

Hebrews

Chapter 1:4-14

⁴ having become so much better than the angels, to the extent that He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

(Utley) This verse seems to be a transition between Heb. 1:1-3 and Heb. 1:5-14.

¹ God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world. ³ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, to the extent that He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Angel > (Strong's) *aggelos* > a messenger, angel

(MacArthur) They may have considered demoting Christ from God's Son to a mere angel. Such a precedent had already been set by the Qumran community of messianic Jews living near the Dead Sea. They had dropped out of society, established a religious commune, and included the worship of angels in their brand of reformed Judaism. The Qumran community had even gone so far as to claim that the angel Michael was higher in status than the coming Messiah. These kinds of doctrinal aberrations could explain the emphasis in the first chapter of Hebrews on the superiority of Christ over the angels.

(Precept Austin) Many people in the first century apparently believed that angels served as mediators between God and men, and it was tempting to focus more on angels than upon the sufficiency of Christ as the Great High Priest and Mediator.

(Precept Austin) Angels are often referred to as the hosts (*LORD of hosts* or *Sabaoth*) and equate with His "army" in heaven. God is represented as surrounded by a host of beings of a higher order than man. As to their number, the writer of Hebrews says there are "*myriads* (*urias* = indefinite large number that cannot be counted) of angels" (**Hebrews 12:22**)

Hebrews 12:22 > ²² *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to **myriads** of angels,*

Myriads > (Strong's) double myriad, ten thousand. From *murioi*; a ten-thousand; by extension, a "myriad" or indefinite number -- ten thousand.

Become so much better > (Precept Austin) *Become* (*ginomai*) is a word the meaning of which is in contrast to that of *poieo* which means "to make." The latter means "to construct or fashion something out of existing materials." (We'll see *poieo* in verse 7) The former is the word used of the universe coming into existence. It means "to become." A number of cults and other unorthodox religious organizations *deny the deity of Christ* on the basis of the KJV translation of Jesus "*being made*" incorrectly interpreting this out of context to mean that Jesus was created ("made"). The Greek verb however is not *poieo*, meaning to "*to make or create,*" but *ginomai*, which means "*to become*" and is the meaning conveyed by most modern translations.

Better > (Constable) This is the first of the writer's 13 uses of the word "better" ... this word appears only 6 times elsewhere in the New Testament.

(HELPS) *kreittōn* (the comparative form of *krátos*, "dominion") – what is *better* because more fully developed, i.e. in *reaching the needed dominion*

(Strong's) the source word is *kratos* > strength, might

Having become so much better than the angels > (Vincent) It is not denied that the Son was essentially and eternally superior to the angels; but his glorification was conditioned upon his fulfillment of the requirements of his human state, and it is this that is emphasized. After having passed through the experience described in **Philippians 2:6-9**, he sat down on the right hand of the divine majesty as messianic sovereign, and so became or proved to be what in reality he was from eternity, superior to the angels.

Philippians 2:6-9 > ⁶*who, as He already existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,* ⁷*but emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men.* ⁸*And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross.* ⁹*For this reason also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,*

Inherited > (Precept Austin) *kleronomeo* > from *kleros* > a lot and *Inemomai* > to possess

(Pink) The Greek for "He hath by inheritance obtained" is a single word. It is a technical term relating to legal title, secure tenure.

Name > (Precept Austin) is the distinctive designation of a person or thing and includes the ideas of title, character, reputation or authority. In antiquity *the name* meant much more than it does today. We use a name as little more than a distinguishing mark or label to differentiate one person from other people. But in the NT "the name" concisely sums up all that a person is. One's whole character was somehow implied in the name.

A more excellent name > (Constable) This superiority is clear, too, in the fact that His name is "Son" (singular) rather than "sons" (collectively). The Old Testament writers called the angels "sons of God" (e.g., Job 2:1; 38:7). Jesus Christ "inherited" the name "Son" before creation (v. 2, cf. 5:8).

Than they > (Vincent) Lit. *beside or in comparison with them*

⁵ **For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are My Son, today I have fathered You"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him and He will be a Son to Me"?**

(Vincent) The seven following quotations are intended to show the surpassing excellence of Christ's name as set forth in Scripture. The quotations present difficulty in that they appear, in great part, to be used in a sense and with an application different from those which they originally had. All that can be said is, that the writer takes these passages as messianic, and applies them accordingly and that we must distinguish between the doctrine and the method of argumentation peculiar to the time and people.

Ever > (Strong's) once, ever

You are My Son, today I have fathered You > (Vincent) **Psalm 2:7** (LXX) *declaring the ordinance of the Lord: the Lord said to me, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.*

(Vincent) Note the emphatic position of *son* ... In the O.T. son is applied to angels collectively, but never individually.

(Zane) Psalm 2 is an enthronement psalm in which God "adopts" the Davidic King as His "Son." That this is what the writer to the Hebrews understood is confirmed in Hebrews

(Utley) This first phrase is used several times in the Gospels to refer to Christ:

1. at His baptism (cf. **Matt. 3:17**; Luke 3:22)
 1. **Matthew 3:17** > ¹⁷ *and behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*
2. at the Transfiguration (cf. **Matt. 17:5**; Mark 9:7)
 1. **Matt. 17:5** > ⁵ *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice from the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him!"*
3. at the Resurrection (cf. **Acts 13:33**; Rom. 1:4)
 1. **Acts 13:33** > ³³ *that God has fulfilled this promise to those of us who are the descendants by raising Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son; today I have fathered You.'*

I will be a Father to Him and He will be a Son to Me > (Vincent) ***II Samuel 7:14*** > (LXX) *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.* (What is interesting is the fact that only this part of the passage is applied)

⁶ ***And when He again brings the firstborn into the world***, He says, “***And let all the angels of God worship Him.***”

(There are two general thoughts as to what the *again* is referring to:

1. Some feel the author is referring another supporting proof that validates the fact that Jesus is better than the angels
2. Others feel that the *again* is pointing to the second coming of Jesus into the world

And when He again brings the firstborn into the world > (Vincent) Const. *again* with *bringeth in*. "When he a second time bringeth the first-begotten into the world." Referring to the second coming of Christ. Others explain again as introducing a new citation as in Hebrews 1:5; but this would require the reading (Greek words)and again, when. In Hebrews, (this Greek word), when joined to a verb, always means a second time.

(Constable) The angels worshiped Jesus at His first advent (***Luke 2:13-14***). and they will undoubtedly worship Him at His second advent.

Luke 2:13-14 > ¹³ *And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army of angels praising God and saying,* ¹⁴ *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased.”*

Here are the two passages used as proof sources. Conflicts exists between two camps ... one choosing the one ... the second the other

Deuteronomy 32:43 (LXX) > *Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and the Lord shall purge the land of his people.*

Psalms 96:7 (LXX) > ⁷ *Let all that worship graven images be ashamed, who boast of their idols; worship him, all ye his angels.*

Firstborn > (Precept Austin) can mean first-born chronologically (Lk 2:7) but refers primarily to *position*, or *rank*. In both Greek and Jewish culture, the first-born was the son who had the *right of inheritance*. He was not necessarily the first one born.

Worship > (Strong's) *proskuneo* > to do reverence to. Usage > I go down on my knees to, do obeisance to, worship.

(HELPS) from *prós*, "towards" and *kyneo*, "to kiss") – properly, to kiss the ground when prostrating before a superior; to *worship*, ready "to fall down/prostrate oneself to adore on one's knees

(Wayne Barber) We hear much today about worship. It is defined everywhere from emotions felt during a song to chill bumps when the preacher gives an illustration. But, what is true worship? How do we know we have worshipped? Well, there are three Greek words for worship in the NT. One of those is *proskuneo*, the word used when the "magi" came from the east to worship the Christ child. This is the word that means to lie down prostrate before one that is worthy to be worshipped. It involves the attitude of humility of the person who is bowing. And on the other hand it involves an understanding and recognition that one is in the presence of the One that is worthy. It is a response word, not an emotion, but an immediate response in the presence of deity.

⁷ *And regarding the angels He says, "He makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire."* ⁸ *But regarding the Son He says, "Your throne, God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of righteousness 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 joy above Your companions."*

Makes > (Precept Austin) *poieo* > means to create and since Jesus is the Creator of all things, the angels were created by Him and therefore Jesus is better than the angels.

Winds > (Vincent) In Hebrew, spirit and wind are synonymous.

Ministers > (Precept Austin) *leitourgos* > from a derivative of *laos* = people [*leitos* ~ public] + *ergon* = work) is literally one who works among the people. Among the Greeks *leitourgos* denoted one who discharged a public office at his own expense and then more generally referred to a public servant or one who performed public service.

He makes His angels winds ... > (Pink) This is a quotation from **Psalm 104**, the opening verses of which ascribe praise unto Jehovah as Creator and Governor of the universe. Its second and third verses apparently relate to the intermediary heavens, and the fourth verse to their inhabitants; verse five and onwards treats of the earth and its earliest history.

Psalm 104 (NASB) > *He makes the winds His messengers, flaming fire His ministers.*

Psalm 103 (LXX) > *Who makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire.*

Your throne, God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of His kingdom > (Pink) Here the Holy Spirit quotes from still another Psalm, the 45th, to prove the superiority of Israel's Messiah over the angels.

Psalm 44 (LXX) > ⁷ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness. ⁸ Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness beyond thy fellows.

Your throne, God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of His kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of joy above Your companions. > (Pink) This supplies us with one of the most emphatic and unequivocal proofs of the Deity of Christ to be found in the Scriptures.

(Pink) It is indeed striking to see how much was included in the ancient oracle concerning the Messiah which the Spirit here quoted from Psalm 45.

- It establishes His Deity, for the Father Himself owns Him as "**God.**"
- It shows us the exalted position He now occupies: He is on the **throne**, and there forever.
- It makes mention of His Kingship, the royal "**scepter**" being wielded by Him.
- It tells of the impartiality of His government and the excellency of His rule: His scepter is a "**righteous**" one.
- It takes us back to the days of His flesh and makes known the perfections of His character and conduct here on earth: He "**loved righteousness and hated iniquity.**"
- It reveals the place which He took when He made Himself of no reputation, as Man in subjection to God: "**Thy God.**"
- It announces the reward He received for such condescension and grace: "**Therefore . . . God hath anointed Thee.**"
- It affirms He has the pre-eminence in all things, for He has been anointed with the oil of gladness "**above His fellows.**"

Scepter



The Sovereigns Scepter with Cross

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 wear out like a garment, ¹² And like a robe 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."

(Zane) The immutability of the King-Son is further stressed by the statements now quoted from Psalm 102:25-27 (NASB)

Psalm 101:26-28 (LXX) > ²⁶ In the beginning thou, O Lord, didst lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. ²⁷ They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them, and they shall be changed. ²⁸ But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

(Pink) A sixth and a seventh is now quoted from the 102nd and the 110th Psalms, to show that He who had passed through such unparalleled humiliation and suffering (the first part of the Psalm), had been greeted and treated by God as One who was worthy of most supreme honor and reward.

Wear out > (KJV uses *old* but the better translation is *wear out*.) (Precept Austin) *palaioo* from *palaios* = old not in point of time but old in terms of use, thus "worn out", antiquated, useless, outmoded; English "paleontology," etc.) when used in the active sense means to make old, to declare or treat as obsolete

And like a robe You will roll them up ...

Psalm 102:26 > Even they will perish, but You endure; **all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing** You will change them and they will pass away.

Isaiah 51:6 > Raise your eyes to the sky, then look to the earth beneath; for the sky will vanish like smoke, and **the earth will wear out like a garment** and its inhabitants will die in the same way. But My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not fail.

(Wuest) And all these shall become old and worn out as a garment. And as a garment which one throws about oneself you will roll them up; as a garment also shall they be changed.

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 provide service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Sit at My right hand ... ministering spirits > (Constable) Angels stand and serve, but the Son sits and rules

(Pink) Verses 13 and 14 belong together. In them another contrast is pointed between Christ and the angels ... He that sitteth at God's right hand is far more excellent than ministers:

Ministering > (Precept Austin) (*leitourgikos* from *léitos* = of the people + *érgon* = work; English *liturgy* = a prescribed form for public worship) in Greek referred especially to those who performed public duties or works of public use (public servants). It means related to the performance of religious or liturgical service

(Wiersbe) Again, the writer quotes **Psalm 110:1**.

Psalm 109:1 (LXX) > *The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

(Jesus and the Pharisees) **Matthew 22:41-45** > ⁴¹ *Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question:* ⁴² *"What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is He?" They said to Him, "The son of David."* ⁴³ *He *said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying,* ⁴⁴ *"The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I put Your enemies under Your feet""?* ⁴⁵ *Therefore, if David calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?"*

(Peter preaching in Jerusalem) **Acts 2:29-35** > ²⁹ *"Brothers, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.* ³⁰ *So because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne,* ³¹ *he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.* ³² *It is this Jesus whom God raised up, a fact to which we are all witnesses.* ³³ *Therefore, since He has been exalted at the right hand of God, and has received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.* ³⁴ *For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,* ³⁵ *Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.'"*

Sent out to provide service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation > (Constable) God revealed a primary purpose and ministry of the angels ("ministering spirits") in this verse. It is to assist ("render service for") human beings toward reaching their final deliverance over their spiritual enemies.

Barnes lays out a number of verses validating Constable's comments above. Here are just a few on the next page

1. **Matthew 4:11** > ¹¹ Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to serve Him.
2. **Matthew 18:10** > ¹⁰ “See that you do not look down on one of these little ones; for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.
3. **Luke 1:26** > ²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth,
4. **Luke 2:10** > ¹⁰ And so the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;
5. **Luke 2:13** > ¹³ And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly ^larmy of angels praising God and saying,
6. **Luke 15:10** > ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”
7. **John 20:12** > ¹² and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.
8. **Acts 1:10** > ¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, then behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them,
9. **1 Peter 1:12** > ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.