

Study 2: Jesus Better than the Angels

Throughout the book of Hebrews, Jesus is compared to a range of aspects that the Hebrew Christians would be familiar with under the Law of Moses.

In this study, we see Jesus compared to *Angels*.

Why does the writer start the way he does in verses 1 & 2?

How is Jesus Introduced here?

How is Jesus presented compared to Angels?

How is Jesus shown to be better than the Angels?

How does the Hebrew writer show that Jesus is God (ie, His Deity)?

Homework:

Read Chapters 1 & 2 together in a single sitting. Consider what has been said about Jesus and Angels both in this lesson, and also in Chapter 2.

What else is Jesus compared to in Chapter 2?

Study Notes for: Study 2: Jesus Better than the Angels

Throughout the book of Hebrews, Jesus is compared to a range of aspects that the Hebrew Christians would be familiar with under the Law of Moses.

In this study, we see Jesus compared to *Angels*.

Why does the writer start the way he does in verses 1 & 2?

The writer is writing to Jews. They were very familiar with the Law of Moses, and how God spoke to and dealt with the Patriarchs. This is exactly where the writer begins...
“*You are familiar guys, with how God spoke to our forefathers in days long ago...*”

He then introduces the fact that God has spoken again – to us!

But notice, that he says that God has spoken “In these last days”. It is true that the days of this revelation were not that long ago from when the writer wrote the letter (at least relative to us today!). It is also true that it was the “last days of the Jewish period” – leading up to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem when the daily sacrifice would be taken away (Dan 11:31, 12:11). And it is also true that this was in “the last period of time” that the Bible refers to several times as “the last days”. Exactly which one of these that the writer may have had specifically in mind is unclear, and in fact he may have had all three in mind!

But notice how he introduces Jesus:

God spoke again – this time not to our forefathers – **but to us!** And **HOW** He did that, was through His Son Jesus.

How is Jesus Introduced here?

Jesus is introduced as:

1. The one who is appointed heir of all things
2. The one by whom God made the worlds
3. The radiance of God’s Glory
4. The exact representation of God’s being,
5. The one who sustains all things,
6. The one who provided purification for sins,
7. The one sat down at God’s right hand.

The idea of “7 things” has with it the idea of completeness and perfection.

In each one of these aspects there is expressed the superiority of Jesus.

Not only as an heir, but an heir of *all* things. And with this comes the idea of the heir being in the special position – not just a servant, but one who will receive the inheritance. And not just a partial inheritance, or one that is shared... but heir of ALL THINGS.

The one by whom God made the worlds. Jesus was there in the beginning with God (Jn 1:1) and all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Jesus wasn't just there as an observer sitting on the sidelines – He was part of the action.

The radiance of God's glory. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai after seeing the back of the Lord passing by, his face shone so brightly that the people had to put a veil over his face. How glorious is Jesus, that He ***IS*** the radiance of God's glory.

The exact representation of God's nature. He is not just an image of God, not a reflection of God, but when we see Jesus, we see God. He is the real thing.

The one who sustains all things. Jesus is the one who keeps all things happening. Not some things, not most things, ***all things*** are kept going by Jesus.

Provides purification for our sins. The Jews understood purification laws. They knew what purification meant, and what things you could not do because you were not "pure". Yet through Jesus, we are made pure, even although we are sinners.

Sat down at God's right hand. His mission of redemption is complete, and He is now actively ruling with God. At the right hand shows the position of Power. The pre-eminent position.

How is Jesus presented compared to Angels?

Firstly, the Angels were made "higher than man", and became special messengers of God to men. We see here order in God's creation: God – Angels – Man – Animals. Jesus is presented as being "above the angels", which puts Him clearly with God.

He has obtained a more excellent name. To the Jews, a name stood for the full character of the person. Jesus "name" (and therefore His character) is "more excellent" than the angels. But notice, that He obtained this *by inheritance* – as the heir of God.

How is Jesus shown to be better than the Angels?

Seven Scriptures are presented that show His exalted position. Once again, the idea of “completeness” in both the fulfilment of prophecy and in His position.

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| 1. Ps 2:7 | You are my Son... |
| 2. 2 Sam 7:14 | Father... He will be my Son |
| 3. Duet 32:43 | Let the Angels worship Him |
| 4. Ps 104:4 | Angels as servants, |
| 5. Ps 45:6-7 | Son is a King, is eternal, and rules with righteousness |
| 6. Ps 102:25-27 | Son is the creator, who remains unchanged for ever, |
| 7. Ps 110:1 | Son is invited to sit at God’s right hand. |

The things that are said about the Son here, are never said about Angels. The writer’s point is the exalted position that the Son has over the Angels.

How does the Hebrew writer show that Jesus is God (ie, His Deity)?

Some of the things that are quoted here from the Old Testament, are spoken about Jehovah God, yet the Hebrew writer says that they were referring to Jesus. The clear and explicit implication of this is that ***JESUS IS GOD***.

The purpose is not to “downgrade the Angels” but rather to show the true nature of Jesus. We will see some more of this next lesson.