

Hebrews 1:4-14

Week Two

Study written by Holli Worthington

Day 1



Holy Spirit, help me to engage my mind and heart as I read; please give me understanding and insight and may the outcome be that you expand my love for Jesus.

- ✓ Read through the passage in each translation.
- ✓ Underline or write in the margin, themes that you see.
- ✓ Write a question you have about the passage.
- ✓ In the space below, write out a verse from our passage that stands out to you, that you can meditate on throughout the week.

Day 2- Hebrews 1:4-5

We begin this week's study in the middle of a sentence, which is a little awkward, but verses 4-14 all aim to show how and why Jesus is superior to angels. The author under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit feels his readers need to know this in no uncertain terms. Possible reasons for this are:

- There may have been an unhealthy preoccupation with angels
- There may have been a temptation to relegate Jesus to something a little less controversial than the Son of God
- There is a need to understand that though Jesus became a human being he is still eternally God and therefore superior to angels

All these reasons are relevant to us today!

1. To understand verse 4 we have to refer back to verse 3. What actions in verse 3b have made Jesus the man, the mediator, the Messiah superior to the angels? (Jesus the Word who was with God and who was God has always been superior to the angels.)

2. Verse 4 tells us that Jesus inherited a name that is better or more excellent than the angel's name. We see in verse 2 and in verse 5 the "name" that is better than angel. What is it?

Scholar's Note: "According to Jewish thought, a person's name revealed his essential nature and could express rank and dignity."¹

3. What case is the author making in verse 5?

Digging Deeper: To fully appreciate Jesus' superiority over angels we need to understand the excellency of angels.

-Describe what angels are like and what they do from the following scriptures

Matt. 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne."

Matt. 28:1-4 "Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men."

Acts 7:53 "...you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

Acts 12:6-11 “Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison. ⁷ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, “Get up quickly.” And the chains fell off his hands. ⁸ And the angel said to him, “Dress yourself and put on your sandals.” And he did so. And he said to him, “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.” ⁹ And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him. ¹¹ When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.”

2 Kings 19:32-35 “Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. ³³ By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. ³⁴ For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.” And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.”

Psalm 34:7 “The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.”

Psalm 78:49 “He let loose on them his burning anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels.”

Psalm 103:20 “Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!”

Isaiah 6:1-3 “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him stood the seraphim [angelic beings]. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

Critical Connection: In verse 5, the author quotes Psalm 2:7 and 2 Samuel 7:14. Both are Messianic verses, meaning they were understood to point to a descendant of King David who would one day be Israel's Savior. Romans 1:3-4 tell us *when* Jesus was ceremonially declared the Son of God as prophesied in Psalm 2 and 2 Samuel 2:7. It says "...concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord..."

-When was Jesus declared to be the Son of God?

Picture and Ponder: "In Roman society, when a son came of age, and if he was approved as a man by his father, he would be ceremonially received and bestowed with his name. So it was in Christ's resurrection: by raising him from the dead, God gave final approval to him who had perfectly fulfilled the law and obediently endured the cross, bestowing on him the name "Son of God" with the Father's divine and supernatural signature."²

Scholar's Note: Throughout the book of Hebrews there are many quotations from the Old Testament. "It is important to remember that we are not merely reading the author's random devotional reflections when he references different sections of the Old Testament. Through the author of Hebrews, the Holy Spirit is providing his own inerrant, infallible commentary on the Old Testament. In other words, we are learning from the author of Hebrews himself the importance of reading Scripture in the light of the rest of Scripture, specifically in the light of the New Testament. We have here the Holy Spirit's own commentary on the very Old Testament Scriptures he inspired."³

4. Fill in the blank: Jesus is superior to the angels because he is a ____ .



Jesus you are the eternal Son of God, the Word who was with God and who was God. You are more glorious than any angel. Help me to see your infinite worth and beauty.

For Discussion: Why do you think some people are more accepting of and fascinated with angels than with Jesus?

Day 3- Hebrews 1:6

5. In verse 6 the word *firstborn* should bring to mind *heir* in verse 2. In ancient times the firstborn son was the heir and had more rights than the other sons. Who is the firstborn referring to in verse 6?

Scholar's Note: There is not consensus on what event the phrase "brings the firstborn into the world" is referring to. Some scholars think it is talking about the incarnation (when Jesus was born) and others say it refers to the second coming.

Critical Connection: Read the following passages then answer the question:

-When do we see the angels worshipping Jesus?

Luke 2:11,13-14 "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Revelation 5:2-5, 11-12 "And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals... Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice,

"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

Digging Deeper: Read the following scripture then answer the question:

-Why should angels not be worshipped?

Revelation 19:9-10 “And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And he added, “These are true words that come from God.” Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God. For the essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus.”(NLT)

6. Fill in the blank: Jesus’ superiority is seen when the angels

_____.



Angels are the definitive worshippers of God. Imagine thousands of angels filling the sky praising God at the birth of Jesus and in Revelation “myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice” their praise to Jesus! Angels are also God’s eager servants doing whatever he bids them to do. So we see angels worshipping by saying and serving.

The Psalms are filled with worship that is spoken out loud. *“I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you... proclaiming thanksgiving aloud and telling all your wondrous deeds... then my tongue shall tell of your righteousness and of your praises all the day long.”⁴*

Romans 12:1 teaches us about worship that is serving. *“...present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. We worship when we lay down our lives to God to use in whatever way he sees fit.*

One day in heaven we will worship perfectly like the angels do, until then we practice saying aloud God’s wonderful deeds and living our life as his devoted servant.

- ❖ Singing together with the body of Christ is a wonderful way to speak out loud the wonder of God. How well is your heart engaged in this form of worship?

- ❖ What other ways can you worship by telling of God's greatness?

- ❖ Why is presenting our whole self to God for his service an act of worship?

- ❖ How does looking at serving as an act of worship change your thinking?

For Discussion: As believers can we divide our life into sacred and secular and what does this have to do with worship?

Day 4- Hebrews 1:7-9

Critical Connection: Verse 7 cites Psalm 104:4 which, beginning with verse 1, says,

Bless the LORD, O my soul!
 O LORD my God, you are very great!
 You are clothed with splendor and majesty,
² covering yourself with light as with a garment,
 stretching out the heavens like a tent.
³ He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters;
 he makes the clouds his chariot;
 he rides on the wings of the wind;
⁴ he makes his messengers winds,
 his ministers a flaming fire.

We know verse 4 is talking about angels because the author of Hebrews tells us. (Remember the principle we learned on Day 2 – we use Scripture to interpret Scripture.)

-What two roles do angels play according to verse 4 of this Psalm?

-What two forces of nature are the angels compared to in Psalm 104:4?

Picture and Ponder: "Angels are portrayed as executing the divine commands with the swiftness of wind and the strength of fire."⁵

Critical Connection: Verses 8-9 are quotations from Psalm 45. This Psalm celebrates a wedding and pictures the bride as she prepares to wed the king. Psalm 45:6, where our Hebrews' quote begins, goes way beyond talking about an earthly king – it can only be fulfilled by Jesus! "The writer of Hebrews is teaching us how to read the Old Testament (and particularly the Psalms), namely, to read it through a Christ-colored lens-promising and anticipating, portraying and celebrating the coming of Jesus Christ."⁶

7. What is Jesus called in the first line of the Psalm quoted in Hebrews 1:8?

8. How is his reign different from an earthly king according to verse 8?

9. What characterizes Jesus' kingdom and is the basis for his exaltation in 8b and 9a?

10. Though Jesus is God (v.8), how is he shown as also distinct from God in verse 9?

11. Using one word for angels and one word for Jesus, describe the Hebrews author's comparison of angels and Jesus in verses 7-9.

Angels-

Jesus-

12. Fill in the blank: Jesus is superior to angels because he is

_____.



Jesus you are the righteous King who reigns forever! You are worthy to be worshipped and served with my whole heart and life. Forgive me for not worshipping and serving you wholeheartedly. Help me worship and serve you in ways that show your worth!

Day 5- Hebrews 1:10-14

13. Verse 10-12 is a quotation from Psalm 102. It is a lament of someone who is afflicted and pouring out his heart to God. Halfway through, the lament turns into praise to God. The quote in Hebrews is taken from the end of the Psalm and is applied to Jesus. In verse 10, what is the Son attributed with doing?

14. Verse 11 tells us that the beautiful world God created through the Son is wearing out and one day will perish. In the midst of a changing world that will not last what great comfort do we have in Jesus according to verse 12?

15. How is the earth going to finally end according to verse 12?

16. Fill in the blank: Jesus is superior to the angels because he is _____.

17. Quoting from Psalm 110 now, where do we see Jesus in verse 13?

- Until what time will he be there?

Digging Deeper: Read the follow passage and answer the question:

-How will God make his enemies into a footstool?

Revelation 19:11-16 “¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Scholar’s Note: “Psalm 110 is the most frequently quoted psalm in the New Testament, because of what it tells us about where Christ went when he departed this earth in glory, and what he is doing now. The imagery of him seated comes from the oriental court, where the king sat upon his throne while his vassals and servants stood before him to show their deference and his supremacy.”⁷

18. As Jesus sits on the throne at the right hand of God until the consummation of his eternal kingdom, what are the angels doing according to verse 14?

19. Imagine Jesus sitting at the right hand of God sending out his angel servants to minister to his people that he saved. How does that nurture our affections for Jesus not angels?

20. Read back over verses 4-14 and list all the things that tell us about who Jesus is. List the reasons we discovered why Jesus is superior to the angels.

For Discussion: How does the supremacy of Jesus show the worthlessness of the vague spirituality that we see in the world today?



The book of Hebrews is about how Jesus is far better than anything else. He is far better than the most glorious angel! He is supreme! He is far above all!

- ❖ It seems that the Jewish Christians were tempted to place more value on angels than on Jesus. Is there anything in your life that you are functionally placing more value on than Jesus?

- ❖ Look back over the study and pick one thing about Jesus that brings you joy today or resonates with you right now.

- ❖ Spend time praising and thanking Jesus for this.
- ❖ Ask the Holy Spirit to work in your heart to make Jesus your supreme joy.

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God was stirring in your heart, convicting you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ Hughes, R. Kent. Hebrews (Vol. 1): An Anchor for the Soul: 001 (Preaching the

² Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 398-399). Kindle Edition. Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 397-398). Kindle Edition.

³ Mohler, R. Albert. Exalting Jesus in Hebrews (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary) (pp. 18-19). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

⁴ Psalm 22, 26, 35

⁵ F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews, rev. ed., New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 56. As cited in: Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Location 8315). Kindle Edition. Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 431-432). Kindle Edition.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. (Kindle location 551-556)