

“No Greater Name”
Hebrews 1:4-5
(Preached at Trinity, September 10, 2023)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. The Book of Hebrews was written to a small group of Jewish Christians. Their profession of faith in Christ was costing them dearly. The pressures upon them must have been enormous. They were excluded from the Jewish society. There were economic hardships. They were constantly ridiculed for the foolishness of their commitment to Christ.
 - A. Their Jewish brethren would have pointed out that Jesus was just a man, a man from the insignificant city of Nazareth. He may have had good intentions, but He was a failure. He suffered the death of a common criminal.
 - B. And as far as His claim to deity and the claim that He died but was now alive, who would believe such a thing?
 - C. Not to mention, Judaism had roots in antiquity. They were sons of Abraham. They were given God's laws and ordinances. The promises were theirs. Even Paul affirmed this.
Romans 3:1-2 NAU - "Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? ² Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God."
2. The writer of Hebrews is reminding them of the infinite superiority of Jesus Christ. Yes, following Him comes at a high price. This has always been true, but He is of infinite value. His people must be willing to take up their cross and follow Him. But is it worth it?
3. This is the background of the Book of Hebrews. It is just as relevant in the 21st Century as it was in the 1st Century. Jesus Christ is worth our lives. He is worth living for. He is worth dying for. He is superior to all. We'll see in Hebrews He is superior to the prophets. He is superior to the angels. He is superior to Abraham, to Moses and to Joshua. He is superior to Melchizedek. He is superior to the Old Covenant.
4. Jesus Christ and He alone has been able to purge our sins by offering up Himself and shedding His own blood.
The word for “purification” in **Verse 3** (καθαρισμός) refers to a purging, an expiation brought about by the atonement. Only Jesus can remove our sin and guilt so that it will no longer be imputed to us.
5. Maintaining a high focus upon the high superiority of Jesus Christ, the author has thus far portrayed Jesus as the ultimate prophet through whom God has spoken, the Creator of the universe, the Heir of all things, the exact representation of God's Divine essence, the Sustainer of all things, the Priest who has provided purification for sin, and the King who is seated at the right hand of Majesty on high.

6. As we continue into this next section, the author declares the superiority of Christ over the angels. Angels have a prominent place in the Bible – over 100 references in the OT and 160 in the New. They exist in vast numbers. The Jews placed a great emphasis upon the angels. They connected angels with the great events of the Old Testament.
- A. They believed God gave Moses the Law through the mediation of angels.
- a. Peter said the Law was ordained by angels.
Acts 7:52-53 NAU - "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; ⁵³ you who received the law as ordained by angels, and *yet* did not keep it."
- b. It was by the voice of an angel that Moses heard God through the burning bush.
Exodus 3:2 NAU - "The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed."
- B. It was to angels that Abraham spoke with regarding the destruction of Sodom. Hebrews alludes to this in **Chapter 13**.
Hebrews 13:2 NAU - "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."
- C. Angels possessed great power. A single angel killed 185,000 men of the Assyrian army.
2 Kings 19:35 NAU - "Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead."
7. Angels are created beings. They are superior to men, yet man has been raised to greater honor.
2 Peter 2:10-11 NAU - "and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, ¹¹ whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord."
Hebrews 2:9 NAU - "But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone."
8. Angels may be superior to man but are in no way superior to Jesus Christ. People have always been fascinated with angels. This remains true today. They dwell in a different realm than ours. But their high veneration of angels is unfounded. Angels were created as servants of God, messengers of the Old Covenant. but Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant, the anointed Son of God.
9. Now the author goes into great detail to describe the ways Jesus excels the angels. He provides five different ways Jesus is superior to the angels.
1. Jesus possesses a greater name – Verses 4-5
 2. Jesus possesses a greater exaltation – 6-7 – He claims all worship.
 3. Jesus possesses a greater throne – 8-9
 4. Jesus possesses a greater, unchanging, eternal glory – 10-12
 5. Jesus possesses a greater sovereign dominion as Lord and King – 13
10. This morning I'll limit our attention to the first – Jesus possesses a better name. "He has inherited a more excellent name than they."

I. Paul declares Jesus has been given a name above all others.

Philippians 2:9-11 NAU - "Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

A. Jesus has been given many names. What name is His high more excellent name?

1. Christ is His lofty title – it means anointed one
2. Jesus referred to Himself most often as “The Son of Man” – this has messianic overtones.
3. He is called Immanuel which refers to His incarnation and abiding presence – “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”
Isaiah 7:14 NAU - "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."
Matthew 1:23 NAS - "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us."
4. Isaiah gave a list of names
Isaiah 9:6 KJV - "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
5. Jesus is also referred to by many metaphorical names: Branch, Door, Good Shepherd, Bridegroom, Lamb of God, Bread of Life, Light of the World, Cornerstone

B. Which of these is the name above every name? A name infinitely superior to all others. A name the angels will never have applied to them. It's not just any name. Paul says, "bestowed on Him the name which is above every name"

1. The name Jesus is a lofty name. it literally means “Savior”
 - a. This was the name Mary was commanded to name her Son.
Matthew 1:21 NAU - "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."
 - b. Paul says at the name of Jesus every knee will bow.
Philippians 2:10 NAU - "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow"
 - c. Peter also spoke of this high lofty name.
Acts 4:8-12 NAU - "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people, ⁹ if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead-- by this *name* this man stands here before you in good health. ¹¹ "He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, *but* which became the very corner *stone*. ¹² "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."

2. But we must understand the importance of the other name attached to the name Jesus. He is the LORD Jesus Christ. This is the high name that every tongue will confess.
Philippians 2:11 NAU - "and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
 The name κύριος is used 716 times in the NT.
Romans 10:9 NAU - "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;"
3. κύριος is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Yahweh. It is the grand declaration that Jesus has been exalted to the highest place.
 "Jesus is Lord" is one of the oldest Christian creeds.
1 Corinthians 12:3 NAU - "no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit."
4. This title "Lord" is the grand declaration of His supremacy over all.
 Don't pretend that there may be another way of salvation.
 Don't pretend that you will not have to give account to Him.

II. There is yet another name for Jesus that is significant in this passage before us.

- A. The writer is stating the significance of Jesus to the New Covenant.
 He is the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah.
 1. In Psalm 2 He is referred to as God's Son.
Psalm 2:7 NAU - "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You."
 This is the passage being quoted in **Verse 5**
 2. Jesus is the eternal Son, the second Person of the Godhead. But the title of Son has other important designations.
 3. It has Covenant significance. It was God's promise to David – the Davidic Covenant
2 Samuel 7:13-16 NAU - "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ "I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, ¹⁵ but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took *it* away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."
 4. The name Son is at the heart of the Gospel.
Romans 1:1-4 NAU - "the gospel of God, ² which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, ⁴ who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,"

- B. As God's Anointed this is a high lofty designation.
1. To Mary it was declared:
Luke 1:32 NAU - "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David"
 2. At His baptism:
Matthew 3:17 NAU - "and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."
 3. Faith in this Son is essential for salvation.
John 3:16-18 NAU - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."
- C. As God's Son Jesus possesses a better inheritance – Verses 5-6
- Hebrews 1:5 NAU** - "For to which of the angels did He ever say, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him And He shall be a Son to Me"?"
1. The right of inheritance was given to the first-born son.
Israel was designated as God's firstborn son.
Exodus 4:22 NAU - "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, "Israel is My son, My firstborn."
Jeremiah 31:9 NAU - "For I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn."
 2. The birthright of the firstborn son was a double portion. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a pot of stew.
 3. Jesus is designated God's firstborn Son. He is the heir of all things.
"I will be a Father to Him And He shall be a Son to Me"
 4. The angels know nothing of such a blessing.
"For to which of the angels did He ever say, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee"?"
 - a. The angels are created as ministering servants.
 - b. They have never been designated as God's own son.
 - c. But we have! We are heirs and joint heirs with Christ. We are the children of the living God. We are designated as sons.
Galatians 3:26 NAU - "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."
Romans 8:14-15 NAU - "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

Conclusion:

1. In the Hebrew mind the name describes the essence of the person. God says,
Exodus 20:7 KJV - "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."
God must be held in holy reverence. This is also true for the Son.
Psalms 2:12 NAU - "Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!"
2. If you turn away from Christ there will be no other Savior.
Acts 4:12 KJV - "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."