

Christ is Superior to the Angels
Hebrews 1:13-14
Part Five

We have plans, so many plans and so often times those plans fail.

But though our plans may fail, God's plan for our lives will never fail. Let me read for you **Romans 8:28-29**. **"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (29) For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son."**

When we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we got on the glory train. And that train will not stop. And if the forces of darkness seek to derail that train, I will tell you what will happen. God will send His angels to protect us and to make sure that the plans that He has for our lives will not be thwarted.

Let me read for you a story from 2 Kings 6. In this story the King of Aram had been enraged at Elisha, and what did the king do? He sent horses and chariots and a great army to Dothan to deal with Elisha, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

So what happened after this? Let me now pick up this story for you beginning in verse 15. **"Now when the attendant of the man of God has risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?'" (16) So he answered, 'Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.'** (17) **Then Elisha prayed and said, 'O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.'** **And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."**

So let me ask you, do you believe that God's plan for Elisha was ever seriously threatened by the king of Aram and his many horses, and chariots, and his mighty army? No! And neither will God's plan for us, for it ever became necessary, that the plan that God had for us needed to be protected, be assured of this, that God's angels would be sent to us to protect us and

God's plan for us, and there is no doubt in my mind that the plan that God, through His angels would prevail.

Hopefully all this will come alive for us this morning, as we once again return back to our study of Hebrews, where an unknown author, in an attempt to strengthen the faith of a group struggling Hebrew Christians living in Rome, wrote to them about the superiority of Christ.

So how did the author see Christ as superior? First of all, 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.

Obviously this is a very large section of verses and we are now in the process of breaking up this very large section of verses into four parts beginning with **Hebrews 1:5-14.**

So how did the author of Hebrews, in the minds of his readers, in **Hebrews 1:5-14**, advance Christ's superiority to angels in this particular section of verses? The author of Hebrews explained Christ's superiority to the angels in Hebrews 1:5-14.

So, what specifically have we learned so far that the author explained to his readers within those verses?

First of all, 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 explain? 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.**

So, what else did the author explain? The author of Hebrews, quoting the Old Testament, explained that because Christ is eternal, He should be

considered superior to all others including the angels (Hebrews 1:8-12). We saw this in **Hebrews 1:8-12.**

So these are the things that the author explained to his readers about Christ's superiority to angels, up through **verse 12**. But the author was not yet done. He also wanted to explain one more thing to them about Christ's superiority to the angels. So, what further explanation did the author supply to his readers?

The author of Hebrews, quoting the Old Testament, explained that because Christ is seated at God's **right** hand, He is superior to all others including the angels (Hebrews 1:13-14).

So now let me read for you **Hebrews 1:13-14** and see if this is not so. **“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 in these verses explain to his readers that because Christ is seated at God's right hand, He is superior to all others including the angels? Yes, I believe he did.

But now let us go back and look at these verses more carefully in order to understand better, why this is so.

And what is my hope for this message as we go back and look at these verses? My hope is that as we contemplate Christ's superior position at God's right hand and thus His superiority to angels, we might this morning better understand the implications of this for our own lives in terms of our own spiritual battles with the forces of darkness and the certainty the certainty of our ultimate victory. So now let us begin our examination of the verses beginning with **verse 13**.

So, what is the very first word in **verse 13**? The very first word is the word **“but.”** So why did the author use this word? The author used the word “but” to mark a contrast between what he had just said about Christ in verses 8-12 with what he was now going to say about angels in verses 13-14.

So what then did the author do, after he used the word **“but,”** to mark this contrast? The author, immediately after he had used the word **“but”** in

order to mark this contrast then went on to explain this contrast, for his readers, by asking them a question, and not just any question, but a rhetorical question.

So let me now read for you the remaining part of **verse 13** and see if this is not so. **“But to which of the angels [in contrast to Christ] has He [or in other words God] ever said, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.’”**

So after the author of Hebrews established the contrast between Christ and the angels by his use of the word **“but,”** did he then go on to explain that contrast by using a rhetorical question? Yes? Absolutely?

So now let me ask you, would this particular rhetorical question have been effective in explaining the contrast? Yes! Absolutely!

And how can we know this? We can know this because of the way they would have answered this question. And how would they have answered it?

They would have answered it something like this. “You have asked us, to which of the angels (in contrast to Christ) has He (or in other words God) ever said, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’ And our answer is there is no such angel, for no angel has ever been extended such an honor. The only person who has ever been extended such an honor is Christ, the Messiah of Israel, our Lord and redeemer.”

And why would we know that they would have responded something like this and not in some other way? We know this because the author of Hebrews set them up to answer this way by using an excerpt from a very specific Old Testament passage that the readers would have understood to be words spoken by God to Christ and not to angels. So, what was this very specific Old Testament passage that the author quoted from to establish this contrast between Christ and the angels and thus confirm for his readers what God had said to Christ and had not said to any angel?

The Old Testament passage that the author quoted in Hebrews 1:13, to confirm what God had said to Christ and had not said to any angel, was Psalm 110:1.

This Psalm had already been referenced earlier in **Hebrews 1:3**. It was a Psalm written by David, most likely against the background of some particular event in the history of the Hebrew monarchy, such as Solomon's installation as king, but even though the background for this Psalm may be somewhat obscure in terms of its historical context, this Psalm was commonly and correctly understood by all Jews, at the time this epistle was written, to be Messianic.

So if this is so, which I believe it clearly is, the Hebrew Christians, to whom this author was writing, would have known immediately as soon as the author asked them this rhetorical question that there could only be one answer to the question that he asked. And as soon as they in their minds answered that question, they would have immediately seen the contrast that he was seeking to explain to them, which was that Christ is in a position of honor at the right hand of God and all others including the angels are not.

So now let us look even more carefully at the specific words that spoke to His Son as recorded for us in **Psalm 110:1**.

The word “**sit**” in the Greek is a present tense imperative, or in other words we could interpret it “**be sitting.**”

So when would God the Father have commanded His Son to do this? There is little doubt. The prophetic event that was most likely prefigured by these words recorded by the Psalmist in **Psalm 110:1** most likely pre-figured the exaltation of Christ following His atoning work on the cross of Calvary. It was at that moment in time that God the Father had commanded Him to sit, which certainly pictures for us completion of His atoning work that He accomplished on our behalf on the cross.

So after God had commanded Christ to sit, where did God command Christ to sit? God commanded Christ to sit “**at His right hand.**” So, what was the significance of God commanding His son to sit at His right hand?

The Son being commanded by His Father to sit at His right hand implied kingship, authority, and supremacy. Therefore there is no higher position than this position in the whole of the universe, and therefore all others within this universe are subject to Him and therefore subservient to Him and would this include even the angels? Absolutely! And that is the very point that the

author is seeking to make in having addressed this rhetorical question to his readers, based on this very familiar Old Testament messianic passage.

So how long was Christ to sit at His Father's right hand according to **Psalm 110:1**? Christ was commanded by His Father to sit at His right hand **"until"** He had made Christ's enemies a **"footstool"** for His feet. So, what is the significance of this particular image?

Using one's vanquished enemies as a footstool was a common way for a conquering king to emphasize his victory (Joshua 10:24). So is there somewhere in the Bible that we actually see this?

Let me now read for you **Joshua 10:24** which records for us what took place after Joshua had defeated five different kings. **"When they brought these kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and, said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, 'Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.' So they came near and put their feet on their necks."**

So was using one's vanquished enemies as a footstool a common way for a conquering king to emphasize his victory? Yes.

And therefore it should not surprise us that when God the Father spoke to God the Son about this future victory that He would give to Him, He would picture this victory of His enemies in this way.

So when will God the Father give Christ's enemies to Him as a footstool? The enemies of Christ will be made His footstool at His second coming (Revelation 19:15-16). Let me read for you **Revelation 19:11-16**. **"And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. (12) His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. (13) He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. (14) And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (15) From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the**

Almighty. (16) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.”

So where is Christ presently seated? Christ is presently seated where no one else will ever be seated including the angels. And where is that? Christ is presently seated at the right hand of God where He will remain seated until His second coming when His Father will make His enemies a footstool for His feet.

So let me ask you this question. If the author of Hebrews, at the time he wrote this epistle, saw Christ seated, how did the author at that time see the angels? Let me now read for you **verse 14**. **“Are they [the angels] not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”** This is how the author, at the time he wrote this epistle, saw the angels.

Though Hebrews 1:13 makes it clear that Christ’s future is to reign over His enemies, Hebrews 1:14 makes it just as clear that the angels’ future is one of service.

And of course the future that this author saw when he wrote this epistle is now our present, which means that as Christ continues to sit while awaiting that time when His Father will make His enemies a footstool for his feet, and His enemies are still attacking us, He will continue to send out the angels as ministering spirits to protect us and to make sure that God’s plan for our lives will not be thwarted.

So should this be an encouragement to us? Absolutely! Though Christ may be presently seated at God’s right hand in this place of kingship, authority and supremacy, He will not leave us to fight the forces of darkness in this world alone.

If necessary, He will send out His angels to assist us to protect us in order to make sure that His plans for us will not be thwarted, for we have been chosen to inherit salvation.

So look to the hills.

May God give us the grace to understand that because Christ is at the right hand of God and the angels of God are subject to Christ, we have nothing to fear from the forces of darkness.