

A STUDY OF HEBREWS

Better Than the Angels—1:4-14

I. Background to Hebrews

- A. An unknown author writes to a Jewish Christian community facing persecution and tempted to compromise their faith by returning to Judaism.
- B. *“The general theme of Hebrews is not in dispute: the unqualified supremacy of God’s Son, Jesus Christ, a supremacy that brooks no challenge, whether from angelic or human beings.”*
 ~Carson, Moo and Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 391.

II. Why Compare Christ to Angels?

- A. Angels were viewed as the mediators of Old Testament law (Heb 2:2, Gal 3:19, Acts 7:53, cf. Deut. 33:2)
- B. The Hebrews were subjected to “diverse and strange teachings”, perhaps including angel-worship. (Heb. 13:9)

III. Text: Hebrews 1:4-14 – Christ is Better Than the Angels

³ After making purification for sins, [Christ] sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? [Ps 2:7]

Or again,

“I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? [2 Sam 7:14]

⁶ And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.” [Deut 32:43]

⁷ Of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” [Ps 104:4]

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.” [Ps 45:6-7]

¹⁰ And,

“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.” [Ps 102:25-27]

¹³ 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]

¹⁴ *Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? (Heb 1:4-14)*

IV. Questions

- 1) The author of Hebrews employs seven Old Testament quotes to prove that Jesus is superior to the Angels. How do the first two quotes differentiate Jesus from the angels? Implications?
- 2) Is there significance to Jesus being designated as the “firstborn” into the world in v. 6? If so, what? What are the implications of Deut. 32:43 as it relates to Jesus?
- 3) What contrast is being made between the angels in v. 7 and the Son in v. 8? What’s the original context of Psalm 45:6-7? How is Psalm 45:6-7 applied to Jesus? Implications?
- 4) Among the seven Old Testament quotes mentioned, what is the significance of Psalm 102:25-27? What is the context of the original quote and how does the writer of Hebrews apply it to Jesus? Implications?
- 5) How should this reality affect our view of Jesus? How should it affect our worship? Read Colossians 1:15-17.