

Sunday, September 28, 2025—Hebrews 1:4-6 Jesus Christ: Better Than the Angels

Hebrews 1:4

- **Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.**
- **Being made so much better than the angels**—the word “made” does not mean that Jesus was created or that He became divine only later. Rather, it refers to His exalted position after His work of redemption.
 - Philippians 2:6–11—note that the Father exalted the Son after being made sin for us.
 - Hebrews 1:3—note this same progression. In His humanity, after His suffering and resurrection, He was exalted to the right hand of God. In this sense, He became greater than the angels as the victorious, enthroned Messiah.
 - Hebrews 1:13—angels are great spiritual beings, but they are servants. Christ is the Son.
 - Ephesians 1:21
 - Colossians 1:18, 2:10
- **as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they**— the “name” here refers not just to a title but to status, honor, and identity. In the biblical world, a name embodies the essence of a person. Jesus has inherited the title “Son” (see v. 5: “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee”). No angel is ever addressed this way. His name is “more excellent” because it reflects His unique relationship with the Father, His eternal sonship, and His role as the heir of all things (v. 2).
- Note the flow of the argument here in the first half of Hebrews 1.
 - Verses 1–3: Christ is God’s final word, Creator, sustainer, and redeemer.
 - Verse 4: As a result of His completed work, He is exalted above angels.
 - Verses 5–14: The author quotes Old Testament passages to prove Christ’s superiority over angels.
- Key Theological Takeaways
 - Jesus is superior to angels in both His divine identity and His exalted role as the enthroned Son.

- Angels are important, but they are messengers and servants. Jesus is the eternal Son and rightful heir.
- This sets the stage for Hebrews' warning not to drift from the message spoken through Christ, which is far greater than the message mediated by angels at Sinai (Hebrews 2:1–3).

Hebrews 1:5

- **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?**
- **For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?**—is really the heart of the argument that starts in verse 4.
- The Rhetorical Question—the writer asks: *Has God ever said this to an angel?* The obvious answer is **no**. These words were spoken only of Christ. The point: Jesus is not just another heavenly being—He is the unique Son.
- Psalm 2:7—is cited as evidence that Christ is “better than the angels” in verse 4.
 - Psalm 2 is a royal psalm originally about Israel’s king, but it pointed forward to the Messiah.
 - Acts 13:33, Hebrews 5:5
 - “Begotten” here doesn’t mean Jesus came into existence (He is eternal). Instead, it’s about public declaration and appointment. In the NT, this phrase is applied to:
 - Resurrection/Exaltation: Acts 13:33, Romans 1:4 – Jesus was “declared” the Son of God in power by resurrection.
 - Messianic kingship: God installed His Son as King over the nations.
 - So, in Hebrews, the author Ps. 2:7 to show Christ’s exalted sonship, something never said of angels.
- **And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?**
- 2 Samuel 7:14—originally spoken to David about his offspring who would build the temple (Solomon). But it also had a messianic dimension, pointing to the ultimate Son of David—Christ.

- The author applies it to Jesus to show His covenant relationship with the Father. He is the promised King in David's line, the Son in a unique way.
- The Flow of Thought
 - Verse 4: Jesus has a “more excellent name” than angels.
 - Verse 5: Proof—God never called an angel His Son in this way, but He did say it of Christ.
 - This sets up the contrast: Angels are servants, but the Son is the royal, eternal heir. Jesus' sonship is unique, rooted in His eternal relationship with the Father and declared in His incarnation, resurrection, and exaltation. Verses 4 & 5 lay the groundwork for the superiority of Christ's message over the angelic mediation of the law (Hebrews 2:2–3).
- Hebrews 1:5 means that God never gave angels the title or relationship of “Son.” These Old Testament texts point uniquely to Christ, showing His eternal sonship, His messianic kingship, and His superiority over all heavenly beings.

Hebrews 1:6

- **And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.**
- **And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world**— “firstbegotten” (πρωτότοκος, prōtotokos) doesn't mean Jesus was created. It means He is the preeminent heir (cf. Colossians 1:15, 18; Romans 8:29). The “firstborn” in biblical thought is the one with inheritance rights and supremacy.
 - Matthew 1:25
 - Luke 2:7
 - Romans 8:29
 - Colossians 1:15, 18
- Hebrews 1:6—“Bringeth into the world” could refer to:
 - Incarnation — when Christ came into the world as man.
 - Resurrection/Exaltation — when He re-entered the heavenly realm as the victorious Son.

- Many scholars see it as pointing especially to His exaltation after resurrection, since that is when His superiority over angels was openly displayed (cf. Philippians 2:9–11).
- **And let all the angels of God worship him**—this is a difficult phrase because this exact quote is not found anywhere in Hebrew Masoretic text. The LXX, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament contains this line in Deuteronomy 32:43. The King James Bible does not because it follows the Hebrew Masoretic text.
- The academy believes this proves that Jesus and the New Testament writers quoted the LXX when writing the New Testament documents. I am skeptical of this position for the following reasons.
 - The Letter of Aristeas, which describes the origin of the Septuagint, is considered legendary and unreliable.
 - Existing Septuagint editions are compiled from Codex Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus, all post-Christ.
 - Esther 8:9 shows Jews still using Hebrew during Persian captivity.
 - Romans 3:1–2: Paul affirms that the oracles of God were entrusted to the Jews, implying Hebrew texts.
 - Matthew 5:18: Jesus refers to “jots and tittles”, which are Hebrew characters, not Greek.
 - Luke 24:44: Jesus references the threefold division of Hebrew Scripture (Law, Prophets, Psalms), not the Septuagint or Apocrypha.
 - Acts 26:14 & Acts 21–22: Jesus and Paul speak in Hebrew, not Greek.
- Psalm 97:7—echoes the phrase being cited in Hebrews 1:6.
- Luke 2:9–14—the angles extol God at the birth of Christ. This is probably also the scriptural clue for what “bringeth into the world” is a reference to i.e., the incarnation.
- Hebrews 1:6—angels, as glorious as they are, are commanded by God Himself to bow down before the Son. Worship is the ultimate dividing line:
 - Angels may be honored, but they are never worshiped.
 - Jesus, however, receives worship from angels—proof that He shares God’s divine status.
- The Argument in Context

- Verse 4: Jesus has a better name than angels.
 - Verse 5: God never called angels “Son,” but He did call Jesus His Son.
 - Verse 6: God actually commands angels to worship Jesus.
 - Therefore, Christ is not just greater than angels—He is in a totally different category.
- This verse powerfully affirms Jesus’ deity—since in the OT, only God receives worship (Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 4:10). It also shows His sovereign role as heir: when He is revealed, even the highest heavenly beings must submit.
 - Hebrews 1:6 means that when God revealed His Son (at His incarnation and especially at His exaltation), He declared that even the angels must worship Him—demonstrating that Christ is far above them in rank, honor, and divine status.