

“4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 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? 6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. 7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. 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. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. 10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. 13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Heb 1:4-14)

There are several things to say about this passage this morning. 1. The Marvel of Angels. What is said of Angels. 2. The deficiency of Angels. Compared to Jesus Christ. 2. The excellency of Christ to do what angels cannot do.

- I. The Marvel of Angels. I cannot even begin to exhaust the Scripture on the subject of angels this morning. I want to give you just a bit for two reasons: I don't know enough about the subject, and if I did we would not have time to say everything that needs said. We will try to present the biblical information simply as possible, integrating the many allusions and references in Scripture.
 - A. Angels are great and mighty beings, spiritual in nature, without physical bodies, but with individual personhood and names. We know the names of Gabriel and Michael. They have immense power and authority, but are not all equal, for some are greater in power and authority than others. There are millions and millions of angels; God is called the Lord of Hosts. The apostle refers to them as principalities and powers in heavenly places. They are most holy beings, except for those who fell in the rebellion of Satan—these are wicked without remedy.
 - B. The most common name for angel is messenger, but this same name is used for any messenger of the Lord, including men, so that it requires careful study to understand the meaning of some scriptures.
 - C. Angels are also charged with the protection and care of those who will be heirs of salvation, although the Reformers rejected the idea that each person had a particular guardian angel. Elijah had a whole army of angels surrounding him when the king of Israel came to take him, but it took only one angel to slay the first born of Egypt and deliver Israel.
 - D. The power and glory of angels are immense, as a number of illustrations makes clear:
 1. An angel, or angels, was placed at the entrance to the Garden of Eden to keep the way to the Tree of Life. There was a sword which turned every way to accomplish this. This represented immense power, for since that day Satan and all his hosts have not been able to return to the Garden of Eden.

2. Two angels went to Sodom and led Lot and his daughters out before they destroyed the cities on the plain with fire and brimstone.
3. An angel was with Jacob in all his journeys and trials and kept him from all evil, as Jacob said before his death.
4. The angel of death killed all the firstborn of Egypt and delivered Israel from Egypt.
5. An angel, the captain of the Lord's hosts, went with Israel and enabled them to win mighty victories over the Canaanites.
6. Ezekiel and other prophets in visions of heaven, saw the glory and splendor of the cherubim and seraphim and their power and will in doing the will of God always.
7. Angels carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom.
8. Angels will separate the wheat from the tares and the good fish from the bad fish in the day of judgment.
9. Thousands and thousands, ten thousand times ten thousands of angels stand always to do the will of God in all things and obey instantly.
10. We are cautioned to always be holy because of the presence of the holy angels in all that we do.
11. Angels learn from God's dealings with the church and praise Him for His mercy and grace.
12. Angels gave the law to Moses and Aaron, according to many Scriptures. Heb. 2:2 and many others.

II. The Deficiency of Angels with respect to Jesus Christ. This is brought out by several texts that are cited in the first chapter of Hebrews.

A. He has a more excellent name, because of His inheritance. He is the heir of His father.

Two citations in verse 5 bring this out:

1. From Psalm 2: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." His resurrection declared His sonship, according to Romans 1:4. It did not make Him the Son of God, but so declared Him. He is the only begotten from eternity, but was manifested to be so by His resurrection from the dead.
2. From Ps. 89 "I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son."

B. He is worthy of divine worship [vs. 6,7]: Ps.97: Even the angels are to worship Him. Even the angels, which are called "gods" because they possess something of the glory and authority of God, must worship Him who is the Son of God in a way they can never be; by nature rather than by adoption. Thus, angels are ministers of God; spirits and a flame of fire; but the Son is God Himself.

C. He is worthy of a throne to which the angels cannot ascend: the throne of God Himself: vs. 8, 9. Ps. 46, 6,7 During his earthly walk as the mediator, he showed Himself worthy by loving righteousness and hating iniquity. The Mediator is therefore exalted above all men and angels, and anointed with the Spirit without measure. But the Mediator is the Son of God, worthy to rule all things; worthy to be worshipped as God.

D. He is the Creator of the Heavens and the earth, the immutable One, God Himself. Vs. 10-12. Note the progression in the things that I cited: 1. He is the Son of God; 2. He is worthy of Divine Worship; 3. He is worthy to sit on the throne of God himself to judge the world; 4. He is the Creator and the Immutable One, God Himself.

- E. He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity: What angel has been elevated to the right hand of God? Ps. 110:1. Verses 13,14. The angels are ministering spirits; Jesus is God Himself and nothing of the Deity do the Scriptures deny to Him. Hence, there are many warnings in the Bible about worshipping angels; no holy angel will accept worship from men.
- F. We omit the references to the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament, for this was the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, who took the form of an angel, and did receive worship from men, as was His right.

III. The Excellencies of Christ; What He can do that the Angels cannot do.

- A. He can forgive sins. The palsied man in Mark 2 was carried by four friends to see Jesus. They took the roof apart to let the man down at the feet of Christ. When He saw their faith He said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." The scribes said, "What can forgive sins but God only?" Exactly. They were right. And so they might know that He has power to forgive sins He told the man to "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."
- B. He can give you a new heart. Angels can cut you to pieces, rain fire and brimstone, turn your heart to stone, but they cannot give you a new heart: this is the work of Messiah, who pours forth the Holy Spirit on those who believe. They can announce the penalty of the law and execute its judgments, but only the Lord Jesus can give a new heart, born of the Spirit of God, for the baptism of the Spirit belongs to Him alone.
- C. He will judge the world at the last day. All nations will be gathered before Him. The angels will do the gathering and carry out the decrees of the wrath of God, but Jesus will sit on that Great White Throne of Glory and Judgment.
- D. Jesus can behold the Face of God in all His glory and splendor, for He is God of God. Angels cover their faces with their wings, for even they cannot look on the fullness of the glory of God, but only in a limited sense as did Israel and Moses.
- E. Prayers are to be made to all the persons of the Holy Trinity. I Peter 3:12 "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Jesus Christ is the Lord, the Father is the Lord, the Holy Spirit is the Lord. One God, one Power, one Honor, one Glory as the Athanasian Creed confesses it.
- F. The Lord Jesus, therefore, is the last word for the last days. Any angel that brings another message is coming from hell, not from heaven, for those days are past. The fullness dwells in Christ and there is nothing beyond Him but darkness and wickedness. Therefore in conclusion I would read Colossians 2:6-10

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

May God bless you.