

**Christ is Superior to the Angels**  
**Hebrews 1:5**  
**Part One**

The Scriptures teach us that we are to give honor to those to whom honor is due. And certainly this is a very important concept for us to understand and apply.

The author of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the prophets in Hebrews 1:1-4.

The author of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the angels in Hebrews 1:5-2:18. This rather lengthy section of Scripture has been regarded as a single unit consisting of four major paragraphs: **Hebrews 1:5-14; 2:1-4; 2:5-9** and **2:10-18**. This morning we will begin to consider the first of those four paragraphs.

And what did the author do in that first paragraph? The author of Hebrews explained Christ's superiority to the angels (Hebrews 1:5-14). And it is this explanation of Christ's superiority to angels that we will begin to examine this morning as we begin our study of **Hebrews 1:5-14**.

So let me now read these verses for you and see if this is not so. **"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'?" (6) And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, 'And let all the angels of God worship Him.'** (7) **And of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.'** (8) **But of the Son He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. (9) You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions.'** (10) **And, 'You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; (11) they will perish, but You remain; and they all will become old like a garment, (12) 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.'** (13) **But to which of the angels has He ever said, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your**

**feet’? (14) Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”**

So did the author of Hebrews, within these verses, explain to his readers the superiority of Christ to angels? Yes! This is exactly what he did.

So why would the author, at this point in his letter, be led by the Spirit to do this? The author in **Hebrews 1:1-4**, in his attempt to keep these Hebrews from turning back to Judaism while under a great persecution, had just established for his readers Christ’s superiority to the prophets, but there was still another group that his readers held in even higher regard than the prophets. And who was this group?

They were the angels and therefore the author felt, through the Spirit’s leading, that he needed to establish for his readers sake Christ’s superiority not only over the prophets but also over the angels as well, if he was going to do all that he could in order to protect his Hebrews readers from turning back to Judaism.

So let us for a moment look at the angels and consider what the Jews during this period of time believed about the angels that caused them to esteem angels so highly.

First of all, there is little doubt that the Jews considered the angels to be the highest and most exalted of all of God’s created beings and rightfully so. And certainly this belief would have led the Jews in and of itself to view the angels more highly than every other created thing, which of course would have included the prophets. But this belief, concerning the angels, that they were the highest and most exalted of all of God’s created beings, was not the only reason why the Jews viewed the angels so highly.

The Jews also believed that God was using angels in extraordinary ways and in such extraordinary ways that it caused the Jews to view the angels even more highly than they would have if they had not believed these things.

And doesn’t this make sense? People can be viewed very highly because they may be seen as holding an exalted position, but they will be viewed even more highly if they in that exalted position are seen as performing very

important and essential functions. And this is exactly how the Jews during the time period of this letter viewed angels.

The Jews not only viewed them as the highest and most exalted of all God's created beings, or in other words as holding the highest and the most exalted position among all of God's creation, but they also viewed them as performing incredibly important and necessary functions. So, what did the Jews believe were some of those incredibly important and necessary functions?

First of all, many Jews believed that the angels acted as God's senate or council and that He did nothing without consulting them. Secondly, many Jews believed there were certain very special angels who controlled various things such as the oceans and seas and rain and hail and thunder etc. Thirdly, many Jews also believed that there was a guardian angel for every nation and every child. These are just a few things that many Jews believed about the angels, which caused them to view the angels so very highly. So is there biblical support for these various beliefs that many Jews believed to be true? No! Not really!

But beyond all of this, there was a belief the Jews held to be true that can be biblically supported that was of greatest importance to them, and what was that belief? They believed that the Old Covenant, or in other words the Mosaic Covenant was brought to them from God by angels, and not only brought to them from God by angels but they also believed that the Old Covenant was mediated to them by angels.

This obviously made the angels very important to the Jews on a very functional and practical level. This belief is supported in **Acts 7:51-53**, **Galatians 3:19** and **Hebrews 2:2**.

So, to the Jewish mind, angels were highly esteemed not only because they believed that the angels were the highest of God's created beings but also because they believed that it was through the angels that the Old Covenant, or in other words the Mosaic covenant was brought to them from God and mediated to them through the angels.

So did the Jewish people have a high view of angels? Absolutely! Did they have a higher view of angels than they did of their own prophets? Yes! They had an extremely high view of angels,

And therefore because of this, it should not be at all surprising to us that the author of Hebrews, after establishing Christ's superiority to the Old Testament prophets in **Hebrews 1:1-4**, has now chosen to go on to highlight Christ's superiority to the angels in **Hebrews 1:5-2:18**, beginning with an explanation of that superiority in **Hebrews 1:5-14**.

So where did the author begin his explanation of Christ's superiority over the angels? The author of Hebrews, quoting the Old Testament, explained that Christ alone should be considered uniquely God's Son and thus superior to all others including the angels (Hebrews 1:5).

So now let us read **Hebrews 1:5** and see if this is not so. **“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’?”** This obviously is a rhetorical question, or in other words a question asked not to gain information but rather to make a point, and what was the author's point? God has never addressed an angel as “Son” nor referred to an angel as “Son,” but He has spoken to Christ in this way and about Christ in that way. So can we demonstrate this to be true? I believe we can.

Let us begin by considering whether or not God in the scriptures has ever addressed an angel as His Son. And what is the answer to that question? The answer would be no.

Even though angels are called “sons of God” in the wider sense of direct creations of God in Job 1:6; 2:2; 38:7, no individual angel is addressed by God as His Son or referred to as His Son.

But this is not so with Christ, for God has addressed Christ as His Son, based on the two Old Testament quotations supplied to us by the author in his rhetorical question in **Hebrews 1:5**.

So, what was the first Old Testament quotation the author supplied as evidence that God had addressed Christ as His Son?

The first Old Testament quotation that the author supplied as evidence that God had addressed Christ as His Son was Psalm 2:7.

So now let me read this Psalm that this author quoted within **Hebrews 1:5**, and this is what it says. **“You are My Son, today I have begotten you.”** So why would the quotation of this verse have supplied such convincing evidence that God had in fact addressed Christ as His Son in this particular Psalm?

**Psalm 2** was already a famous Messianic Psalm, understood to be fulfilled in a future day by a descendant of David who would be crowned king. Its words were recalled at Jesus’ baptism when a voice from Heaven announced, **“You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased”** as recorded in **Mark 1:11**.

So did the author present conclusive evidence for his readers when he quoted **Psalm 2:7**, based on what they understood about this Psalm? I believe he did.

But now as an aside it would be good for us to pause and address this question. What did the author of Hebrews in this context mean by the expression **“today I have begotten you?”** We do not have to guess. Paul, in speaking to the Jews in Pisidian Antioch in **Acts 13:32-33**, told us what God meant. So now let me read this passage for you and this is what it says. **“And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, (33) 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.’”**

So, what did the expression **“today I have begotten you”** mean? Based on the words of Paul in Acts 13:32-33 the expression “today I have begotten you” was referring to Christ’s resurrection and subsequent exaltation. This would fit in nicely with the popular view of **Psalm 2** that I already shared with you and would serve to strengthen even further the evidence that the author of Hebrews had put forward in **Hebrews 1:5** to support His point that God had in fact spoken to Christ in **Psalm 2:7** and addressed Him as Son.

So, what was the first Old Testament quotation the author supplied as evidence that God had addressed Christ as His Son?

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So, what was the second Old Testament quotation the author supplied as evidence that God had addressed Christ as His Son?

The second Old Testament quotation that the author supplied as evidence that God had addressed Christ as His Son was 2 Samuel 7:14.

So now let me read **2 Samuel 7:14** as it appears in **Hebrews 1:5** and this is what it says. **“I be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me.”**

This is also, like **Psalm 2**, a well-known Messianic passage commonly called the Davidic Covenant in which the prophet Nathan told David that after his death his son would build a house for God and establish a royal throne that would endure forever. God’s words to the Son – Christ – were **“I will be his Father, and He will be My Son.”**

Since Solomon failed to fulfill this, as did the following Davidic kings, the later prophets looked forward to a greater son of David who would fulfill it. The fulfillment of that ancient promise was celebrated in the angel Gabriel’s announcement to Mary in **Luke 1:32-33**. And what did Gabriel say to Mary? He said, **“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; (33) and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”**

So, what did the author of Hebrews, in using a rhetorical question, do in **Hebrews 1:5**? The author of Hebrews, quoting the Old Testament, explained that Christ alone should be considered uniquely God’s Son and thus superior to all others including the angels.

May God give us the grace to give honor where honor is due, but may the honor we give to God’s Son be transcendent over all others to the praise of His glory.