

Study 3: Jesus Better than the Angels (2)

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 again compared to *Angels*.

Why does the writer use the word “therefore” at the beginning of chapter 2?

What is he referring to in vs 2 – “the word spoken by angels”?

How was God’s message delivered to us?

How is Jesus again compared to angels?

If Jesus is greater than angels, why does it say that Jesus was made lower than them?

How does the writer introduce the idea of sacrifice and Justification?

Why does the writer quote here from Psalm 22?

How has Jesus demonstrated His power over Satan?

What are the closing arguments?

Homework:

Re-read the notes of the last 2 lessons, and reflect on what has been said about Jesus and Angels.

Read Chapter 3 in preparation for next week.

- How is it that Jesus is said to be an “apostle” in verse 1?
- Who is Jesus compared to in chapter 3?

Study Notes for: Study 3: Jesus Better than the Angels (2)

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

Why does the writer use the word “therefore” at the beginning of chapter 2?

It has been said that whenever we see the word “therefore”, we should ask “wherefore?”

The writer has built an argument. Based on his argument so far, he now wants to move towards building on it and moving towards a conclusion.

His argument so far is:

- God has spoken
- He has spoken to us
- He did it through Jesus
- In Jesus we see the exact representation of God
- Jesus is perfection and completeness in God’s representation to us
- He is greater than the Angels
- He is complete and perfect compared to the angels

This being the case (“therefore”) we should be diligent to listen....

Notice how the writer uses the terms “we” here. **We** ought to take notice. The things **we** have heard. Lest **we** should let them slip.

The writer puts himself right in there with his readers. He was clearly not one of the original disciples.

What is he referring to in vs 2 – “the word spoken by angels”?

The accepted view (by the Jews) was that the Law of Moses came with the assistance of angels. Such is supported by the Septuagint (LXX), Their presence is also mentioned in other NT passages (Ac 7:53; Gal 3:19) and in the LXX of Dt 33:2.

The reference to disobedience is therefore a reference to what happens to people who disobeyed Moses’ Law.

He then moves to the major point: If Jesus is greater than the angels, then what will happen if we ignore what **He says!**

How was God’s message delivered to us?

At the beginning of the letter, He talks about the fact that God has spoken to us through Jesus, and he now articulates exactly how.

It was first spoken by the Lord. Here we have the beginning of the gospel, or the things that the Lord said during His earthly ministry and some of which is recorded for us in the first 4 books of the New Testament.

Those who heard him passed it on to us, and confirmed it. The apostles and prophets were the ones who had first hand knowledge and heard what Jesus said, and then wrote it

down so that we also might know. But the Hebrew writer also says that more than just being passed on to us (and written down), *it was confirmed to us*. The evidence is not unsubstantiated. It is evidence that we can be assured of because of its confirmation. So, how was it confirmed?

*God, bearing them witness with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit... This is **exactly** what Jesus said would happen in Mk 16:20 “They went everywhere preaching the word, and the Lord worked with them, confirming the word with the signs that followed them.”*

The readers must have been sufficiently familiar with the miraculous events of the past few years, as these events had received great notoriety particularly in Jerusalem, but also into other places as the gospel was preached.

How is Jesus again compared to angels?

The world to come is not in subjection to any of the angles (but it will be in subjection to Jesus).

He now quotes Ps 8:4-6 but he does not need to tell his readers who said it, or where it was said – they already knew! But the Hebrew writer is pointing out that this quotation was not just a *reference* to Christ, but *testified of Jesus!*

If Jesus is greater than angels, why does it say that Jesus was made lower than them?

The reference here is to Jesus life on earth as a man. We see Jesus, the crown jewel of heaven who took on human form. Paul tells us (Phil 2:7-8) that Jesus emptied himself, and took on human form. He further humbled himself by being obedient to death – even the cruelest form of death – that of a cross!

How does the writer introduce the idea of sacrifice and Justification?

Like the Philippian passage, Jesus triumph over death is expressed by His crowning with glory and honour, and His victory for every one of us! (vs 9).

This would no doubt be somewhat of a strange idea for the Jews, who were looking for the coming Messiah to redeem Israel. Their concept of the Messiah was that He would re-establish the Kingdom like it was under David, and that He would rule from Jerusalem, and overcome all of their enemies (put all of them under His feet).

And yet the Hebrew writer tells us that God’s intention was that perfection would come not through triumph and a physical fulfilment, but through suffering...(vs 10) through the death of the Messiah!!! (vs 9).

Why does the writer quote here from Psalm 22?

Ps 22 was widely recognised as a Messianic Psalm. Jesus quoted from it (or rather, it foreshadowed Jesus words) on the cross. Jesus fulfilment of this showed *how* he can relate to every one of us, and therefore we are His brethren.

13 Two further citations from Scripture underscore the point--the first is from [Isa 8:17](#), the second from [Isa 8:18](#). The reason for the first passage is not obvious. The context in Isaiah, however, speaks of difficulties, and the thought may be that just as Isaiah had to trust God to see him through, so was it with Jesus. In this he was brother to all God's troubled saints. The second quotation continues the first, but it is introduced here with "and again he says," because it makes a new point. The author now sees believers as "the children [GK [G4086](#)] God has given" Christ. This word is normally used of literal children, but this is the one place where it is used of "children" of Christ. These children are "given" by God as the disciples were given to Jesus ([Jn 17:6](#)).

All three quotations from the OT, then, place the speaker in the same group as God's children. The actual word "brothers" occurs only in the first, but they all locate Christ among people. He had a real community of nature with those he came to save. (NIVBC)

The writer then points out how Jesus has shared ("partaken") in the same sufferings and difficulties that we go through in our lives (vs 14) and therefore He is perfectly well equipped to intercede with God for us (vs 18).

How has Jesus demonstrated His power over Satan?

By demonstrating His power over death through the resurrection, He demonstrated that Satan could not hold Him in death, and therefore He is more powerful than Satan.

By doing this, He has also demonstrated His power to deliver those of us who have been under bondage (ie in sin), and have been "*dead scared*" of what happens when we die – because of our sinful state – and He has made us free.

We are free not only from sin, but also from the *consequences* of sin – guilt, and punishment of death. We are also free from worrying about what lies beyond the grave, because Jesus has demonstrated for us that there will be a resurrection, and that we will therefore be raised to be with Him.

What are the closing arguments?

He took on himself the nature of Abraham. In saying this, the writer is just saying that he became a man – but importantly he introduces Abraham the father of the Jews into his argument.

Jesus did not take on the form of angels. Although He was above the angels, when he came to earth he came as a man – just like Abraham – and lower than the angels.

By doing this, He became "one of us".

Why? So that He might be able to understand the things that we go through, and He was in a position to make reconciliation of our state, and bring us back to God.

Finally, the writer throws in the fact of Jesus High Priesthood, which he is beginning to build on, and will spend a great deal of time in the remainder of the book. Jesus was not just a High Priest, but a *merciful and faithful High Priest*.