流相反的。神呼召我們將祂的光反射到墮落的世界中。我們必須保護並宣揚我們所相信的是真理。希伯來書肯定耶穌基督是神。第一章告訴我們，耶穌比一切更美，因為祂是天父超越的兒子。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 密切的關係 Intimacy with The Father

首先，耶穌是超越的，因為祂與天父有密切的關係。第 1 至 4 節告訴我們，耶穌是神唯一的兒子。神藉著人聽得見的聲音、神蹟或夢向祂的使者說話。他們寫下親身經歷，並成為舊約的一部份。但當耶穌來的時候，神以更直接的方式啟示祂自己。耶穌成為一個人，並出生在上。使徒約翰在他的福音中將耶穌描述為「道」。這個用詞可以指信息、途徑或過程。耶穌帶給我們神的真理。祂是與父神和好的唯一途徑。祂死在十字架上，為我們鋪路。耶穌不僅是道，祂還是神的兒子。因為耶穌是兒子，祂承受萬有。但是耶穌會從天父那裡得到什麼產業？什麼時候會得到？耶穌成為人的時候，祂甘願放下祂作為神的特權。祂在各方面都與我們認同。例如，耶穌不能同時出現在兩個地方。祂會覺得累和餓。祂會流淚，會感到痛苦。祂在十字架上的死也是真實的。然而，耶穌在死後的第三天復活。祂復活後回到天堂。祂恢復了自己本來擁有的所有權柄和榮耀。聖經告訴我們，有一天耶穌會回來審判世界。祂將在永恆裡接受祂子民的敬拜。這一切都是祂的產業。然後作者還說耶穌是

「神榮耀所發的光輝，是神本體的真像」。這裡的「光輝」可以指光的源頭或反射。但在這裡它是指到照明。耶穌更像太陽，而不是像月亮。耶穌在登山變像時，祂在三個門徒面前顯出榮耀。祂展現了祂的光輝。然後耶穌也是「神本體的真像」。那個形容是指印記。例如，硬幣上的圖像顯示了一個人的樣子。猶太人所看見的耶穌就是神自己！在約翰福音 14 章，耶穌向門徒告別，因為祂快要上十字架了。腓力要求主將天父顯給他看。耶穌在 14:9 回答：…「腓力，我與你們同在這樣長久，你還不認識我嗎？人看見了我，就是看見了父；你怎麼說『將父顯給我們看』呢？」沒有人可以在他有罪的身體中看神。但是看到耶穌就等於看到天父。祂們是一樣的。希伯來書的作者也將耶穌和天使作比較。神賦予天使一定的能力。例如，他們執行神的命令摧毀邪惡的城市和人。天使雖然比人類超越，但他們只是神的僕人。相比之下，只有耶穌獲得神的兒子的獨特稱號。在人的邏輯中，兒子比不上父親。我的兒子在很多方面比我聰明。但我仍然支付他們的賬單，因為我比他們富有。摩門教徒和耶和華見證人爭辯說耶穌比天父低一等。他們聲稱耶穌不過是一個受造之物或高級的天使。但是我們不能根據一節或幾節經文來發展我們的教義。我們必須通讀整本聖經。就算在希伯來書中，也有許多證據表明耶穌是神。我們在今天信息的其他部份和以後的學習中會有更多的討論。兒子並不代表次要的地位。這個稱呼同樣指到耶穌和天父之間密切的關係，就像孩子和父母之間的親密關係。作為兒子，耶穌順服天父。例如，耶穌在約翰福音 6:38 中說：「因為我從天上降下來，不是要按自己的意思行，乃是要按那差我來者的意思行。」耶穌完全順服天父。耶穌在客西馬尼園禱告時的掙扎是真實的。當祂走近十字架時，祂知道即將面臨的羞辱和痛苦。那些身體和情感上的煎熬是真實的。祂切切地懇求天父，如果有其他選擇，祂寧願免去十字架。但最終，耶穌降服於天父的旨意。耶穌是我們順服的完美榜樣。跟隨神並不容易。我們常常必須放棄自己的喜好和面子。但最終，神會從我們的身上得到榮耀，我們也會得到祂的喜樂。

## 2. 崇高的名份 Supremacy in His Name

耶穌不僅享受與天父的密切關係。另外，耶穌擁有崇高的名份，勝過所有的名。作者在這一章比較耶穌和天使。第 4 節說：他所承受的名，既比天使的名更尊貴，就遠超過天使。天使在希臘中的意思是使者。天使是神所創造天上的僕人。這裡提到的「名字」是指什麼？從上下文來看，它應該是指耶穌作為兒子的頭銜。在聖經中，一個人的名字說明了他的品格。例如，撒拉的意思是「公主」，約翰的意思是「神是恩慈的」。華人的父母為孩子取名字時希望女兒是漂亮或聰明，兒子是強壯或偉大。榮耀、能力和威嚴伴隨著耶穌的名字。耶穌不僅是兒子，祂也是主。保羅在腓立比書 2:9-11 中寫道：9 所以，神將他升為至高，又賜給他那超乎萬名之上的名，10 叫一切在天上的、地上的，和地底下的，因耶穌的名無不屈膝，11 無不口稱「耶穌基督為主」，使榮耀歸與父神。猶太人明白，「主」這個稱號相當於舊約中的神。耶穌是萬有的主。祂的名字比任何名字都崇高。所有受造之物在永恆裡都

會向耶穌下拜，都會承認祂是主。今天，我們不是記念一位已故的宗教創辦人。我們是敬拜復活的主。希伯來書說，連天使也敬拜耶穌。我們在聖經中看到，有時人們錯誤地向天使下拜。例如，在啟示錄 22:8-9 記載：**8 這些事是我約翰所聽見、所看見的；我既聽見、看見了，就在指示我的天使腳前俯伏要拜他。9 他對我說：「千萬不可！我與你和你的弟兄眾先知，並那些守這書上言語的人，同是作僕人的。你要敬拜神。」**約翰驚嘆天使向他啟示的異象。約翰不僅跪在天使面前感謝他，他要敬拜那位天上的使者。天使馬上阻止約翰，因為他們兩人都只是神的僕人。只有神配得我們的敬拜。這個信息再清楚不過了。很可惜，縱觀歷史，人們選擇敬拜一些受造物而不是造物主。就算在今天，仍有許多人崇拜天使。他們認為天使是溫柔善良的，不像神那樣嚴厲和兇惡。這就像賄賂清潔工人為你開後門，而不去打擾一個無情的總裁。但這些人對天使的看法是錯誤的。聖經記載天使是天上的軍兵，與撒旦的手下作戰。我們應該只敬拜神。希伯來書第 8 節給了我們另一個敬拜耶穌的理由：**論到子卻說：神啊，你的寶座是永永遠遠的；你的國權是正直的**。作者引用了詩篇 45 篇，它是預言耶穌的所謂「彌賽亞詩」之一。在這裡，它把耶穌形容為一位公義的君王。祂的國度存到永遠。我們很難理解永恆是怎樣的。我們生活在一個有限的世界裡。當機器故障或我們的健康出狀況時，我們會容易感到沮喪。這些情況應該促使我們渴望永恆的事物。唯有神是永恆的。耶穌的名超越一切，帶著能力和榮耀。當我們禱告時，我們是奉耶穌的名。天父聆聽我們並回應我們，因為耶穌是我們通往施恩寶座的中保。我們敬拜耶穌是宇宙的主和我們生命的主。

### 3. 關鍵的工作 Primacy of His Work

作者提到耶穌與天父密切的關係以及耶穌崇高的名份。第三，他還告訴我們耶穌關鍵的工作。這一章列出耶穌的三項關鍵的工作。第一，祂的創造。請看第 10 節：**…主啊，你起初立了地的根基；天也是你手所造的。**作者引用了詩篇 102 篇，這是另一篇彌賽亞詩。作者將耶穌描述為一名建築工人，正在蓋房子。當然，耶穌不需要任何材料，祂從無到有創造了整個宇宙。創世記告訴我們，神用祂的話語創造萬物。耶穌是這個龐大工程背後的造物主。保羅在歌羅西書 1:16-17 也告訴我們：**16 因為萬有都是靠他造的，無論是天上的，地上的；能看見的，不能看見的；或是有位的，主治的，執政的，掌權的；一概都是藉著他造的，又是為他造的。17 他在萬有之先；萬有也靠他而立。**不論地點或地位，每個受造物都是耶穌創造的。保羅也提到那些有權柄的人。這包括君王、以及天使和魔鬼。耶穌不僅創造了萬物，祂也維持萬有。希伯來書的第 3 節也講到類似的概念。耶穌用祂有能力的話語托住萬有。這是祂第二件關鍵的工作。「托住」的希臘文意思是帶動。換句話說，耶穌不是像一些神學家所假設的那樣創造世界之後便讓它自由運轉。耶穌繼續引導世界的軌跡來完成祂的旨意。我們可把它想像成汽車製造廠的生產線。當輸送帶不斷移動時，機器人或工人會裝上鋼板或配件。漸漸地，一輛汽車就成形了。

同樣，耶穌的創造也有其目的。世界似乎是失控。當混亂發生時，國家元首彷彿束手無策，但神從來不會失控。祂用祂的話語來維護和引導世界。舊約律法規定了以色列人的生活。它管理人與神以及人與人之間的關係。我們需要知道關乎神的一般旨意都在聖經中找到。當我們信靠神並遵守祂的話語時，我們就會蒙福。其實，任何國家的法律都是以聖經為基礎的。人類比動物具有更高的尊嚴和價值，因為我們是按照神的形象被造的。剝奪他人的生命或神賦予給他們的權利都是錯誤的。耶穌第三樣關鍵的工作是祂的贖罪。第 3 節的後半部分說：…他洗淨了人的罪，就坐在高天至大者的右邊。「洗淨」這個字是用在舊約獻祭中的。祭司在祭壇上焚燒動物以彌補人的罪。該儀式預告耶穌的救贖工作。這個主題將在後面的幾章經文中進一步的解釋。耶穌是偉大的大祭司，祂將自己作為終極的祭品獻在十字架上。耶穌是神的羔羊，除去世人的罪孽。祂的潔淨是如此的徹底，無需再重複。這就是為什麼耶穌可以坐下來。會幕或聖殿裡都沒有椅子。祭司們進去是工作，而不是休息。他們必須每天重複地獻祭。但耶穌現在坐在天父的右邊。右邊對猶太人來說是一個尊貴的位置。我天生是個左撇子，但是我爸爸強迫我用右手吃飯和寫字。他認為左撇子在某種程度上低人一等。但根據一些統計，大多數的左撇子具有比較高的藝術才能。我不會畫畫，但至少我可以裝著像會唱歌一樣。但耶穌不需要爭取祂的榮耀。祂本來就擁有所有的榮耀和尊貴！耶穌配得我們敬拜，因為祂創造了世界，祂為我們而死，並且祂繼續用祂的能力引導世界。人類歷史和我們的經歷不是隨意和毫無意義的事件。沒有神的旨意，什麼事都不會發生。祂會按照祂的計劃完成一切。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

耶穌比一切更美，因為祂是天父超越的兒子。耶穌與天父有著密切的關係。祂的名字高過一切的名字。耶穌為我們完成了偉大的工作。祂繼續掌管世上的事情和我們的遭遇，以實現祂的計劃。耶穌基督在各方面都更好，因為祂是至高無上的。基督信仰不是人想像出來的宗教。我們相信的不是古老的神話故事。沒有人能猜想神是怎樣的。唯有神差遣祂的兒子來告訴世人祂是獨一的真神。耶穌給我們帶來了好消息，祂是得救的唯一途徑。兩千多年過去了，今天我們向那些不認識耶穌的人分享同樣的好消息。福音從來不需要任何修訂。神的話語永遠長存。