



The Book of Hebrews 1:4-14_The Son...So Much Better than the Angels!

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Holy Text: Hebrews 1:4-14

This entire section is about the superiority of Christ over angels. This explanation was likely necessary because of a tendency among the author's hearers to elevate angelic hosts beyond what was proper, and lower the importance of Christ. Recall even the apostle John's undue reverence and subsequent correction?

Revelation 22:6-9 (KJV) *And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. 8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. 9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.*

Angelology: A Brief Look

1. Angels were created by God.

Nehemiah 9:6 (KJV) *Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*

2. There are thousands upon thousands of them.

Revelation 5:11-13 (KJV) *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

3. They are ministering spirits that carry out God's will.

Psalms 103:20-21 (KJV) *Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. 21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.*

4. They, by God's will, also serve the saved.

Hebrews 1:14 (KJV) *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

5. There are different kinds. In addition to "regular" angels, there are:

- Seraphims. Thought by some to be the highest in heaven due to proximity to God's throne.

Isaiah 6:1-3 (KJV) *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his*

feet, and with twain he did fly. **3** And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

- Cherubims. They are often presented as guardians of the Holy and creatures involved in Yahweh's worship.

Genesis 3:24 (KJV) So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Hebrews 9:5 (KJV) And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

Revelation 4:8-11 (KJV) And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. **9** And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, **10** The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, **11** Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Read Ezekiel 10 and the rest of Revelation 4 to see the fantastic nature of these heavenly creatures.

- Archangels

Jude 1:9 (KJV) Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Daniel 10:13 (KJV) But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

6. Some rebelled and fell.

Ephesians 6:12 (KJV) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Genesis 6:4 (KJV) There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

2 Peter 2:4-5 (KJV) For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; **5** And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

Jude 1:6-7 (KJV) And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of

the great day. **7** Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

7. Satan (Lucifer) is one such fallen one.

Revelation 12:7-9 (KJV) And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, **8** And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. **9** And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Isaiah 14:12-15 (KJV) How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! **13** For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. **15** Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.¹

Ezekiel 28:13-15 (KJV) Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. **14** Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **15** Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.²

8. They are indeed greater in power and might than humans...

2 Peter 2:11 (KJV) Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

- They move between the spiritual and material world. They have struck men with blindness (Gen 19:11), destroyed cities (Ex 12, 1 Chr 21:15), etc., but they are not all-powerful or all knowing. Nor can they be in all places at once.

9. Despite their power, they are not to be worshipped!

Colossians 2:18 (KJV) Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

- One can make a very strong case that the worship of false deities is actually the worship of fallen angels. Paul wrote:

1 Corinthians 10:20 (KJV) But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

Walking through the Text

¹ A taunt against the king of Babylon, seen by many as towards Satan as well. (Lk 10:18)

² A lament against the king of Tyre, seen by many as a description of Satan's fall.

Given angels' roles, descriptions, and obvious ability in the Bible, one can see the authors intent here. They are indeed great. **But Christ is so much greater!**

Hebrews 1:4 (KJV) Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

- “Being made” refers to our LORD’s Incarnation, Finished Work, and Ascension.
- As *God the Son* who created the angels, Jesus has always been much greater. As the *Incarnate Son of God*, He was “made” lower than the angels (Heb 2:9) in His humanity, but then exalted and given an “inheritance” and “obtained a more excellent Name!”

Philippians 2:5-11 (KJV) *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Hebrews 1:5 (KJV) For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

- The author quotes the Psalms:
Psalms 2:7 (KJV) *I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*
- Although angels are “sons of God,” (Gen 6:2, Job 1:2), none are THE SON of GOD!
- In this same messianic Psalm, Christ is heralded as the antitype of the LORD’s anointed (v.2), the King upon Zion’s holy hill (v.5), the inheritor of the uttermost parts of the earth (v.6), and the one that shall break His enemies with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel! (v.9) Saints, let us...

Psalms 2:12 (KJV) *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

Hebrews 1:6 (KJV) And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

- “First begotten” is a term that describes the uniqueness of Christ: the *Theanthropos, the God-man.*³
- **To prove this is so, the angels of God are commanded worship Him!** (The author quotes the Septuagint {LXX} of Deut 32:43).⁴ And worship Him they do:

³ “Jesus has two natures in one person (called the Hypostatic Union). He is not half God, half man. He is fully God and fully man at the same time. At the Incarnation, He added a human nature to His divine nature for our sake. His natures are not mixed together; they are separate, yet act as a unit. He was born of a woman (Isa 7:14; Lk 1:31; Rom 1:3; Gal 4:4), had a human genealogy (Mt 1:1; Lk 3:23-37) and body (Matt 26:12; Lk 24:39; Jn 1:14), and the had common experiences of humanity, including sorrow (Matt 26:37), natural growth (Lk 2:40), hunger (Lk 4:2), and sleep (Lk 8:23).”

⁴ *Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and the Lord shall purge the land of his people.*

Revelation 5:11-12 (KJV) *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Hebrews 1:7 (KJV) **And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.**

- A quote of Ps 104:4. Angels are “spirits.” The word here in Greek (pneuma) can suggest a mighty “wind.”
- William MacDonald writes that angels “obey His will with the speed of wind and with the fervency of fire.”⁵

Hebrews 1:8 (KJV) **But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom.**

- The Son however, is so much greater than an angel. He is God!

Psalms 45:6 (KJV) *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.*

- He has a throne that is forever and ever! He holds a scepter of righteousness and rules a Kingdom!

*Now follows a galaxy of glories in which **the Son** is seen to be incomparable. First He is addressed by God as **God**. In Psa 45:6 God the Father hails the Messiah with the words, “**Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.**” Here again the deity of Christ is unmistakable, and the argument comes from the traditional Hebrew text. (There is at least one quotation from the OT in every chapter of Hebrews.)*

*He is also the eternal Sovereign; His throne lasts **forever and ever**. His kingdom shall indeed “stretch from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.”*

*He is the righteous King. The psalmist speaks of Him as wielding a **scepter of righteousness**, which is a poetic way of saying that this King rules in absolute honesty and integrity.⁶*

Hebrews 1:9 (KJV) **Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.**

- There are two wonderful contrasts between verse 9 and verses 10-12 concerning Christ’s humanity and deity.
- Here in verse 9, in His humanity, Christ displayed personal holiness and uprightness of character above all men. Therefore, the Father has given Him joy. (Ps 45:7). Indeed:

⁵ Believer’s Bible Commentary

⁶ Ibid

Hebrews 12:2 (KJV) *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- Quick thought: Sin tricks us into thinking it will bring us satisfaction. The truth is Holiness brings true happiness (joy!).

Hebrews 1:10-12 (KJV) **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.**

- In verses 10-12, Christ divinity and power are proclaimed! Again, the author purposely quotes the Psalms:

Psalms 102:25-27 (KJV) *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

- Verses attributed to Yahweh (Jehovah) are attributed to Jesus Christ! He:
 1. Laid the foundation of the earth, He is the Creator!
 2. Established the heavens and the earth!
 3. Is eternal, with no beginning nor end!
 4. Is coming again to establish a new heaven and earth!
 5. Is the same, yesterday, today, and forever! (Heb 13:8)
- These things are not and cannot be the works of angels, or of one who is lower than angels in essence. Rather, these things are the works of God!

Hebrews 1:13 (KJV) **But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?**

- Again a quote from the Psalms! (Ps 110:1)

Psalms 110:1 (KJV) **A Psalm of David.** *The LORD (Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Adon), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

- The “right hand” of God is the place of authority and power. The author assigns the kingly work outlined in Psalms 110 beyond an earthly king to a Divine one! This cannot be the work of angels!

Macdonald writes on Ps 110:

The key to understanding this lies in identifying the two distinct persons referred to by the name of "Lord." The first use of the word refers unmistakably to Jehovah. The other word "Lord" is the Hebrew adon and means "master" or "ruler." It was sometimes used as a name of God and sometimes applied to a human master. Although the word itself does not always indicate a Divine Person, the words that follow show that David's Lord (Adon) was equal with God.

The NT writers leave no room for doubt that the One who is seated at God's **right hand** is none other than Jesus of Nazareth (Mat 26:64; Mk 14:62; Mrk 16:19; Luk 22:69; Act 2:34-35; Act 5:31; Act 7:55-56; Rom 8:34; 1Co 15:24ff; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, Heb 1:13; Heb 8:1; Heb 10:12-13; Heb 12:2; 1Pe 3:22; Rev 3:21). Therefore verse 1 tells what Jehovah **said to the LORD** Jesus on the latter's ascension day when He sat down at God's **right hand**.⁷

Hebrews 1:14 (KJV) Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

- Concluding his argument that as great as angels are, they are not equal with Jesus Christ, the author states the divine design and purpose of angels: 1) They are ministering spirits, and 2) They are dispatched to serve the heirs of salvation.
- This is a precious truth. God has created a “race” of beings designed to perfectly carry out His will and minister to His chosen ones!
- Amazingly:

Hebrews 13:2 (KJV) *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*⁸

- Yes, there is a biblical propriety surrounding them. For example:
 1. A woman covers her head in worship “because of the angels.” (1 Cor 11:10)⁹
 2. We dare not bring railing accusations against divine beings, but look to the LORD for such. (Jude 1:9)
 3. And again, they must never be worshipped! (Col 2:18)
- Astoundingly, one day, we will judge angels!

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 (KJV) *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? **3** Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?*

Applications

1. The big application today is this: **embrace the superiority of Christ over all things!**
2. The second: keep developing your supernatural worldview. There is a “spirit-realm” and the activity of spiritual beings is all around us.¹⁰
3. Both the above should humble us to worship our LORD and cause increased dependence upon the Word of God.

Amen.

⁷ Believer's Bible Commentary

⁸ Recall Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18:1-3), Lot (Gen 19:1-2), Gideon (Jdg 6:11-24), and Manoah (Jdg 13:6-20). -MacArthur Study Bible.

⁹ Our view is the headcovering shows a woman's submission to God's creation and governmental order, and is a warning to all angels present in times of worship of the cataclysmic events in Genesis 6. See our book, *A Return to HeadCovering*, p.41.

¹⁰ Remember Micaiah's vision of the LORD surrounded by His hosts? (1 Kings 22:13-28) What about the “decree of the watchers” in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, by the will of God? (Dan 4)