

Angel's Proper Place: Part 2

Last week we worked our way down through the text that teaches us the superiority of our Lord over the angels. We learned that Jesus is superior because He has a superior name. Only our Lord is called the Son of God and the Son of David. We also discovered in the text that Jesus is superior because He does not worship angels but, in fact, the angels are commanded to worship Him.

As we continue this morning, it is important to remember who it is that the writer is writing this epistle to. He is writing this letter to Hebrew Christians who were struggling with the religious leaders and many of their fellow Jews. The Jews were telling these believers that their Jewish traditions and former beliefs were superior to Christianity. Traditionally, the Jews have held a very high view of angels. To the Jews, it was an angel that delivered the Law of God to Moses. It was angels that would often destroy towns and level villages. It was an angel that killed all the firstborn in Egypt. Angels had proclaimed many things on behalf of God and angels had performed many mighty feats in God's name. However, we must remember that angels are created beings that are obedient to God's will. God says go and they go. God says deliver this message and they deliver it.

If the Hebrew Christians were going to inherit eternal life, they must see Christ as superior. As amazing as angels are, Jesus far exceeds their glory. We too, my beloved, must see Jesus as superior to everything in this universe. The creation of the universe is just one evidence of God's power over everything. God's created beings, angels, serve Him and they worship God.

As we prepare to continue let me lead us in prayer.

Superiority of Christ To Angels

The writer gave his readers, which includes us, 7 proofs from the Old Testament that Jesus is superior to the angels. He uses the biblical number of perfection or completion, 7 indisputable points made from the Old Testament that Jesus is superior in every way. Last week we covered the first 3 and today we will explore the last 4.

Reviewing the first three proofs:

1st Proof: “For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’?” (v.5) The New Testament teaches that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies found in Psalm 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:14 and 1 Chronicles 17:13. Jesus is the only begotten eternal Son of God.

2nd Proof: Jesus is superior to angels because He is King David’s Son. In Hebrews 1, verse 5 we read, ‘I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son’? This statement echoes several Old Testament passages that reveal the Messiah would be both fully man and fully God meaning the Messiah is superior to angels and all creation.

3rd Proof: Jesus is superior to the angels because all the angels worship Him. Reading verse 6, *And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him.’* Here the writer is quoting Deuteronomy 32:43 and Psalms 97:7. For all eternity God commands all the angels without exception to worship the Son.

Now we move on to the last 4 proofs and examine them in more detail. As we work our way through the next four proofs, we should remember that the Hebrews

knew these Psalms by heart. So, when the writer of Hebrews picks out a line or two from a Psalm, the readers would have already known the content and context.

4th Proof: Jesus commands the angels. Verse 7 reads, “Of the angels he says, ‘He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.’” Here the writer quotes Psalm 104, verse 4. In this Psalm it highlights the God of creation. Psalm 104 especially highlights how God creates and maintains the universe. He speaks and creation obeys. The split second the command is given creation obeys. Continuing Psalm 104 at verse 5, “He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. ⁶ You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. ⁷ At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight. ⁸ The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place that you appointed for them. ⁹ You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.” (Psalm 104:5-9) What we come to understand from this passage is that God controls the winds and the fire to do His bidding. When He wants the wind to blow, God simply gives the order and it obeys. The author is telling us that this is exactly how it is also with angels. God commands and they obey.

We know from verse 2 the writer of Hebrews is referring to Jesus Christ. He is the Creator. The logic goes like this: Jesus Christ is superior to the angels because He commands them and they obey, not the other way around. In the same way that Christ commands the elements and they obey, likewise He commands the angels and they all obey.

If the entire universe; the stars, wind, fire, angels, etc. obeys the Lord, why are we, as those created in His image, so often disobedient? What is it about us that enables us to think we have the authority to disobey the eternal King and get away with it? Why do I not immediately and consistently obey my Lord? When I fail to immediately obey - why does the Lord not punish my disobedience? I believe it

highlights the Lord's patience and mercy. He is working with each believer. Someday we will not be hindered by sin and our fallen nature any longer. Someday we will obey perfectly. What a glorious day that will be when we truly see and perfectly obey King Jesus. Do you look forward to that day? I do!

5th Proof: Christ is both God and man, Jesus is God incarnate. In verses 8 and 9 we are instructed, ⁸“But of the Son he says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.’” Here the writer is quoting Psalm 45, verses 6 and 7. Again Jesus is the One who fulfills Old Testament prophecies. The contrast found here is very important. While the angels are off doing the bidding of King Jesus, He is forever enthroned. His kingdom has been throughout all eternity. The writer makes clear that Jesus is the Son and as the Son He is God.

It is at this point we should pause to think together about a crucial truth. Many folks today will tell you that they love God. Here is the point and everything hinges on this. Your eternal destiny depends on this. Jesus Christ is God. He is one Person of the Trinity. To reduce Jesus to a creature is to worship the wrong Jesus. The JWs, the Mormons and Muslims all worship Jesus as one created instead of Jesus the Creator. They worship a Jesus that is not the God of the Bible and therefore are lost.

Paul made clear Jesus Christ would come from the lineage laid out in the Old Testament, “To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.” (Romans 9:5) To Titus he instructed, ¹¹“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:11-13) Satan

works to corrupt anything that is of God, so, believe me that today there are many folks that Satan has tricked into being devoted to an idol or angel and not the real Jesus. The list of false religions, false beliefs, cults and occults is long. As Jesus warned, ¹³ “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.” (Matthew 7:13-14)

The Trinity is at times hard to clearly see, but is One God who manifests Himself in 3 persons and that is important to understand. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Spirit. Each member of the Trinity is fully God, and is One God.

Another important point for us to consider today is that King Jesus rules and reigns on the eternal throne as God and His rule is consistent with perfect righteousness. This is a concept that the devil wants to hide from us. We often are led to think that rebellion and sin will bring happiness. Satan wants you to think that God is too picky or that He is restricting you because of His unreasonable demands for righteousness. It is the same lie the devil told Adam and Eve. God’s truth is His children will be the happiest when we are practicing righteousness. When we obey the Lord, we will find unspeakable joy and peace. This has proven true throughout history. Jesus holds out His scepter and judges with perfect righteousness. May we embrace John’s inspired words for time is running out, “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.” (Revelation 19:11) May God grant to us a hatred of wickedness and rebellion and a love for righteousness. Only in righteousness will we find true joy and peace, a peace the world does not know.

6th Proof: Christ is the Creator of everything. Reading at verse 10, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work

of your hands; ¹¹ they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, ¹² like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.” Here the writer quotes Psalm 102, verses 25 to 27 where the Psalmist is lamenting in anguish because of the destruction of Jerusalem and he prays to God. He believes in the sovereignty and mercy of God. He is steeped in remorse. In the midst of his struggle in prayer before God, he is reminded of the Lord’s immutable qualities. He sees Jerusalem fall but sees the Lord standing strong and unmovable. The writer of Hebrews takes this Old Testament text and uses it to show us that the One receiving the prayer of the psalmist was none other than Jesus Christ. We see the world tearing itself apart, but Jesus is still strong and unmovable.

We learn from this text and other places in scripture that Jesus is the Almighty Creator of the universe. The psalmist received comfort as he was reminded that the One who was currently working to bring judgment to Jerusalem was also the One who made Jerusalem and everything else. Can we find comfort when we go through struggles? Yes, we can be comforted knowing that the same Lord who died for you is also the Creator of the universe. It makes a huge difference to see Christ as the Creator. He made everything including the things we go through. He is sovereign and Almighty. He loves us and has the power to do anything. Seek the Lord of Creation by studying the Bible and in prayer with a heart that desires to live for His glory.

To really drive this point home, Hebrews tells us when it was - that Jesus laid the foundations of the earth. “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning.” When we read this phrase, it should remind us of the Book of Genesis, and the very 1st verse of the Bible, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” The Creator is eternal and unchanging and deserves all worship. On the other hand, creation is subject to change. Angels fall into the realm of creation and the

created, therefore angels should never be worshipped; Satan is an angel who has rebelled against God and should never be worshipped for he is evil.

The 7th and final proof given by the writer of Hebrews seals the argument that Jesus is superior to everything. **7th Proof:** Christ has the greatest honor. Reading the final 2 verses of this passage, verses 13 and 14, “**And to which of the angels has he ever said, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet’?**” (Ps. 110:1) **Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?”** Here the writer quotes Psalm 110, verse 1. Psalm 110 is a Psalm that has been interpreted as a Messianic Psalm by Rabbis and theologians, both Jewish and Christian for thousands of years. It is the most quoted Psalm in the entire Bible. When someone in the Old or New Testament quoted it, everyone knew what they meant, it was that common. This Psalm is referenced in the New Testament almost 2 dozen times. “**The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.’**” We could interpret the opening of the verse to say it more simply, let me rephrase, as God the Father says to the Messiah; for this is how the ancient scholars would have understood it. Some thought this verse was referring to King David but we are shown in the New Testament that this is not referring to David but referring to Jesus.

Peter on the day of Pentecost quotes Psalm 110, as recorded in Acts 2, verses 32 to 36, “**This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.** ³³ **Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.** ³⁴ **For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, ³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.”**’ ³⁶ **Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”** In other words, they had the long-awaited Messiah before them for 3 years. But, instead of bowing in

worship, they beat Him and hung Him on the cross. They crucified the Messiah, but God still reigns and Jesus rose from the dead.

The apostle Paul speaking of the resurrection and what is to happen before Jesus returns, wrote to the Corinthian Church and quotes Psalm 110 affirming Jesus' superiority, "Each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For **'God has put all things in subjection under his feet.'** But when it says, 'all things are put in subjection,' it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Corinthians 15:23-28)

Finally, Jesus in a debate with the Pharisees brings an amazing point to their attention. A point and a question that would, in the end, get Him crucified. Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1 and asks the Pharisees the question that reveals Him as the Messiah but they do not answer because they do not want to admit who Jesus is. Reading from Matthew chapter 24, beginning at verse 41, "Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, ⁴² saying, 'What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?' They said to him, 'The son of David.' ⁴³ He said to them, 'How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, ⁴⁴ **"The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet"**?' ⁴⁵ If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?' ⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions." Jesus' point is that there is only one possible answer. A descendant of David would be the Messiah and be the Lord of heaven. They knew exactly what He was getting

at. Jesus was saying, I am the One this Psalm refers to. I will be seated on the throne of honor; I am the Messiah.

The writer of Hebrews shows us that Jesus Christ is seated in honor while the angels stand around Him wait for their next assignment. Verse 14 makes it clear, “Are they (*angels*) not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?” Angels do the Lord’s bidding. Jesus orders and they obey. Jesus uses angels to “serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation”; which means all people who believe in the Jesus of the Bible as their Lord and Savior.

Through this brief survey found in the first chapter of Hebrews we have been taught that Jesus Christ is far better than the angels because:

He alone is called the Son of God

He alone is David’s descendant

He alone receives worship from the angels

He alone commands the angels

He alone possesses deity

He alone is the Creator

He alone is seated in the place of honor

Jesus Christ alone deserves our worship above anything that exists and this includes angels. If angels obey Jesus without hesitation and the scriptures teach that we are above angels because we have been created in the image of God; then we too must work at obedience to Jesus without hesitation. Amen!