

# CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS

## HEBREWS 01:01–03

### ***DIVISION OVERVIEW: Hebrews 01:01–04:13***

Man has always felt an inner drive to live forever in a perfect world. Therefore, he has sensed an inner need to search and find out if there is a God, and if there is, to please Him and to gain His approval and acceptance. This is where so much religion has come from, from the inner struggle of men to find God.

The great tragedy is this: men have groped and grasped after God as though they were in a dark world that gave no evidence of God. But this is just not so; there is no need for man to be in the dark about God. Why? Because God has revealed Himself, and He has revealed Himself in many different ways:

- => through nature or what might be called a revelation of His Supreme deity and power. A person can look at nature and clearly see God's deity and power.
- => through conscience or what might be called an inner witness or sense of duty to God.
- => through law or what might be called a revelation of Supreme justice.
- => through religion or what might be called a revelation of how to worship and become acceptable to God.
- => through prophets and priests or what might be called the revelation of God through human spokesmen and mediators.

The list could go on and on, but the point is that God has revealed Himself to man, and each revelation has been very important for man's understanding of God. But despite all these revelations, something vital is still missing. If man is ever to know God, there is only one way, the very same way that man gets to know anybody. Man can know *about a person*, know all the facts about a person's life; but until he personally meets the person and associates and fellowships with him, he does not personally know him. Therefore if man was to ever know God, God had to reveal Himself in the most supreme way possible: He had to come to earth and show Himself to man, revealing exactly who He is and what He is like. This is the whole point of these four chapters. In fact, it is the point of the whole Book of Hebrews: the Supreme revelation of God is Jesus Christ, God's very own Son. God has revealed Himself in the most glorious way possible: He has sent His very own Son into the world.

### ***Introduction: Hebrews 01:01–03***

Men have usually looked upon the prophets of religion as great men of God. They have seen the prophets of God...

- as very special servants of God.
  - as men who had a special message from God.
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- as men who could tell others how to become acceptable to God.
- as men who could tell others how to live and please God.

This was a true concept, just so the prophet was one of the chosen prophets of the Old Testament. The prophets of the Old Testament were great men of God. They were men to whom God spoke and to whom God entrusted His message. But as great as the prophets of the Old Testament were, they fade into insignificance when compared to Jesus Christ, God's very own Son. Jesus Christ is far, far Superior to the prophets.

- I. Jesus Christ is the supreme spokesman of God (vv. 1-2).
- II. Jesus Christ is the appointed heir of all things (v. 2).
- III. Jesus Christ is the Creator and Maker of the universe (v. 2).
- IV. Jesus Christ is the very glory of God Himself (v. 3).
- V. Jesus Christ is the exact representation of God (v. 3).
- VI. Jesus Christ is the Sustainer of the universe (v. 3).
- VII. Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind (v. 3).
- VIII. Jesus Christ is the supreme Mediator (v. 3).

### ***I. Hebrews 01:01–02 The Supreme Revelation of God***

Jesus Christ is the supreme spokesman of God. This is the first reason why He is superior to the prophets. Note the glorious truth: God has spoken to man. He is not as most people think, far off in the distance, someplace in outer space, so far away that He is unconcerned with what is happening to man and his world. The very opposite is true: God is concerned with our lives, with the trials and trouble, sin and evil, suffering and disease, death and decay — with all that happens to us. Therefore, God has spoken to us; He has given us the wonderful words of life and of deliverance. He has told us exactly how to conquer the trials, temptations, corruption and death of this world. When did God speak to man, and where can we find the record of God's Word? If God is really not far off in the distance someplace — if God has really spoken to man, then we must find His Word and heed it. For His Word would mean everlasting life and victory over all the evil, trials, corruption and death of this life. Where is God's Word? It is found in two places.

1. First, God's Word is found in the prophets. In ancient times God spoke to man by His prophets, that is, by persons whom He had chosen to proclaim His Word to the world. Who are these persons? They are the men and women of the Old Testament Scriptures. But note a significant fact: God spoke through the prophets...
  - “in the past”: that is, in many parts (polumeros); in many separate revelations, at many different times.
  - in various ways (polutropos).

What does this mean? No man could possibly receive and understand or explain the whole revelation of God. God and the truth of God is too big for any one man. Therefore, God had to make many revelations to many different people, and He had to use many different ways to speak to men. No man could ever contain or share the whole revelation of God.

Mathew Henry states it well by saying that there had to be a *gradual opening* of man's mind concerning the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. (*Mathew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, p. 888.)

- => God spoke to Adam and told him that the Saviour would come from the offspring of the woman (Gen. 3:15).
  - => God spoke to Abraham and told him that the Saviour would come from his offspring (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18).
  - => God spoke to Jacob and told him that the Saviour would come through the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10).
  - => God spoke to David and told him that the Saviour would be born of his house (2 Sam 7:13).
  - => God spoke to Micah and told him that the Saviour would be born at Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2).
  - => God spoke to Isaiah and told him that the Saviour would be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14).
- Note also the different ways in which God spoke to the prophets:
- => He spoke to Moses in a great thundering sound in the midst of a storm (Exo. 19:19; Dut. 5:22).
  - => He spoke to Elijah by a gentle whisper (1 Kng. 19:12).
  - => He spoke to Isaiah in a vision (Isa. 1:1).
  - => He spoke to Samuel in a dream (1 Sam. 3:5).

On and on the list could go, for God spoke to his prophets in many different ways. But the point to see is this: each prophet could present only a part of God's revelation. No one of them could present the whole revelation of God. The full revelation of God is not found in the prophets. Where is it found then? This brings us to the second point.

2. Second, God's Word, His full revelation, is found in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. "In these last days he [God has] spoken to us by His Son." This is the most astounding truth imaginable! For God could send no greater messenger with His Word than to send His very own Son. And this is the astounding declaration of this passage: God has sent His Son to proclaim His Word to men.

Before Christ, no man could fully grasp or understand God, and no man could fully proclaim the Word of God. Men could understand only a part or fragment of God. But now God's very own Son has come to earth and revealed God, proclaiming all that God is. And note: it is He Himself who is the revelation of God. He embodies

the Word of God. In fact, He is the Word of God. Everything that God ever wanted to say to man is said in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the perfect expression of God's mind. Everything that man needs to know about God and the conquest of life with all its trials, corruption and death is seen in Jesus Christ. (See *The Word*, Jn. 1:1-5.)

**Thought 1.** This means several wonderful things.

- 1) God loves man. He has not left man in the dark, groping and grasping and trying to find the truth of life and death and the hereafter. God has spoken to man and revealed the truth about...
  - where we have come from.
  - why we are here.
  - where we are going.
  - how we can conquer the trials, evil and death of this life and world.
- 2) If we want to know the truth about God and ourselves, we have to look to God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He and He alone is the full revelation of God.
- 3) Jesus Christ is superior to all the prophets; He alone is the supreme revelation of God. As great as the Old Testament prophets were, they were not above God's Son. The Lord Jesus Christ is above the prophets; He is the supreme — the full and final — spokesman for God. There can be no greater spokesman than that of God's own Son.

## II. *Hebrews 01:02 Jesus Christ, the Heir of All Things*

Jesus Christ is appointed the heir of all things. This is the second reason why He is superior to the prophets. What is meant by heir? It means that Jesus Christ is to receive and be "the lawful Owner of all things" (Amplified New Testament). Jesus Christ alone has inherited all that God is and has. No man is great enough or worthy enough to be the heir of God; only Christ is. He alone has *lived and walked perfectly* before God. Among men, He alone has obeyed God perfectly, therefore, He alone has inherited all that God is and has; He alone has been appointed to be the Owner of all things. What is it that Jesus Christ is to inherit and receive?

=> Jesus Christ is to inherit all power in heaven and earth.

**Mat 28:18** *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*

=> Jesus Christ has inherited the authority to execute all judgment upon men.

**John 5:22** *"Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son."*

=> Jesus Christ is going to inherit the Lordship over both the dead and the living.

**Rom 14:9** *For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.*

⇒ Jesus Christ is going to inherit the whole universe: a new heavens and earth and a new world capital.

**2 Pet 3:10-13** *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.*

**Rev 21:1-2, 23-26** *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it.*

⇒ Jesus Christ is going to inherit all government — eternal government.

**Isa 9:6-7** *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.*

**Heb 1:8** *But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom."*

⇒ Jesus Christ is going to inherit all power and wealth, wisdom and strength, honour and glory and praise.

**Rev 5:12** *In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!"*

**1 Pet 3:22** *Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand — with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

⇒ Jesus Christ is going to inherit a name above every name and every knee shall be bowed before Him vindicating His claim to be both Lord and Saviour.

**Phil 2:9-10** *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*

### III. **Hebrews 01:02 Jesus Christ, Creator of the Universe**

Jesus Christ is the Creator and Maker of the worlds or universe. This is the third reason why Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets. The word “universe” (aiones) can also be translated as ages. Jesus Christ is the creator of both the universe and the ages that roll in one upon another, creator of both the worlds and time as it moves forward from event to event, and generation to generation. The Amplified New Testament states it well:

**Heb 1:2** *But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.*

**Col 1:16** *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*

The point is this: Christ’s creation includes all the universes of all dimensions of being, wherever they are and however many there may be. This is exactly what is meant by the “universe.” It is also what is meant when Colossians says that Christ created all things “things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities.” (Col. 1:16)

⇒ If there are other *visible planets and living beings* in outer space, Christ created them.

⇒ If there are *invisible worlds and beings* in other dimensions, Christ created them.

It does not matter what kind of world or creatures they may be — thrones, powers, rulers or authorities — Christ created them all. There is nothing in existence that He has not created.

- no planet
- no vegetation
- no star
- no mineral
- no creature
- no element
- no dimension
- no thing

**John 1:3** *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

**1 Cor 8:6** *Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.*

**Eph 3:9** *And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.*

**Col 1:16** *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*



#### **IV. Hebrews 01:03 Jesus Christ, the Glory of God**

Jesus Christ possesses the very glory of God. This is the fourth reason why Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets. Note the phrase “The Son is” (on). It means “absolute and timeless existence” (A.T. Robertson. *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1932, p. 335). This means that Jesus Christ Himself possessed the glory of God before He ever came into the world. He has always existed in the glory of God; He is eternal.

What does glory mean? It means all the brightness of God — all the brilliance, radiance, splendour and light of God’s Being. It means that God’s very presence — in all of His light and purity — dwells among us in the person of Jesus Christ. It meant that in Christ “all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (Col. 2:9). Men could look at Jesus Christ and see the glory of God in Him — the very light and radiance of God’s Being.

*John 1:14* *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

*John 17:5* *“And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”*

*John 17:24* *“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”*

**Thought 1.** Many commentators point out that the sun is a good illustration. Just as the glory of the sun’s light reaches down to earth and touches the lives of men, so Jesus Christ, who is the glory of God, reaches down and touches the lives of men.

#### **V. Hebrews 01:03 Jesus Christ, the Representation of God**

Jesus Christ is the exact representation of God. This is the fifth reason why Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets.

=> The word “exact” (charakter) means the very stamp, mark and impression — the very reproduction of God. Jesus Christ is “the perfect imprint and very image of [God’s] nature.”

=> The word “representation” (hypostasis) means substance. Jesus Christ is the very substance, the very Being, Person and embodiment of God.

*John 10: 30* *“I and the Father are one.”*

*John 14:9-10* *Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.”*

**2 Cor 4:4** *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

**Phil 2:6** *Who [Christ], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.*

**Heb 1:3** *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

## **VI. Hebrews 01:03 Jesus Christ, Sustainer of the Universe**

Jesus Christ is the Sustainer of the universe. This is the sixth reason why He is superior to the prophets. No man holds the universe together, but Christ does. God has not created the world and left it to fly through space to take whatever course it will. God is not going to let the world destroy itself. God is in control. His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is controlling the world and moving it forward to a climactic moment of renewal and recreation — what the Bible calls the *great day of redemption*. And note how He is sustaining it and holding it together: by His powerful Word. He simply speaks and the laws that sustain the world are set in motion (cp. the law of gravity. See note, Col. 1:16-17.) The Word of Jesus Christ is...

- perfect and pure energy
- perfect and pure power
- perfect and pure unity
- perfect and pure cohesion
- perfect and pure force
- perfect and pure order
- perfect and pure solidarity

It is His Word that sustains and upholds everything together. It is his love and power...

- that keeps the universe from flying apart and disintegrating.
- that keeps evil from completely conquering and utterly destroying all things.

**Col 1:17** *He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

**Heb 1:3** *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

## **VII. Hebrews 01:03 Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of Mankind**

Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind. This is the seventh reason why He is superior to the prophets. Redemption has not come from some great prophet who has made purification for our sins. Christ and Christ alone could sacrifice Himself for our sins. How could He do this? In fact, how could any man do this? No man can; this is the point of this passage. Only a perfect Person could ever purify and cleanse men from their sins. This



is the reason Jesus Christ had to come to earth and live a perfect life. He had to secure perfect righteousness for man and die as the perfect substitute for man. By so doing, He stands for all men...

- His perfect righteousness stands for all men.
- His sacrificial death stands for all men.

When a man believes in Jesus Christ, truly believes, the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ cover him. God takes the man's faith and honours it; He honours it by *counting* the man as being in the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ. The man is righteous in Christ, and he has already died to sin in Christ. Therefore, the man is purified; his sins are cleansed and washed away.

*1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

*Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.*

### **VIII. Hebrews 01:03 Jesus Christ, the Supreme Mediator**

Jesus Christ is the supreme Mediator and Intercessor. This is the eighth reason why He is superior to the prophets. He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in heaven, sitting there as the great Mediator and Intercessor for man. No other person could ever come close to being seated at the right hand of God; no other person could ever be accepted by God as the Mediator and Intercessor for man. Christ and Christ alone can sit at the right hand of God. Note two significant points.

1. Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God as the exalted Lord and as the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. He is the supreme Being of the universe, the Person who is to be supremely respected, honoured, worshipped and served by all beings in both earth and heaven.

*Eph 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.*

*Phil 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.*

2. Jesus Christ is in the presence of God as our Mediator and Intercessor, as the only Person who has the right to represent man before God. Note: Christ is not exalted to stand as our Prosecutor and Judge; contrariwise, He is before God to represent us, to plead for us, to offer His righteousness and sacrificial death for us. This means a most wonderful thing: someday when we appear before God, if we have trusted Jesus Christ as our Saviour, God will be able to deal with us in love and not judgment.

Because Jesus Christ stands before God as our Mediator, God will accept all those who have trusted Christ to be their Mediator. Remember, however: all those who have rejected Jesus Christ as the Mediator shall face Jesus Christ as the Sovereign Lord and Judge.

**Rom 8:34** *Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

**Heb 7:25-26** *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest meets our need — one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

**Heb 8:1** *The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.*

**1 Tim 2:5** *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

**Heb 8:6** *But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.*

**Heb 9:15** *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

**Heb 9:24** *For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.*

**Heb 12:24** *To Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

**1 John 2:1** *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ■*

# CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE ANGELS

## HEBREWS 01:04–14

### *Introduction*

Angels actually exist. They are a magnificent and glorious order of beings who have been created by God to be His messengers and servants. They are spiritual beings who live in another dimension, the spiritual dimension. They have the glorious privilege of living in God's presence and of serving Him day and night. Because of their high and exalted position, some people have tended to look to angels instead of Christ. They tend to take the thought and attention that is due Christ and give it to angels. They tend to consider angels as their *go-between* between them and God. Four things usually cause this.

=> A person feels unworthy to approach God. He needs someone to approach God for him, someone to serve as an intermediary and mediator for him. He knows that angels are the ministers of God; therefore feeling unworthy himself, the person begins to look to an angel. He wants the angel...

- to communicate with God for him.
- to present his needs and desires to God.
- to protect him.
- to secure God's blessings and care for him.

=> Another person may feel that God is just too far away for him to reach. God is just too inhuman, too big, and too all-embracing. God reaches out beyond all the worlds of outer space. Therefore, the person feels that God is too busy with the big issues of the universe to be concerned with one small person upon earth. The person feels the need for some intermediary, some mediator that is not as big and busy as God, but who has access to God. Therefore, he begins to look to an angel to look after and protect him and to plead his case and to present his needs before God.

=> Some persons seek experiences with angels either face to face or through visions and dreams. They feel that such spiritual experiences are a privilege and that the experience strengthens them and makes them more spiritual. In their minds the angel is an intermediary between them and God, a messenger sent from God to bring them a special word from God.

=> Still others do not believe in Christ, that He is the Son of God. They do not believe that He is the only Mediator between God and man. Therefore, they seek to communicate with the spiritual world through some angel or person in the spiritual world.

The point to note in these approaches to God and the spiritual world is this: angels are exalted as glorious and magnificent beings — as so glorious and magnificent that they stand as mediators or intermediaries between men and God. In every case God is seen as sending an angel or an angel is sought to carry a message between God and man. God is thought either to be too busy or big or unable to communicate and share with man.

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Note what happens when men emphasize angels above Christ and above His Spirit and His Word:

- => Note how far away it removes Christ from involvement in a person's life.
- => Note how it places another mediator or intermediary between men and God — someone other than Christ and His Spirit.
- => Note how it relegates and lowers Christ to a lesser position than angels.

This is what this passage is attacking. It is not denying angels, for they do exist. It is not denying the glory and magnificence of angels, for they are glorious and magnificent beings. It is not denying the ministry and service of angels to God, for they are His ministering spirits. What this passage is attacking is this: the emphasis of some people who exalt angels by seeking experiences with them and by focusing thoughts, attention and prayers upon them. Angels are not God's intermediaries and mediators between Himself and us. The only intermediary and Mediator between God and us is God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the only Person who can approach God for us. He is the only Person who can hear and answer our prayers and look after and care for us. This does not mean that He may not use an angel to help us. He does use angels in our lives to guide, protect and encourage us (see *Angels*, Heb. 1:4-14). But the angel serves Christ; the angel is not to be the focus of our attention and thoughts nor praise and honour. The angel is the servant, not the Lord of Jesus nor the Lord of our lives. Christ alone is the Lord — both of the angels and us. Therefore, He and He alone is to be the focus of our attention, thoughts, honour and worship.

This is the thrust of this passage: Christ is superior — far, far superior to the angels.

- I. Christ has a superior name, the name of God's only Son; angels have an inferior name (vv. 4-6).
- II. Christ is God's heir; angels are created subjects of God (vv. 7-9).
- III. Christ is the Creator and Sovereign Lord; angels are created subjects and ministering spirits (vv. 10-14).

### HEBREWS 01:04–14 ANGELS (ANGELOS)

The word angel simply means *messenger*. The word is used at least five different ways in Scripture.

- => It is used of men (Lk. 7:24; Jas. 2:25; Rev. 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).
- => It is used of Christ (Rev. 8:3-5).
- => It is used of the "angel of the Lord" or the "angel of God," meaning the presence of deity in angelic form (Gen. 16:1-13; 21:17-19; 22:11-16; 31:11-13; Exo. 3:2-4; Judg. 2:1; 6:12-16; 13:3-22).

=> It is used of prophets (Hag. 1:13).

=> It is used of spiritual beings who serve God (Psa. 104:4; Heb. 1:14; 2:2, 5).

1. The important facts about angels seem to be as follows:

- a. Angels are created beings, superior to men (Psa. 104:4; cp. Heb. 1:14; Col. 1:16).
- b. Angels are numerous (Psa. 68:17; Mt. 26:53; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11).
- c. Angels are extremely superior to men in intelligence and knowledge (2 Sam. 14:20; Ps. 103:20; 104:4).
- d. Angels have great power (2 Kng. 19:35; Mt. 28:3; 2 Pet. 2:11; Rev. 20:1-2).
- e. Angels observe men (Eccl. 5:6; 1 Cor. 4:9; Eph. 3:10).
- f. Some angels have fallen with Satan from their original state (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:10.)

2. Apparently, angels were created in various ranks and for specific functions to be performed *before God Himself*.

a. There is the archangel Michael who stands above all the other angels. He is the prime administrator of God (Dan. 10:21; 12:1, 7-12; 1 Th. 4:16; Jude 9). Some believe Satan was an archangel, superior even to Michael, before his fall (see Rev. 12:7).

b. There is the angel Gabriel who is God's very special messenger of mercy (Dan. 8:15-16; 9:21; Lk. 1:19-33). He is never called an archangel.

c. The Scripture gives the titles of other angelic orders.

=> There are the seraphim, whose function seems to be to praise God (Isa. 6:1-6, the only reference to them).

=> There are the cherubim, whose function seems to be to proclaim the glory of God (Gen. 3:24; Exo. 25:18; Psa. 80:1; 99:2).

d. Other angels are said to have various functions...

- to worship God (Neh. 9:6; Lk. 2:13-14).
- to rejoice in the repentance of a single sinner (Lk. 15:10).
- to accompany Christ at His second coming (Mt. 24:31; 25:31; Mk. 8:38; 1 Th. 4:16).
- to execute the judgments of God (Gen. 3:24; 19:1; Judg. 5:23; 2 Sam. 24:16; 1 Chron. 2:15; 2 Chron. 32:32; Acts 12:23; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:9).

3. Angels have a very important function in God's dealings with believers. Note what Scripture says: They are "all ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation" (Heb. 1:14).



- a. They protect and deliver believers either through or from trials (Psa. 34:7; Psa. 91:11; Isa. 63:9; Dan. 3:28; 6:22; Acts 12:7-11).
- b. They guide and lead believers in their ministry (1 Kng. 19:5; Mt. 2:13, 19-20; Acts 5:19; 8:26).
- c. They escort believers into heaven (Lk. 16:22).
- d. They encourage believers (Acts 27:23-25). Note: this assistance seems to begin at childhood and to continue on throughout life (Heb. 1:14; cp. Mt. 18:10; Psa. 91:11). □

### HEBREWS 01:04–14 OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES

The writer proves Christ's superiority by quoting seven Old Testament passages and applying them to Christ. The Old Testament passages stand as types which symbolized the coming Messiah or Saviour of the world. The passages are: Heb. 1:5 (2 Sam. 7:14 Psa. 2:7); Heb. 1:6 (Dut. 32:43; Psa. 89:27; 97:7; cp. Lk. 2:13f); Heb. 1:7 (Psa. 104:4); Heb. 1:8-9 (Psa. 45:6-7); Heb. 1:10-12 (Psa. 102:25-27); Heb. 1:13 (Psa. 110:1). □

#### I. *Hebrews 01:04–06 The Holy Name of Jesus Christ*

Jesus Christ has a superior name, the name of God's Son; angels have an inferior name. This is the first proof that Christ is superior to the angels. He is much *superior* — so much better — to the angels. And note what it is that makes Him superior: it is His name. His name is far more excellent than their name; it ranks far higher with God than the name of angels.

1. Christ is the Son of God; angels are not sons of God. "You are my Son; today I have become your Father" (v. 5; cp. Psa. 2:8).

God said this to Christ, not to the angels. Jesus Christ is the Son of God; He and He alone has been "begotten" (gegenneka), that is, born or sent into the world by God. God did not send or cause an angel to be born into the world; He sent His one and only Son.

⇒ Jesus Christ is the one and only Son of God who was sent into the world.

*John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

⇒ Jesus Christ is the one and only Son of God who was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead.

*Rom 1:4 And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Jesus Christ is far, far superior to the angels. He is superior because He is the one and only Son of God. His name is far more superior than the name of angels.

**Thought 1.** Christ and Christ alone is the one and only Son of God. He and He alone can save us and keep us from perishing (Jn. 3:16). No angel can do this. Therefore, we must look to Christ and to Him alone.

2. Christ has a Father-Son relationship with God the Father.

**Heb 1:5** *For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?* (cp. 2 Sam.7:14)

Christ alone is the one and only Son of God; He alone was sent into the world to establish a relationship between God and men; He alone stands as the Mediator and intermediary between God and men. He alone calls upon God as the Father of the one and only Son, and God alone calls upon Christ as His one and only Son. God has only one perfectly obedient Son and that is Christ.

God said this about Christ, not about angels. Christ alone is the one and only Son of God; He alone was sent into the world to establish a relationship between God and man; He alone stands as the Mediator and intermediary between God and men. God has only one perfectly obedient Son and that is Christ. God sent Christ into the world to secure perfection and righteousness for men, and Christ obeyed God. By His obedience He has established forever a relationship between men and God. Therefore, God is a Father to Christ, a Father who loves and honours His obedient Son, and Christ is a Son to God, a Son who obeys and honours His Father.

Jesus Christ is far, far superior to angels. He is superior because God is a Father and Christ is a Son to God. The name of Jesus Christ is far more superior to God than the name of angels.

**Thought 1.** Jesus Christ has opened the way to God for man; He and He alone provides a relationship with God; He and He alone was perfectly righteous and obedient to God; He and He alone provides perfection and righteousness for man. No angel can do this. Therefore, we must look to Christ to bring us to God.

**2 Cor 5:21** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**Heb 5:9** *And, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

**Heb 2:10** *In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.*

**Heb 7:26** *Such a high priest meets our need — one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

**1 Pet 1:19** *But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

**1 Pet 2:22** *“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”*

3. Jesus Christ is worshipped by angels; they are not worshipped by Him.

**Heb 1:6** *And again, when God brings his first-born into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”* (cp. Dut. 32:43; Psa. 89:27; 97:7)

Note the word “first-born” (prototokos). It means first in the sense of priority and superiority, of being above someone else. It is a word that shows dignity, honour, worth; that someone deserves praise. Jesus Christ is the One who is to be worshipped and praised, not angels.

=> When Jesus Christ was born into this world, He was attended and worshipped by angels. (Lk. 2:13f).

=> When Jesus Christ was taken into the world above, at His resurrection and ascension, He was attended and worshipped by angels (Acts 1:10f).

=> When Jesus Christ returns to this earth again, He shall be attended and worshipped by angels (Mt. 13:41; 16:27; 24:31).

**Thought 1.** Jesus Christ is the Person who entered the world as Man, to save man. He is the Person who was raised from the dead and who ascended into heaven to conquer death forever. He is the Person who is to return and take us home to heaven to be with God eternally. Angels did not do this. Therefore our worship — our hope and attention and praise — is to be upon Christ. We are to be seeking Christ as our way to God, not angels or some other intermediary. Jesus Christ has a name that is far superior than that of angels.

**Phil 2:9-11** *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Heb 5:11-12** *We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!*

**Rev 19:16** *On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

**Isa 9:6** *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

## II. *Hebrews 01:07–09 Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Majesty*

Jesus Christ is God's heir; angels are only created subjects of God. Scripture says this about angels:

*He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire (v. 7. cp. Psa.1-4:4.)*

Note the word *make*: angels are made, that is created and controlled by God. They are created spirits to serve God in the operation of the universe. Just as wind and fire are used to serve God and men, so angels are used to serve God. But this is not true with Christ. Note two points about Christ.

1. Jesus Christ is God, the Sovereign Majesty who sits upon the throne of God (v.8. Cp. Psa. 45:6.) Note three facts.
  - => The Son is addressed as "God" by God the Father; that is, God the Father calls Jesus Christ *God*. God the Father is saying that Jesus Christ has the very same nature, being and character that He has. Within heaven there is God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
  - => The Son has a throne that is eternal, for ever and ever.
  - => The Son has an eternal kingdom that is ruled by the sceptre of righteousness.

The point is clear: the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a created servant to God; He is the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. He is God Himself who rules and reigns over the universe. He is the One who sits in dignity and dominion over the universe, not angels. They are created beings, made to serve God just as wind and fire have been made to serve God and men.

*John 3:31 "The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all."*

*Eph 1:19-22 And his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.*

*Phil 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.*

*1 Pet 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand — with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

2. Jesus Christ has been anointed with the oil of joy above all companions.

**Heb 1:9** *You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. (cp. Psa. 45:7-8.)*

Who is meant by “companions”? It has to mean all creatures both in heaven and earth, for no being or person nor group of beings or persons are equal to Him. He is anointed.

=> above all angels.

=> above all prophets, priests and kings.

=> above all believers, living and dead.

And note why He is so highly exalted. Because He is God; He loves righteousness and hates wickedness. This means two things.

=> Jesus Christ is totally devoted to righteousness and perfection. He rules and reigns in righteousness; His very nature and being is righteousness. The love of righteousness permeates and flows through His very Being. Righteousness is the only thing that He knows.

=> Jesus Christ came to earth to fulfil and secure righteousness for men. He did this by never sinning and by living a perfect and righteous life before God. Therefore, He stands as the ideal, perfect, and righteous Man. As the ideal Man, His righteousness is able to cover all men who honestly trust Him for righteousness.

**Thought 1.** The point is striking: no angel has been anointed above others as God. No angel has come to earth and secured righteousness for man; only Jesus Christ has done that. Therefore, we must look to Jesus Christ for righteousness, not to angels. Jesus Christ is the only Person who can make us acceptable to God. Jesus Christ is the only Person who can stir God to count us righteous and acceptable to Him.

**Rom 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**2 Cor 5:21** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**Phil 1:11** *Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God.*

### III. **Hebrews 01:10–14** *Jesus Christ, the Creator*

Jesus Christ is the Creator and Sovereign Lord; angels are created subjects and ministering spirits. Note three significant facts.

1. Jesus Christ is the Creator of earth and heaven.

**Heb 1:10-12** *He also says, “In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain;*



*they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.” (cp. Ps. 102:25-27)*

Jesus Christ created the universe; angels did not. As Creator, Jesus Christ is above the world; He is the Sovereign Ruler of the world. It is true that the world is changing and that it passes through many stages. It is aging, deteriorating, dissolving, but not Christ. He is unchangeable. The earth will perish, but Jesus Christ will remain eternally. He is above and beyond changing. Therefore, He rules over the world. He is sovereign over its destiny. Jesus Christ is superior to angels because He is the Creator and the Sovereign Ruler who is unchangeable. This makes Him far superior to angels. They actually owe their existence and allegiance to Him as well as their destiny.

**John 1:3** *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

**1 Cor 8:6** *Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.*

**Eph 3:9** *And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.*

**Col 1:16** *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*

**Heb 1:1-2** *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.*

2. Jesus Christ is the exalted and Sovereign Lord; angels are not.

**Heb 1:13** *To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?* (cp. Ps. 110:01)

He has been exalted to God’s right hand, which is a position of...

- love and joy
- triumph and victory
- power and sovereignty
- justice and judgment
- honour and dignity
- rule and authority
- responsibility and duty

Christ has finished His work upon earth as the faithful and obedient Son of God — perfectly faithful and obedient in dying for the sins of men. He has conquered and triumphed over the forces of sin and death for men and made it possible for them to

be saved and to live eternally with God. Therefore, God has highly exalted Christ to His right hand. And Christ shall sit there until He is ready to return in judgment and to subject His enemies (make them His footstool).

**Thought 1.** The point is this: at no time has God ever told an angel to sit on His right hand nor to conquer the enemies of men. But He has given this right and authority to Christ. Therefore, Christ is the One to whom men are to look. Christ is to be the focus of men's attention and thoughts, the One to whom men are to look for salvation and life — not angels.

**Rom 14:9** *For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.*

**John 1:36** *When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"*

**Rev 5:12** *In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!"*

3. Angels are the ministering spirits of Christ sent to serve believers. The heirs of salvation are those who believe in Jesus Christ. Note that angels are not *lords*, but servants. They are servants of Christ. They are spirits, spiritual beings of the spiritual world, and they exist to carry out the will of Christ. The will of Christ for angels is that they minister to believers — to minister to men and women for whom Christ has done so much: purchased their salvation and given them eternal life.

**Thought 1.** The point is that angels are servants, not lords. Christ and Christ alone is the Lord to whom men are to look and trust for salvation.

**Acts 12:7** *Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.*

**Acts 27:23** *Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me.*

**Heb 1:14** *Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*

**Exo 14:19** *Then the angel of God, who had been travelling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them.*

**Psa 91:11** *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.*

**Dan 6:22** *"My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king." ■*