
Into Thy Word Bible Study in Hebrews

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Hebrews 1:5-14: "The Sonship of Christ!"

General idea: Jesus Christ is greater than everything! He is greater than angels, and so are His Name, His role, and His purpose. These has been given by God for Him and presented to us. Jesus is the Son and the eternal Sovereign God; God wants the entire universe to recognize Christ's sonship and LORDSHIP and rule. In fact, angels too must recognize and worship Jesus as LORD. Angels of various categories and responsibilities all must know and see the Son as Royal, God eternal. He who made the universe made you and me, runs all things, and knows all things; His love is inexhaustible and His holiness indescribable. He has always existed and will always endure forever, yet all other things will eventually fade. His enemies—those who hate God and everything that is good—will be judged and will be humiliated. Yet, angels are servants of God, messengers to worship Him and care for Him and show Him to others, and even serve us. They are important and precious, sent from God to us; but they are not God nor do they hold any of His attributes.

Contexts and Background: This passage in Hebrews sets up an eloquent and carefully crafted case for the clear indication of the infinite deity, superiority, and supremacy of Jesus Christ as the eternal, Holy God, all of which is also documented by the Old Testament. In addition, Jesus is infinitely superior to any created being or entity. This argument uses various verses quoted from the *Septuagint* (first century Greek translation of the Old Testament most recognizable to the early church and Jews) using key words, such as *Son*, in order to link the thoughts from the coming Messiah to the revelation and resurrection of Christ Himself, a then common Jewish exegetical technique. These quotes come mostly from Psalm 2:7 and the Old Testament passage 2 Samuel 7:14. Then the "author," inspired by the Holy Spirit, is using rhetorical questions to prove Christ's coming and His Supremacy (worshiped by angels) to a misguided church that thought angels were supreme and Christ was also an angel of some sort or at least not as authoritative (Deut. 32:43; 2 Sam. 7:14; Psalm 2:7; 97:7; Acts 13:33).

Commentary, Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Angels* mean "messengers." Here, they denote heavenly beings that live and work in Heaven. They are messengers sent by God to "minister," as in to serve God and humanity. These celestial beings may seem ominous to us, hence why in every encounter in Scripture where they were revealed, people fell to their feet. But, they are created beings and have limited knowledge and attributes. They have the same emotions and will that we have—the reason one-third of them fell—and they are curious and interested in the things of God—the reason two-thirds remained loyal to God. God had not told them everything, but now His plan is made known (Eph. 3:10). They serve God in heaven and have many different roles and levels of casts. They can intervene to protect us, and also

discipline us. They escort His elect to their heavily reward and glory, and when Christ returns, they will accompany Him in full force and magnitude. The role of angels is very important and needed, but we must never elevate them above what God intended. They are to be honored and respected and obeyed, but they are never to be worshiped or prayed to (Gen. 18; Matt. 18:10; Luke 16:22; Acts. 5:17-21; 12:1-10; Heb. 1:4-15; 13:2; 1 Pet. 1:12; Rev. 22:9)

- *You are my Son.* This is a declaration of the Father testifying to the Church that Jesus has finished His work as Messiah via the resurrection. He is indicating the Son is His and is Him for the purpose of exalting Jesus as the eternal God in reality and effectually. This passage quotes Psalm 2:7; 2 Sam. 7:14 (Luke 1:32-33), as being the ultimate Messianic application. Jesus is God's Son; yet, He is God, and He is distinguished from the Father—One God, two distinctions or Persons, three including the Holy Spirit, the Trinity. The end result is through Christ we have redemption, life, and purpose. This was foretold and now it has come to pass, and is real for us now and through the ages to come. This does not mean we are the son or a son of God or a little god, as some misguided preachers have used this verse to say. There is only One God, and neither you nor I is He. We are “adopted” as a child, a son or daughter to be redeemed as Jesus establishes our salvation so we may share and participate in the *Sonship* blessings (John 1:10-13; Rom. 8:21; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:1-10; 5:19). Sonship is the relationship of the Son to the Father as testified in this passage and others; it means that Christ is the eternal Son and He has always been the Son of God. This does not just refer to *Christ incarnate* or as He lived on this earth; it is His eternal attribute. But, this does not mean inferiority. Many good Bible scholars confuse this and say Jesus is the Son only as He was also fully human. This view is contrary to Scripture (Psalm 2:7, Mark. 12:6; Luke. 1:32-35; John 1:18; 3:16; 5:18;.16:28; 17:24-25; Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:4; Eph. 1:22; Heb. 1: 5-14; 7:3; 13:8). No human or angel can be divine or share in divine attributes. There is One God with Three personalities, the Trinity (Psalm 2:7; Matt. 26:63-64; Mark 1:11; John 3:16; 10:36; Acts 13:32-35; Rom. 1:4; 8:15-29; Heb. 2:10; 3:14; 5:5).
- *God brings his firstborn into the world.* This means Jesus as the “Royal Personage” who humbles Himself to “condescend” to be human, to assume our nature to battle sin. This is also an assault to the belief that this applies to angels or archangels (Luke 2:13-14).
- *Firstborn* means the Almighty Lord God (Yahweh), and is applied to Christ. This also means the inheritance rights and the ranking leader. In ancient Semitic cultures, the firstborn son, who holds the right of heir and to rule, had that role. This, a paraphrase quote from Psalm 97:7, also refers to coronation and the superiority of a king—in this case, the King. This does not mean Jesus was born, because He is eternal; rather it is His role to rule (Ex. 4:22; Deut. 21:17; Psalm 89:26-27; 97:7; Col. 1:15-17).
- *Let all God's angels worship him.* Angels worship Christ—period—and they proclaim Christ's superiority by worshiping Him. This clears away any assumption that angels are equal or superior. Neither we nor they are to worship

anything else except God Himself—no angel or principality. Christ is presented as superior as and greater than any angel or role of a priest of Israel, the priesthood, or any traditions, and supercedes any decree of the Prophets and Law (Heb. 2:5-18).

- *Angels' winds/spirits.* The Greek word “pneuma” usually refers to the Holy Spirit and only once elsewhere is used for wind, in John 3:8. Here, it concludes that God used the elements and weather as well as angels, and they are subordinate to Christ (Psalm 104:4).
- *Servants/ministers.* Angels are servants of God, and through Him, are also servants of humanity; Christ is the Eternal, Preeminent One.
- *Flames of fire.* This does not mean the angels are made of fire as some Jewish Rabbis in that day taught. The people to whom this letter is written thought the angels created the world; here, the argument is reversed and proves that only God creates. This also means God's heavenly court and awe and that the angels are the ones who were created in distinction to the preeminence of Christ (Psalm 104:4).
- *Scepter of your kingdom.* Quoted from Psalm 45:6-7, this meant to affirm the deity and immutability of Christ, and refers that God is God, there is One; yet, Christ and God are distinct in Person. One God, three manifestations. This also means God's blessings were upon Christ to counter Jewish opposition to Christianity (Isa. 9:6; John 1:1).
- *Loved righteousness.* As Christ the Creator submitted to the Father in His incarnation (becoming Fully God and Fully Human) to become and serve humanity, this was His ultimate triumph. He is Holy and as the “incarnate Son,” remained loyal and obedient to His own precepts and the challenge of sin and worldliness (Heb. 1:2; 3:1-2; 4:15; 5:7-8; 7:26; 9:14).
- *Companions/fellows* means sharing and partaking in as a partner (substantive). This also signified the joy and blessings we have as Christians in Christ (Heb. 3:1, 14; 12:8, 28).
- *In the beginning, O Lord* refers that the Son is addressed as *Yahweh*, meaning the “Ultimate Supreme Being.” (Gen. 2:4; Deut. 6:4-5; Dan. 9:14, Psalm 11:7, Lev. 19:2; Hab. 1:12)
- *You remain.* Christ as God is “immutable,” meaning His nature is unchanging; He is eternal—he has no beginning or ending. Thus, He reigns forever. And through Him, we are saved and receive the inheritance, as the redeemed and as believers, of His priesthood to serve. This also refers to the faithfulness of Christ as the High Priest paying and atoning for our sins (Psalm 102: 25-27; Heb. 7:3, 23-24; 10:34; 12:27-28; 13:14).

- *Sit at my right hand* refers to the heavenly, eternal authority of and Lordship of Christ and His right to decree and rule and to save. In contrast, the angels are merely messengers with no authority other than what is given to them by God (Psalm 102: 25-27; 110:1; Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:3, 11, 17, 21; 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2).
- *Inherit salvation*. Means we receive His work of redemption and regeneration through grace, and we belong to Christ. We even share in the Son's rights as well as blessings we receive as the children of God. This also means we have victory as He delivers us and tramples our enemies; our future inheritance is insured. What we earn is placed as our eternal reward. God even favors humanity over the angels (Psalm 3:2, 8; 18:2; 35:3; 71:15; 132:16; Rom. 8:17, 29; Heb.2:10; 6:12).

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

Jesus is described as the Immutable, Eternal, Most Holy, and Supreme God. This implies several questions to us: one is *who is Jesus to you? What have you done with this knowledge? Do you see, feel and know His Divine Fullness? Do you realize that through Christ we have everything that is important and effectual for eternity?* We know who we are, what we can do, what we will be, and why we are so fueled to keep going through the joys and trials of life. Through Christ, we can commune with the Father; we have a life worth having so it is worth living and a purpose that will resound throughout eternity! The key to taking hold of this is to know Christ, and understand who He is and what He has done. When we chase our speculations and fantasies through misguided and faulty desires or wants, we miss out on Him and change the truth for a lie that can do nothing for us. Whether it is worshiping angels or listening to false prophets, ignoring our call or being disobedient to His precepts, we are the ones who lose out. But, when we seek Him first, we mature; when we walk by faith, we grow and nothing important will take His Truth. Put on Christ and take off your old rags; see His wonder; allow Him to thread His truth in and through you into a masterful cloak of honor and glory. Be made in Him and for Him and go forth to serve Him!

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. What traits do you have in common with your parents? Or, what traits do your kids have in common with you? How does that make you feel?
2. How is this passage like a portrait of Jesus? Why do you suppose there are so many quotes from the O.T.?
3. What is a healthy, biblical view of angels?
4. Why would people want to believe that angels are so much more than what they actually are? In contrast, why would some people dismiss angels altogether?
5. How would you describe the role and purpose of our Lord in this passage?
6. Because Jesus Christ is greater than everything, I am impacted (how)...?
7. How would you describe the relationship of the Son to the Father? How does His unchanging nature affect your attitudes and views of life?
8. Angels are important and valuable; how should we view and respond to them? How does it help your faith knowing that God will send them when you are in need and you may never know about it?
9. How does knowing more about Jesus and what He does for us help us know who we are, what we can do, and what we will be? Why?
10. When did Jesus become more than just a name or religious figure to you? What took place? What does it take for this to happen in others' lives as well? What can you and your church do to spur this on more?
11. What does it take for you to be more fueled up in Him and keep going through the joys and trials of life?
12. What is the key to taking hold of knowing more about Christ and understanding who He is and what He has done? How can this help you attain more of the joy and blessings we have as Christians in Christ?