

## Hebrews 1:1 – ‘Biblical’ Unitarian Pseudo-Proof-Text

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*Hebrews 1:1-2 (NASB) 1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.*

I. This verse is used by BUs to prove Jesus did not exist before the prophets.

A. Anthony Buzzard writes: “A text which surveys God’s activity over the ages says, ‘God spoke long ago to the fathers through the prophets in many portions and in many ways, but [in contrast] in these last days has spoken to us in His Son’ (Heb. 1:1,2). This would seem to confirm that until his human birth Jesus was not Son of God nor God’s messenger to man. This same book of Hebrews points out that the Word was spoken through angels in Old Testament times (Heb. 2:2). If the message to Israel was through the same preexistent Jesus who became man, the writer of this New Testament book seems to lack any such information.”<sup>1</sup>

B. Kegan Chandler is more forceful: “But God, according to Hebrews 1, explicitly did not speak to the fathers through His Son until these last days, that is, until the recent days of Christ’s ministry and the founding of the church. It should be impossible to say that it was actually the Son speaking to Abraham in Genesis 14.”<sup>2</sup>

II. Both Buzzard and Chandler make unwarranted assumptions:

A. A positive statement (that God spoke through the prophets in past time, and through His Son afterwards) does not require a negative inference (that God never spoke through His Son previously).

B. God did not speak through the prophets EXCLUSIVELY previously. He also spoke through the “Messenger of Yahweh” who was not a prophet.

C. The writer of Hebrews was not referring to God’s Agent who spoke to the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as Mr. Chandler assumed.

1. The “prophets” refers to those men God sent to Israel as a nation, the first being Moses who was born long after the patriarchs were dead.

2. The “fathers” refers to the rebellious Israelites Moses led out of Egypt.

3. “Long ago” in Heb. 1:1 refers to Israel’s history as a nation.

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<sup>1</sup> Buzzard, Anthony F, The Doctrine of the Trinity, Christianity’s Self-Inflicted Wound, p. 108

<sup>2</sup> Chandler, Kegan A. The God of Jesus in Light of Christian Dogma, p. 298

III. The correct meaning of the statement: "God, ... spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways" explained by parallel Scriptures:

A. 1 Kings 8:21 (NASB) "And there I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt."

B. 2 Kings 22:13 (NASB) "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the LORD that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

C. Zechariah 1:1-6 (NKJV) 1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, 2 "The LORD has been very angry with your fathers. 3 "Therefore say to them, `Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. 4 "Do not be like your FATHERS, to whom the former PROPHETS preached, saying, `Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.'" But they did not hear nor heed Me," says the LORD. 5 "Your FATHERS, where are they? And the PROPHETS, do they live forever? 6 Yet surely My words and My statutes, Which I commanded My servants the PROPHETS, Did they not overtake your FATHERS? "So they returned and said: `Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us, According to our ways and according to our deeds, So He has dealt with us.

D. Luke 6:22-23 (NKJV) 22 "Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their FATHERS did to the PROPHETS."

E. Luke 11:47-48 (NKJV) 47 "Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the PROPHETS, and your FATHERS killed them. 48 "In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your FATHERS; for they indeed killed THEM, and you build their tombs.

F. Acts 7:51-53 (NKJV) 52 "Which of the PROPHETS did your FATHERS not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 "who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it."

G. Acts 28:25-26 (NKJV) 25 So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the PROPHET to our FATHERS, 26 "saying, `Go to this people and say:

*"Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive;*

IV. Hebrews 1:1 borrows from Jesus' Parable of God's Vineyard (Mark 12:1-11)

A. The Vineyard is the nation of Israel.

B. The Owner is God.

C. The vine-dressers are Israel's priesthood

D. The servants sent to collect from the vine-dressers are the prophets.

E. The Owner's Son is Jesus, who preexisted before being sent.

1. Mark 12:6 *"Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son'."*

2. ἔτι ἕνα εἶχεν υἱὸν ἀγαπητὸν ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν

*STILL one HE-HAD Son beloved commissioned Him*

a. The verb εἶχεν (He had) **imperfect tense**, a past state of being, modified by the adverb ἔτι (still), *"He was still having one Son, the beloved."*

c. God SENT His Son to rebellious Israel LAST, who already existed when the prophets were sent previously to Israel.

V. Conclusion: 'Biblical' Unitarians are blinded by their presuppositions to the intended meaning which supports the opposite interpretation, as does all of Hebrews 1 & 2.