

Christ is Superior to the Angels
Hebrews 1:8-9
Part Three

Government is necessary. Can you imagine what it would be like without government? It would be chaos. And because God is a God of order, He, as an expression of His love and wisdom, provided us governing authorities.

Government however is no panacea for all that ails us, but even though I believe people in general know this they just can't seem to stop getting their hopes up when a new government comes into power.

Look around the world and see if this is not so; there are always people who can't seem to help themselves. There are always people who think that somehow, some government will be able to bring them into the Promised Land, but what will they invariably experience? They will experience disappointment.

But there is a ruler who can provide us with all that we long for if we would simply come to Him and remain bowed before Him in worship. And who is this ruler? This ruler is Christ.

He does not rule over a country, but He does rule over a kingdom. It is called in **Colossians 1:13** the kingdom of light. And it is this kingdom that hopefully each one of us have chosen to enter by grace through faith for this kingdom is ruled by One who is both eternal and righteous. And hopefully this truth will come alive for us this morning as we return back to our study of the Book of Hebrews.

The Book of Hebrews was written by an unknown author to protect a group of Hebrew Christians living in Rome, while in the midst of a great persecution, from returning back to Judaism. In order to accomplish this feat the author of Hebrews had to show his readers how he personally saw Christ as superior to anything they may have left behind in Judaism.

So how did the author see Christ as superior? First of all, as we have already noted, the author of the Book of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the Old Testament prophets in Hebrews 1:1-4.

So how else did the author of Hebrews see Christ as superior? The author of Hebrews saw Christ as superior to the angels in Hebrews 1:5-2:18. This is the section that we are presently examining, beginning with **Hebrews 1:5-14**, which is the first paragraph of this very large section of Scripture dealing with angels.

So, what have we learned about this first paragraph of Scripture? Or in other words, what have we learned about **Hebrews 1:5-14**? The author of Hebrews explained Christ's superiority to the angels in Hebrews 1:5-14. This is what we have learned.

So let us now again read that explanation, and this is what it says. **“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 the angels? Yes! This is exactly what he did. And it is this explanation that we will continue to examine this morning. So, what have we learned so far?

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). We saw this in **Hebrews 1:5**. So,

what else did the author of Hebrews put forward as an explanation of Christ's superiority to the angels?

The author of Hebrews quoting the Old Testament explained that because Christ was being worshipped and served by angels, He should be considered superior to all others including the angels (Hebrews 1:6-7). We saw this in **Hebrews 1:6-7.**

But the author of Hebrews is not done in putting forward his case for the superiority of Christ to angels, and this brings us to this morning's message and to a further explanation of Christ's superiority. So, what is this further explanation?

The author of Hebrews quoting the Old Testament explained that because Christ was eternal, Christ should be considered superior to all others including the angels (Hebrews 1:8-12). So this is what the author will be seeking to explain to these struggling Hebrew believers.

So how did the author establish this fact that Christ was eternal? The author in **Hebrews 1:8-12** established the fact that Christ is eternal by quoting two different Old Testament passages. The first of those passages that he quoted was **Psalms 45:6-7**. And where did he quote this passage? He quoted it in **Hebrews 1:8-9**. And these two verses will be as far as we will get this morning.

And what is my hope for this message as we seek to establish Christ's superiority from these two verses? My hope is that we might not only be encouraged to think about the fact that Christ is eternal but that He is also righteous, and how blessed we are to have Him as our Lord and King. And I would hope that this thought might drive us to our knees before Him. This is my hope for this message this morning.

So let me now read for you Hebrews 1:8-9 and this what they say. **“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.’”** So did the author in these verses explain that because Christ was eternal that He

should be considered superior to all others including the angels? Yes, I believe he does.

But how did the author in quoting this particular Old Testament passage accomplish this? The author of Hebrews quoting Psalm 45:6-7 (LXX 44:7-8) established the fact that Christ was eternal by pointing out to his readers that Christ's throne is eternal (Hebrews 1:8-9).

So did the author quoting this Old Testament passage in **Hebrews 1:8-9** establish the fact that Christ's throne is eternal and thus Christ is eternal? I believe he does. And he establishes this fact very quickly at the very beginning of **verse 8**.

And what does the very beginning of this verse say? **“But** [in contrast to what God the Father had just said about angels being the worshippers and servants of Christ in Hebrews 1:6-7] **of the Son** [or in other words, of Christ the Son] **He says ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.’**” In other words, **“Your throne, O God, is eternal.”**

So if Christ's throne is **“forever and ever”** or in other words **“eternal,”** what can we conclude about Christ? We can conclude that Christ is **“forever and ever”** or in other words Christ is **“eternal.”** So there it is! The author by quoting **Psalm 45:6-7** has established Christ's throne as eternal, and in establishing Christ throne as eternal, he has established Christ as eternal. And this of course makes Christ superior to the angels, who are not eternal, which is of course the point that he is seeking to make by quoting this Old Testament passage.

A point that the author also drove when he represented God in this same quotation as addressing His Son, the One whose throne is **“forever and ever”** as **“God.”**

So let us go back to **Hebrews 1:8** and see if this is not so. **“But** [in contrast to what God the Father had just said about angels being the worshippers and servants of Christ in Hebrews 1:6-7] **of the Son** [or in other words, of Christ the Son] **He says ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.’**” So how did the author of Hebrews represent God the Father as having addressed His Son?

The author of Hebrews represented God the Father as having addressed His Son as “**God**” or in other words as “**God the Son.**” The way that God the Father addressed His Son in this Old Testament passage is a very powerful biblical argument to support our belief in the deity of Christ and one that we hopefully will not forget when we might find ourselves in a position where we might have to defend this very important doctrinal truth.

So, what else did the author of Hebrews believe that God the Father had communicated about His Son’s throne besides that it was eternal?

The author in quoting Psalm 45:6-7 not only communicated that Christ’s throne is eternal, but also that His rule from that throne is characterized by righteousness.

So let us go back and read **Hebrews 1:8-9**. “**But** [in contrast to what God the Father had just said about angels being the worshippers and servants of Christ in Hebrews 1:6-7] **of the Son** [or in other words, of Christ the Son] **He says ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever** (or in other words “Your throne, O God is eternal” and then the author represents God as saying this) **and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.’”**

So is the author of Hebrews, in quoting this particular section of **Psalm 45**, choosing to communicate to us not only that Christ’s throne is eternal, but that also that His rule from His throne is characterized by righteousness? Yes, this is exactly what He is doing.

We know that Christ’s rule from His eternal throne will be characterized by righteousness, because the scepter of His kingdom, which served as a symbol of a monarch’s authority, was described in Psalm 45:6-7 as the scepter of righteousness.

So when people look at Christ and the rule that He exercises from His eternal throne and over His kingdom, what will they see? They will see righteousness, or in other words they will always see Christ acting in accordance with what is right.

What did Moses say about God in **Deuteronomy 32:4**? “**For all of His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He.**”

So after the author of Hebrews quoting **Psalm 45:6-7** had represented God the Father as having addressed His Son as “God,” and having had spoken to His Son about the eternal nature of His throne and the righteous quality of his rule, what did the author do next?

The author of Hebrews in **Hebrews 1:9** continued to quote **Psalm 45:6-7** and continued to represent it, as God speaking to His Son. But this time he did not represent God as speaking to His Son about the eternal nature of His throne or the inherent righteousness of His rule, but this time He rather spoke to His Son about how He (past tense) “loved righteousness” and how He (past tense) “hated lawlessness.” In other words, God now, from the author’s standpoint as he quoted this Old Testament passage, was not focusing on the eternal nature of His throne or the inherent righteousness of His rule but rather God the Father was now focusing on how the Son had expressed His love of righteousness and His hatred of lawlessness sometime in the past. And how He had blessed His Son because of it.

So now let me read for you **Hebrews 1:9** and see if this is not so. **“You have loved righteousness [past tense] and hated lawlessness [past tense]; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions.”** So do we see God in this verse responding in a positive way to how His Son had expressed His love of righteousness and His hatred of lawlessness sometime in the past? Yes, we do. And what did the author of Hebrews indicate was that positive response?

The author of Hebrews in Hebrews 1:9 indicated in quoting Psalm 45:5-6 that God’s response to Christ’s love of righteousness and hatred of lawlessness was that He anointed Christ above His companions.

So, what had Christ done as an expression of His love and hatred of sin that caused His Father to anoint Him with the oil of gladness of His companions?

I believe it was when Christ chose to leave His throne in glory, so that He in becoming a man might offer Himself up to His Father as an offering for sin. I believe that it was after this very dramatic expression of His love of righteousness and His hatred of sin that caused His Father to respond by anointing Him with oil of gladness above His companions.

So, what was this anointing with the oil of gladness above His companions? The anointing with the oil of gladness took place when His Father exalted Him back to His former glory at His right hand, when Christ was given a name above every name according to **Ephesians 1:20-22** thus making it possible for Him to enter into that joy that He had looked forward to and that had sustained Him during the time of His suffering according to **Hebrews 12:2**.

So who exactly were these companions? The companions that Christ has been anointed above are the angels. This clearly from the context would be the identity of the companions.

People invariably get excited about new governments believing that somehow they might be able to lead them into the promised land, but though they can't there is a ruler who can if we would simply come to Him and remain bowed before Him in worship. And who is this ruler. This ruler is Christ.

He does not rule over a country, but He does rule over a kingdom. It is called the kingdom of light in **Colossians 1:13**. And it is this kingdom that hopefully each one of us have entered, for Christ who rules this kingdom is neither mortal nor morally flawed.

So let us get excited about Him and all that He is and has done for us. And may our excitement for Him cause us to bow before Him so that His life might fill us and be seen through us,

May God give us the grace as the followers of Christ and citizens of His kingdom to reflect His love of righteousness and His hatred of sin to the praise of His glory.