

Jesus is Superior to Angels

The other day I discovered a poll about angels and found out that the poll was from the Gallup organization. The poll revealed that 75 percent of those living in the United States believe in angels. Now there were roughly 308 million people in the United States at the time of the poll and that translates to 231 million people who believe in angels. That's a big number. That's a lot of people who believe in angels.

I decided to perform an internet search to see how many different things a person could buy that were related to angels. I stumbled across an internet store that had 2,347 different items related to angels that you could buy. The items varied from wind chimes to plates. You could buy bells, T-shirts, books, and figurines. You could buy all kinds of *holy* hardware related to angels. It was amazing all the different kinds of things I found that dealt with angels.

I discovered there are TV programs named after angels or about angels. I found out that there are movies that are about angels or have angels in the title. If you put all the information together, Americans believe in angels! Not just people here in the United States believe in angels, but people around the globe believe in angels too! Not just folks today, but folks down through history have believed in angels - including the Jews in Jesus' day.

The Jews in Jesus' day believed in angels, except for the Sadducees and their followers. According to Acts 23:8 the Sadducees didn't believe in angels. Most of the Jews believed that angels were holy spirit beings who were created

on the second or the fifth day of creation. They believed that the angels did not hate and were not jealous. In short, they were holy. They were perfect. They believed that angels were made of a kind of fire substance and lived in the rays of God's Shekinah glory.

The Jews believed that angels were powerful and that there were a vast number of them. They were more numerous than the stars of heaven. They believed, in fact, that angels constituted an advisory group to God. They were like

the Council of the Sanhedrin, like our Senate, or like the House of Representatives. They were like a legislative body that God could visit and receive advice.

The Jews believed there were different types of angels such as wheel-angels, seraphim, living beings and angels who held responsibility over

different nations in the world. There were even ministering angels who did different functions. There were angels that surrounded God's throne - a vast number of them.

They believed that they knew some of their names such as: Michael and Gabriel, which are in Scripture. They taught there were angels called Rafael, Uriel and Metatron. Metatron was believed to be the greatest. He was the chief of all the angels according to the Jews.

They believed that there was an angel responsible for the sea, an angel responsible for clouds, and one responsible for the dew. There was an angel responsible for rain or snow or the lightning or trees. There were even angels responsible for every individual blade of grass on the ground around the globe. There was a death angel and an angel responsible for



judgment. It is amazing what they believed about angels.

In Colossians 2:18 Paul rebukes some Christians for worshipping angels. A vast number of Jews believed in angels. Most of what they believed was speculative because the Bible does not teach or authenticate most of what they believed. What they taught about angels is mostly fanciful.

So now you might ask why are we talking about angels? Why did we explore what the Jews believed about angels? We did because of what the Holy Spirit is going to teach us about angels in the book of Hebrews. Our study will compare Jesus to angels, and then the Holy Spirit will demonstrate that Jesus is better. He is greater! He is superior to the angels! So, it is important for us to understand what the Jews believed about angels.

There was great respect on the part of the Jews for angels. So, if the Holy Spirit can demonstrate that Jesus is superior to the angels, superior to beings that the Jews highly respected, then they should highly respect Jesus. That is exactly what our study is about.

REVIEW OF THE LAST STUDY. We saw in our last study that God had not spoken to mankind for four hundred years. The prophets had written about Christ. They had written about the Son of God and the Son of Man. But then there was a period of silence for 400 years. We are told in Hebrews 1:2,

God . . . has spoken to us in His Son . . . Hebrews 1:2 (NASB)

He has spoken to us through His son and we discovered that He, the Son, is the creator. He is our God. He is our Savior and lives in heaven. We learned that in the first three verses of Hebrews 1:1-3.

When we come to verse 4, we are going to discover that Jesus is better than all the angels. I invite you to take your Bible and open to Hebrews 1:4. We are going to find in coming weeks Jesus is not only greater than the angels, He is greater than Moses. Jesus is greater than Aaron. Jesus is greater than all the high priests including Melchizedek. As we begin our study this morning, let's start with verse 3.

BETTER THAN THE ANGELS. Verse 3 reads, "And He," that is the Son, that is, Jesus. He "is the radiance of His

glory", that is, God's glory. "And the exact representation of His nature." That means He is exactly like God and has all of His attributes, nature, essence and subsistence.

. . . upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than them. Hebrews 1:3-4 (NASB)

The English word for "better" in verse 4 comes from a Greek word that means greater than, better or superior. The Holy Spirit is saying that Jesus is superior to the angels. Now many Christians will say that is not a big statement. So, what! We already believe that. That's not a big deal. But for the folks to whom the book of Hebrews was written that is a significant statement because they weren't sure about Jesus. They were unsure about Jesus, but they had high regard for angels. So, when the Holy Spirit made the stunning statement that Jesus is better, is greater or is superior to the angels, that was extremely significant.

Then the Holy Spirit gives the reason why He is superior. He states, "He has inherited a more excellent name than they." What does that mean? In what way has He inherited a better name? The Holy Spirit is going to give us seven prophetic passages from the Old Testament to reveal this truth, starting in verse 5.

FIRST QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Let's look at verse 5 and read the first prophetic statement.

*For to which of the angels did He ever say,
"You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You"?
And again,
"I will be a Father to Him
And He shall be a Son to Me"? Hebrews 1:5 (NASB)*

Now the phrase "You are my Son, today I have begotten You" is the first prophetic passage and is quoted from Psalm 2:17.

If you were to compare this verse with Psalm 2:17, you

may find that it does not exactly agree with the wording of Psalm 2:1 in your English Bible. The reason the two verses may not agree is that verse 5 is a quote from the Septuagint. The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament or what we call the LXX. The Septuagint was very common in Jesus' day. The Jews read from it.

The first thing we want to look at is the phrase "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You?" This is a question and the implication is that God never ever called any angel My Son. If we read Psalm 29:1, Psalm 89:6 and Job 1:6, we would find that every time that the term "Son" is used relative to angels, the word always occurs in the plural. God never called any of the angels His Son. He always called them sons. Look at Job 1:6,

*Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.
Job 1:6 (NASB)*

In that verse, the phrase "sons of God" refers to angelic followers of Satan. It refers to demons or evil spirits. It refers to, watch this, angels - fallen angels! You will find the same truth in Psalm 29:1 and Psalm 89:6.

God called angels "sons" but He has never called an angel "my Son." "To which of the angels did He ever say you are my son?" The answer is none! Absolutely none! None of them! And then He adds, "Today I have begotten you." To which of the angels did He ever say that? The answer is none! He didn't say that to any of the angels.

Now we need to stop to think about the word "begotten." What does that mean? Luke 1:35 explains that it refers to His physical birth by the Holy Spirit. The verse says,

*... for that reason He shall be called the Son of God. Luke 1:35
(NASB)*

This verse reveals that because the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary and the baby Jesus would be the by-product of that, He would be called the Son of God. The phrase refers to His human incarnation. Yet the Son and Father relationship was prophesied in the Old Testament and was

decreed to occur before the foundation of the world. If we look at Acts 13:33, we find another reason why He is prophetically referred to as begotten. In Acts 13:33, we discover that Psalm 2:17 is also quoted. It is the same prophetic passage that is quoted in Hebrews 1:5. Here's how it reads. Let's start with verse 32,

And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You." Acts 13:32-33 (NASB)

He raised up Jesus! This refers to the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus was dead. Now He is alive. So, He quotes the prophetic passage. He says, as it was written in Psalm 2, "You are my son, today I have begotten you." In conclusion, the phrase "begotten" prophetically refers to His human birth but also to His resurrection. And Hebrews 1:5 reveals that is an eternal relationship. So, to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten You?" The answer is none! He has said that to only one - the Son! This reveals the first reason that Jesus is better than the angels. Only Christ is called the Son.

SECOND QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Verse 5 quotes a second prophetic passage.

*... I will be a father to Him, and He shall be a Son to Me.
Hebrews 1:5 (NASB)*

This is a quote from 2 Samuel 7:14. The statement recognizes the father-son relationship that was established at His incarnation when He took on human flesh, when He took on the physical appearance of a human. Notice that it says, "I will be a Father to Him."

In Philippians 2:8 we begin to gain insight into the Son and Father relationship. This verse tells us that Jesus submitted to the Father.

*Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
Philippians 2:8 (NASB)*

Jesus Christ submitted to the Father even to the point of death. Now that is submission!

Look at John 4:34. There we discover that Jesus says He did the will of the Father. Let's start with verse 33.

[So, the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he? Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. John 4:33-34 \(NASB\)](#)

We learn again that Jesus obeyed the Father just as an earthly son obeys a father. Jesus obeyed God the Father just as a human son should obey a human father. Eventually Jesus obeyed to the point of death on the cross.

So, when answering the question, "To which of the angels did He ever say, 'I will be a Father to Him and He will be a Son to me,'" the answer is none! Only the Son has a son-father relationship! That is the second reason Jesus is better than the angels.

THIRD QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Now verse 6 gives us another reason why Jesus is better than the angels. Jesus is better because He is the Son and because He is related to God the Father in a father-son relationship. In verse 6 we read,

[And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him." Hebrews 1:6 \(NASB\)](#)

Now the He in this verse is God. There are two keywords in this verse. The first word that we want to look at is "firstborn." The word comes from the Greek word *prototokos* and it means "priority one" or "chief one" or "most important one." It does not mean that Jesus was the first one born. Some of the cults want us to believe that Jesus was created. If you would turn to Colossians 1:18, I want you to see the true meaning of this Greek word. Colossians 1:18 is probably the clearest or most obvious clarification of this word translated as firstborn.

[He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the begin-](#)

[ning, the firstborn from the dead . . . Colossians 1:18 \(NASB\)](#)

Now I have a question. If this verse is telling us that Jesus is the first person that was born from the dead, then we have a problem because in the Old Testament and in the New Testament we are told that numerous people had died already. If we were to look at every person who came back to life, we would discover that there were six people recorded as having come back to life before Jesus did. This means that Jesus wasn't the first one resurrected. He was the seventh. Therefore, the Greek word cannot mean that He is the firstborn from the dead. That's not what the word means.

We know that the Greek word means "most important one." Therefore, Jesus is the priority one. He is the chief one. When we are told, "He again brings the firstborn into the world" it means that He brings the "most important one" into the world. He brings the priority one. He brings the superior one into the world. I like "superior one" or the "better one." Therefore, once again Jesus is better than the angels. He is the most important one. That's the first keyword here in verse 6.

The second keyword in verse 6 is the word again. When did the firstborn come into the world? The answer is when He took on human flesh or when He was born of the Virgin Mary. That is when Jesus came the first time. Today we are waiting for Him to come again a second time. But this verse doesn't say the first time. This verse says, "and again." What is being described is the second coming of Christ. It's talking about something in the future. It's talking about something down the road. It's not an event in the past. It's an event in the future. "And when He again brings the firstborn into the world" refers to Jesus' second coming.

Now he quotes Deuteronomy 32:43 which states,

[Let all the angels of God worship Him. Deuteronomy 32:43 \(Septuagint\)](#)

Do you realize what this says? When He comes, He is going to be worshipped by all the angels. This tells us that Jesus is better than the angels. All the angels will worship Him.

Now look at Revelation 5:6. We're going to read from verse six to verse eight. Revelation 5:6-8 gives us a picture of heaven and the picture is about the Lamb of God. The lamb is Christ Himself or the Son.

And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Revelation 5:6 (NASB)

What a picture! Jesus is the Lamb. There are twenty-four elders and four living creatures. Now look at verse 9. And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth. Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands . . .” Revelation 5:9-10 (NASB)

Superlative statements! We are told that we cannot count them. There are just masses of angels, an unbelievable number of angels which are beyond counting - more than a packed football stadium, more than all the packed football stadiums in the world!

Saying with a loud voice,
“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”
And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying,
“To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing

and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.” Revelation 5:12-13 (NASB)

What an incredible picture. Again, this refers to Jesus' second return when He sets up His kingdom. This is a picture of the outpouring of worship for Jesus Christ. The third reason that we know Jesus is better than the angels is that all the angels will worship Jesus.

FOURTH QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Back in Hebrews 1:7 we are asked another question,

And of the angels He says,
“Who makes His angels winds,
And His ministers a flame of fire.” Hebrews 1:7 (NASB)

The author of Hebrews cites Psalm 104:4 and the keyword in this passage is makes. We must ask the question, “What does “makes” mean?” We know that the angels were created. They didn't exist from eternity past. They were created at some point and the question is who made them?

We have already answered the question in verse 2 in our last study. That is,

. . . in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. Hebrews 1:2 (NASB)

The Greek word for “world,” if you recall, means ages. He created space. He created time. He created energy. He created things that were invisible. He created things that were visible. He created everything and anything that exists, except for Himself. This helps us understand who made these angels. Who made the angels? The Son! The Son made the angels. This reveals one more reason why Jesus must be greater than the angels. Jesus must be superior to the angels because He made the angels! Verse 7 also reveals that the angels were made to be servants or ministers; but that is not true of Christ, as we will discover in verse 8. The fourth reason Jesus is better than the angels is that He created them and they are servants or ministers.

FIFTH QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Verse 7 is contrasted to

verse 8 because it says, “But of the Son He says.” He has been talking about the angels and now He says,

But of the Son He says
“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.
You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;
Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You
With the oil of gladness above Your companions.” Hebrews 1:8-9
(NASB)

This quote from Psalm 45:6-7 teaches us that the Son is God. When it says, “But of the Son He says, ‘Your throne, o God’ it is talking about the Son. He is called God. That is why the Son created the angels because He was and is God. Then the Holy Spirit goes on to say that He is forever and ever. He is eternal. He existed in the Old Testament. He existed before the Old Testament. Christ existed before the beginning of time. He has always existed. He has existed forever and ever.

Next, notice that we are told “the righteous scepter is a scepter of His kingdom” and says, “You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.” There’s only one word that can explain all of this. It is the word holy. Jesus is holy.

Verse 9 says, “Therefore God, Your God has anointed You.” That is a great statement. God, Your God has anointed you -- what a fabulous statement. It reveals that Jesus and the Father are both God. God the Father is God, and Jesus is God. This statement can only be explained by the doctrine of the trinity. This is an illusion to the fact that there is one God. In fact, we are told in the Old Testament and in the New Testament that God is one.

The Great Shema is in Deuteronomy 6:4. Therein we are told that God is what? He is one! The New Testament says that God is one (James 2:19). There is one God and only one God. Isaiah 43-48 repeatedly teaches that there is only one God and there is no other. There is God and only one. There is no other God. The only way that statement can be true is that both are God. The Son is God and the Father is God. If we add Act 5:3-4, we discover the Holy Spirit is God. Then we have the Trinity. We have God the Son, God the

Father and God the Holy Spirit. They are a trinity but yet are one. They are God. Then the end of verse 9 says, “With the oil of gladness above your companions.” The term “companions” just means “ones who share.” It’s a reference to the angels. So, among the throngs of the angels in Heaven, God has anointed the Son and not the angels. God has anointed the Son. The fifth reason Jesus is better than the angels is that He is the infinitely holy God.

SIXTH QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Verses 10-12 reveal another characteristic about the Son. It is a prophetic quote from Psalm 102:26-28. This is the sixth prophetic passage in this section. It reads, “You Lord.” Notice that the Son is called Lord.

You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens are the works of Your hands . . . Hebrews 1:10
(NASB)

Here we discover that Jesus laid the foundation of the earth and created the heavens. This reinforces the message of Hebrews 1:2.

Verses 11-12 reveal another characteristic about Christ.

They will perish, but You remain;
And they all will become old like a garment,
And like a mantle You will roll them up;
Like a garment, they will also be changed.
But You are the same
And Your years will not come to an end. Hebrews 1:11-12
(NASB)

Jesus not only created the earth and the heavens, but someday He is going to roll them up like a carpet and throw them away. He will burn them up (2 Peter 3:10-13). They will be destroyed and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

Now turn with me to Revelation 20:11 and we will see that someday in the future the present earth and the present heaven will disappear.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from

whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. Revelation 20:11 (NASB)

The earth is going to disappear. The heavens are going to disappear. Then Revelation 21:1 says,

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. Revelation 21:1 (NASB)

Do you realize what is going to happen someday in the future? The ground upon which we are walking, the world that we are admiring – the Grand Canyon may be great, the Himalayas may be wonderful, and there may be some really great things that you have seen – but they are nothing compared to the future world. God is going to take all these things of the present and erase them. The heavens are going to go away, the earth is going to go away and He's going to make a new earth and new heaven.

Hebrews 1:12 reveals that Christ is eternal,

But You are the same,
And Your years will not come to an end. Hebrews 1:12b (NASB)

The Greek word translated as “the same” has the idea that His character is unchanged. In the Old Testament He may have been the angel of the Lord. In the New Testament He is the Son in human flesh, but He is still God in character and essence. He is God in form (Philippians 2:6-8). “You are the same and Your years will not come to an end.” He is our eternal God. The sixth reason Jesus is better than the angels is that He is eternal. He had no beginning and He will have no end.

SEVENTH QUOTE ABOUT CHRIST. Now the last two verses of this chapter reveal that the angels will serve Jesus Christ.

But to which of the angels has He ever said,
Sit at My right hand,
Until I make Your enemies
A foot stool for your feet.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation? Hebrews 1:13-14 (NASB)

Verse 13 is a quote from Psalm 110:1. It asks a simple question. Did God the Father ever ask one of the angels to sit at His right hand? The answer is given in verse 14. They were not made to rule but to minister.

Now, think with me for a minute. In the Old Testament angels rescued Lot and his family. In the book of Daniel angels helped answer a prayer of Daniel. Daniel had been praying and God sent an angel to give the answer. Think about John the Baptist. He was an answer to Zacharias' prayer. It was an angel who told Zacharias that his prayer was answered. It was an angel who announced the birth of Jesus to Mary. It was an angel who helped Peter get out of jail. It was two angels who comforted women who came to the tomb early on a Sunday morning when they were looking for Christ to anoint Him with incense. Or, how about Jesus when He was in the wilderness? After the temptation angels ministered to Jesus. Angels do minister to the saints.

Even Jesus in Matthew 18:10 talks about the fact that we have angels who watch over us. That is great. What a wonderful truth. God uses angels to minister to us. Angels are not beings we are to pray to or worship. Angels are not to be worshipped. Angels serve God. But if you want help, do not seek for angels as some of the Jews did. Instead, go to Jesus. Go to God. God is the one to whom we must pray. Angels are just servants. There is nothing special about angels compared to our God. They are second class citizens compared to our God. I do not mean to be disrespectful to angels, but I am trying to make the point that angels are not beings that we are to seek after. It is Jesus that we must seek. It is God the Father we must seek.

CONCLUSION. Do you know what this passage has been about? It has been a comparison between Jesus Christ and the angels. The Holy Spirit has just demonstrated the astounding truth that Jesus is greater than angels. Since they respected the angels highly, the Jews of Jesus' time should have respected Jesus even higher. Jesus is better than angels. Jesus is greater than angels. Jesus is superior to angels, and

we had better listen because Jesus has spoken in these latter days. We better listen because He is God eternal, the Creator of heaven and earth, our Savior, our coming King and our Lord. Jesus is better than all the angels.