

# BETTER THAN ANGELS / Sunday, December 7, 2014

## Unifying Topic: WORSHIP CHRIST'S MAJESTY

### Lesson Text

I. **Christ Is Supreme** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

II. **Christ Is Superior To The Angels** (Hebrews 1:5-9)

**Lesson Text:** Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3, KJV).

**Unifying Principle:** Some people do seemingly miraculous things with their gifts and talents. How do Christians respond? For the true miracle of Jesus Christ, the gift of salvation, God's people respond with worship.

**Lesson Aim:** To affirm the superiority of Jesus over angels and to consider why He is worthy of adoration and worship.

**Life Aim:** To help lead adults to practice meaningful worship as well as to understand how Jesus is to rule our lives.

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- 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,  
1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;  
1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:  
1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.  
1:5 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?  
1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.  
1:7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.  
1:8 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.  
1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

### HISTORY:

The author of Hebrews does not name himself; his identity is unknown. The general consensus is that this letter was written to Jewish Christians. The purpose in the first part of chapter 1 is to show that Christ is "*better than the prophets*" and Christ is "*better than the angels*." The epistle begins without any greeting, demonstrating that it is not a personal letter but a word of exhortation. Immediately the author proclaims his theme: The work of Jesus Christ is God's final work and is superior to all that which preceded it. The author clears up confusion by carefully explaining how Christ is superior to angels

### LESSON:

#### **Hebrews 1:1-4 Christ Is Supreme**

**1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,**— This simply means that God does speak! "*At sundry times and in divers manners*" meant that He spoke in many separate revelations, at many different times. Therefore, in the past, God spoke in many different ways to the fathers through the prophets. God spoke in visions, dreams, and even face to face to reveal little by little His Will and even Himself. The prophets of the Old Testament were great men and women of God whom God spoke to and entrusted His message, however, no man could ever contain or share the whole revelation of God. Men could understand only part or fragments of God. Therefore, God had to make revelations to many different people at different times and manners.

**1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,** — Although God's Word is found in the prophets, His Word in this final age is found in God's very own Son who came to earth and revealed God, proclaiming all that God is.

**THIS IS THE FIRST REASON JESUS CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS GOD SPEAKS TO US BY HIS SON. THERE IS NO ONE ELSE WHO KNOWS ALL**

**OF GOD.** Men fade into insignificance when compared to Jesus Christ, God's very own Son. God could send no greater messenger with His Word than send His very own Son.

**1:2b ...whom he hath appointed heir of all things,**— By whom, He **SECONDLY** was **APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS**. What is Jesus to inherit or receive?

- Jesus is to inherit all power in heaven and earth.
- Jesus has inherited the authority to execute all judgment upon men.
- Jesus is going to inherit the whole universe...
- Jesus is going to inherit all government.
- Jesus is going to inherit all power and riches, wisdom and strength, honor and glory and blessing.
- Jesus is going to inherit all the angels and all the other spiritual authorities and powers.
- Jesus is going to inherit a name above every name and every knee shall be bowed before Him.

**1:2c ...by whom also he made the worlds;**— **THIRDLY, JESUS IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS AGAIN** because **HE IS THE CREATOR AND MAKER OF THE WORLDS**. The worlds can be translated as "ages", referring to time, space, energy, and matter—the entire universe and everything that makes it function. Wherever they are and however many there may be; visible, invisible, Christ created them! There is nothing in existence that He has not created.

**1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory,**— Jesus Christ possesses the very glory of God. This is **THE FOURTH REASON JESUS CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS**. This means **HE POSSESSED THE GLORY** before He ever came into the world. He has always existed in the glory of God; He is eternal! The glory means all the brightness of God; all the brilliance, radiance, splendor, and light of God's Being; His very essence and presence!

**1:3b ...and the express image of his person,**— **THE FIFTH REASON JESUS CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS** is because Jesus is **THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF GOD**. The word "express" (*character*) means the very stamp, mark, and impression—the very reproduction of God. Jesus Christ is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature. The word "image" (*hypostasis*) means substance. Not only is Jesus Christ's God's spokesman, He is God Himself—the full revelation and complete embodiment of God!

**1:3c ...and upholding all things by the word of his power,**— **THE SIXTH REASON JESUS CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS** is that Jesus Christ is Sustainer of the universe, **UPHOLDING ALL THINGS** by the Word of His power. No man can do that. God did not create the world and leave it to fly through space; no, the Word of Jesus Christ is love and power keeping evil from completely conquering and utterly destroying all things

**1:3d ...when he had by himself purged our sins,**— **THE SEVENTH REASON JESUS CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS**.<sup>1</sup> He has taken us from unrighteousness to righteousness. The purpose of purging is to get rid of something that holds you back. Purging helps you by propelling you forward. How? When you confess and repent of the unrighteous behavior, you purge out all sin. Sin holds you down or holds you back. Purging brings deliverance. Deliverance allows you to move forward without hindrances. He "gave himself that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" Titus 2:14. Redemption did not come from some great prophet who has **MADE PURIFICATION FOR OUR SINS**. Christ and Christ alone sacrificed Himself for our sins. No man could do this; only a Perfect Person could ever purify and cleanse men from their sins. His Perfect Righteousness and His Sacrificial death stands for all men.

*When a man believes in Jesus Christ, truly believes, the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ cover him. God takes the man's faith and honors it; He honors it by counting the man as being in the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ. The man is righteous in Christ, and he has already died to sin in Christ. Therefore, the man is purified; his sins are cleansed and washed away.*

**1:3e ...sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;**— **THE EIGHTH REASON JESUS CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS** is because **HE SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH**. Jesus sits there as the great Mediator and Intercessor for man. No other person could ever come close to being seated or accepted at the right hand of God. The right hand is the place of power, authority, and honor. Christ alone has this position! It is also a position

<sup>1</sup> <http://pastorphilip.wordpress.com/2012/10/24/purged-of-sins/>  
<http://www.pitwm/net-pitwm-sundayschool.html>

of subordination, implying that the Son is under the authority of the Father. The seat that Christ has taken is the throne of God where He rules as sovereign Lord. This depicts a victorious Savior, not a defeated martyr. It is a position while still being God!

**1:4 Being made so much better than the angels,**— Jesus was made so much better than the angels, refers to...

- the Incarnation (embodiment); the Word made flesh, as the Son of God and Son of Man. And He still accomplishes the cleansing of our sins.
- the price paid at Calvary (*the reason for the Incarnation*),
- and then His Exaltation as Savior;
- as God, Jesus has always been greater than the angels, but this is speaking of Him here as man.

Although angels had high and exalted positions, no angel was better than Jesus; no angel could perform what Jesus could do.

**1:4b ...as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.** This refers to what Christ did at the cross, with the present result being that the inheritance is in His permanent possession. <sup>2</sup>Yet He was declared to be the Son of God, and it was made manifest, that this name of right belonged to him, upon the discharge of His office, at His resurrection and ascension to heaven; and therefore He is said to obtain it by inheritance. The more excellent name that Jesus possesses is "Son." In Job 1:6 the group of angelic heavenly beings were called "*the sons of God*" as they gathered before God like a council before a king. However, no one angel was given the individually title of Son. They do not inherit that name, only Jesus. By inheritance He had obtained a more excellent name.

## Hebrews 1:5-9 Christ Is Superior To The Angels

**1:5 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 begins a series of Old Testament quotations or questions. Which of the angels were asked to be God's Son or was told that God would be his Father? God said "thou art my Son" to Christ, not to the angels. He alone has been "*begotten*" (*gegenneka*), that is, born or sent into the world by God, **THE BEGOTTEN SON**, who was **DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD**, and God is the Father. Christ is more superior than the angels because of this. Jesus is the first and only begotten Son.

**1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.** The word "*firstbegotten*" (*prototokos*) means in the sense of priority and superiority, of being above someone else. It is a word that shows dignity, honor, and worth; that someone deserves praise. Jesus Christ is the One who is to be worshiped and praised, not angels. Jesus Christ is the Person who entered the world as man. He is the Person who was raised from the dead and who ascended into heaven to conquer death forever. He is the Person who is to return and take us home to heaven to be with Him eternally. Angels can't and are not able to do this. Therefore, our worship, our hope, and attention; and praises are to be upon Christ.

- When Jesus Christ was born into this world, He was attended and worshipped by angels (Lk.2:13).
- When Jesus Christ was taken into the world above, at resurrection and ascension. He was attended and worshipped by angel (Acts 1:10).
- When Jesus Christ returns to this earth again, He shall be attended and worshipped by angels (Mt.13:41).

**1:7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.** Consider the word "*make*": Angels are made, that is, created and controlled by God. They are created spirits who serve God; He makes His ministering angels a flame of fire in the operation of the universe; they guard, fight, do battle, bring messages, etc. They serve God just as wind and fire have been made to serve God and men. They honor the Father, therefore, they honor the Son. Christ is not a created being. "*He was here before any angel. He that cometh from above is above all: He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all*" John 3:31.

**1:8 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.** This denotes two objects which are known for authority: throne and scepter. Jesus Christ is God, the Sovereign Majesty; the King who sits upon the throne, not angels. Jesus Christ is the One; the King who has the scepter of righteousness which denotes His power over all, not the angels. His throne and scepter is forever.

<sup>2</sup> <http://biblehub.com/hebrews/1-4.htm>

<http://www.pitwm/net-pitwm-sundayschool.html>

**1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.** Jesus Christ has been anointed with the oil of gladness above all fellows. Who is meant by fellows? It has to mean all creatures both in heaven and earth, for no being or person nor group of beings or persons are equal to Him. He is the Anointed One above all angels. He loves righteousness and hates iniquity. We must look to Jesus Christ for righteousness, not angels.

### **SUMMARY:**

God's spokesmen in times past were at various times and in different ways. He spoke to the fathers or ancestors by His prophets to reveal His Will and Himself. However, at the end of these days, God speaks to us by His Son. This is the Son whom He has appointed heir of all things and through whom He made the worlds. Jesus is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person, upholds all things by the Word of His power, purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. This paints the picture of the supremacy of Christ over the prophets and being so much better than the angels. For by inheritance He obtained a more excellent name than theirs (1:1-4).

As evidence for the superiority of Jesus over angels, the author proceeds to ask which of the angels did He ask to be Son and He would be Father? There is no other firstbegotten than Jesus in which the angels worshiped Him. He made the angels to be spirits or messengers as swift as the wind and ministers or servants to be as a fiery flame. But the Son, His kingdom, authority, and power will last forever and ever, for He loves right and hates wrong. Therefore, God had anointed Him, pouring out more oil of gladness upon Him, than anyone else (1:5-9).

### **APPLICATION:**

Angels are created beings to worship the Creator, just as we also are created to worship the Creator! Don't waste your time worshiping men.