

## I. Review

- A. We are doing a verse-by-verse study of the book of Hebrews as a church family. We encourage you all to be reading a chapter a day in the book of Hebrews for the duration of this study. As you do, invite the Holy Spirit to help you understand, know, and love Jesus more through it.
  
- B. Introduction
  - 1. Recipient - Messianic Hellenistic Jews
  - 2. Purpose - Many were denying Jesus and going back to Judaism because of increasing persecution.
  - 3. Message - The supremacy and worth of Jesus in the new covenant revelation and relationship versus the old covenant revelation and relationship.
  
- C. 7-Fold Supremacy of Jesus - This first portion of the book of Hebrews is widely held as one of the premier passages that proclaims the majesty, supremacy, and beauty of Jesus in the entire Bible.
  - 1. Heir of all things
  - 2. Creator of the worlds
  - 3. Brightness of God's glory
  - 4. Express image of His person
  - 5. Upholding all things by the word of His power
  - 6. Purged our sins
  - 7. Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

## II. The Supremacy of Jesus over Angels, Verse by Verse

**“having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” (Heb. 1:4)**

- A. Having Become - Earlier in this study we observed that the writer of Hebrews is pointing out many significant and glorious things about Jesus with a primary view of His identity as a man. Such is the case here; in God's perfect timing and perfect plan, God the Son became a man forever. The theological term for this is the incarnation and it is possibly one of the greatest and most beautiful themes concerning God to behold. (Jn. 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8; 1 Jn. 4:2-3; 2 Jn. 1:7)

- B. Better than the Angels - In our 21st century culture, angels have lost much of their significance and we have lost much biblical understanding concerning them and their role in creation and in our lives. The audience of this letter would have been very familiar and much more concrete in their understanding of the significance of angels. (For more on Angels, see Dr. Michael Heiser, “Unseen Realm”, and other resources).

*The Jewish understanding of that day was that God's government was administered by angels. Angels were accredited with influencing nations, destroying armies, orchestrating weather, recording heaven's books, serving in the councils of heaven, casting out demons, healing, and bringing life and death to humanity. Surely no mere human was greater than an angel, only God was greater. - Stuart Greaves*

1. Angels mediated God's word and revelation - Over 150 times in scripture (Almost all prophetic encounters in scripture are with angels).
  2. Angels mediated God's judgments - Over 50 times in scripture (Even in the book of Revelation, “New Covenant” angels are carrying out the judgments of God).
  3. Angels were highly privileged - Angels live in the presence of God and are free to come and go into the most holy place in heaven where God dwells and to gaze upon Him.
  4. Angels were commonly worshiped by men - With these two themes and realities concerning angels in place, it's easy to see why angels were honored and esteemed highly by men, and to say that a man was better or more honored and more significant than an angel was quite a bold statement.
- C. By inheritance obtained - Obviously Jesus in His deity is eternally and significantly better than angels; however, what is in view here is that in His identity as a man He was shown to be worthy or inherited a better name. In Hebrew thought, the name of someone was more than a title, it declared your nature and character. (Ex. 33:18-19, 34:5-7; Is. 9:6) Examples: Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Simon to Peter, and ultimately, Jesus to Savior, Messiah, Son of God).

**“For to which of the angels did He ever say” (Heb. 1:5)**

D. Did He ever say - Now the writer is going to lay out his arguments to prove why and how Jesus is supremely higher than any angel and inherited a more excellent name according to the Father. I strongly encourage us all to read the entire psalm that he quotes throughout his letter. Many times there is much more to glean in light of what the writer through the Holy Spirit is telling us concerning Jesus through the Old Testament scriptures. For example, if the quoted verse is speaking of Jesus, then in most cases so is the rest of the chapter or psalm.

1. He is the only begotten Son - (Ps. 2 and 2 Sam. 7:14) - The first point the writer makes is that the Father declares that the son of David, messiah, is His begotten Son. This fact immediately and dramatically separates the children or sons of God from this Son. This Son was not created but begotten. The word begotten in scripture literally means, “pertaining to being the only one of its kind or class, unique in kind”. Jesus is in His own class or the only one of His kind. Angels share class and kind with other angels as do humans and every other created thing. (Lk. 1:32-34)
2. Let angels worship Him - (Deut. 32:43) - Contrary to popular application, the writer is not referring to Jesus receiving the worship of angels at His birth (although he did). What is in view here is the unceasing worship of all nations and all angels that will be offered to Him as the messianic King of the earth upon His return. However, even if you want to apply this to His first coming, the point is the same. Angels who worship God--and God--alone are commanded to worship Jesus. (Lk 2:13-14)
3. Angels are ministering servants to the Sovereign God - (Ps. 104:4) - This psalm is an acknowledgement of the wonders and glory of God as creator and sustainer of everything. The psalm clearly tells us that angels were created to minister to and serve the creator. The main point the writer is making is that angels serve. As powerful and glorious as they are, they don't rule but rather exist to serve the ruler.

*When we think of the extraordinary powers entrusted to angelic beings, and the mysterious glory of the seraphim and the four living creatures, we are led to reflect upon the glory of the Master whom they serve, and again we cry out with the psalmist, "O Lord, my God, thou art very great." - Spurgeon*

4. Jesus is the Sovereign Ruler - (Ps. 45:6) - By contrast, the ministry of the begotten Son is to rule, not to serve as angels do. Psalm 45 clearly tells us that the king is the messiah, the son of David, who at the same time is God. The writer is pointing out that Jesus exercises royal or sovereign power over the earth. He is the sovereign ruler of all creation.
5. Jesus is the Highest in Righteousness - (Ps. 45:7) - In Jewish and biblical culture, what is esteemed is personal righteousness or holiness. The holiest or most righteous among men was the one to be admired and honored above the others. The writer chose to make this point from this psalm that Jesus was more righteous than all other righteous beings, both angelic and human. (Ps. 37:16; Pr. 20:7, 29:2; Lk 23:47)
6. The begotten Son is unchanging as Creator and King - (Ps.102:25-27) - The writer has already stated that Jesus is the creator (Heb. 1:2) and the messianic king (Heb. 1:8) and so now He proves it to us by showing us (Ps. 102). Here, the same “Lord” who created the heavens and earth is the same “Lord” who will rule over the earth from Zion. This “Lord” is immutable and never diminishes in His rule from eternity past through eternity future. The eternal Son will never cease to exist, angels on the other hand are brought into and out of existence by Him. (Mt. 22:41-46)
7. The begotten Son sits while angels stand to wait upon Him - (Ps. 110:1) - It has already been established Jesus sits at the right hand of the majesty (Heb. 1:3). In our current context, the writer is speaking of Jesus’s superiority over angels. The point here is that angels are serving Him specifically by bringing all His enemies under His feet, a point that will be proven in chapter 2. (Phil 2:10-11; Rev. Judgments are carried out by angels).