

# Christ's Preeminence Over the Angels : Hebrews 1:4-14

"We believe in one God...and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father."  
Nicene Creed 325 AD

sermonnotes

## Introduction

Last week we took a look at the intro to Hebrews and established the main theme of the book is Christ as the "supreme revelation of who God is!" Jesus is superior to anything we can create in our own desire to make our own cultural gods. In the first three verses we see Jesus as the revelation of God, as the "Word," as the one who defines God for us. There are seven phrases used to describe Him that set the course of and foundation of this book.

1. "Appointed heir of all things" (Philippians 2:10-11)
2. Through whom the universe was made" (Colossians 1:16)
3. The radiance of God's glory" (2 Corinthians 4:6)
4. the exact representation of His being" (John 14:9; Col. 1:15)
5. Sustaining all things by His powerful word" (Colossians 1:17)
6. Provided purification for sins" (Romans 3:24-26)
7. Sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven" (Psalm 110:1)

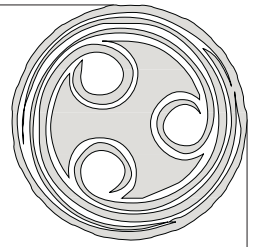
We see in Christ that He has accomplished all three important offices of the Old Testament, **Prophet** ("He has spoken") **Priest** (He "Provided purification of sins"), and **King** (He "Sat down at the right hand of the majesty..."). Since the author has established the foundation as the supremacy of Christ over all, he then moves to outline some of the implications of this reality. What does it mean for Jesus to have supremacy over everything?

## From The Head...

There is good reason to believe that there were a number of people who had begun to worship angels (see **Colossians 2:18**), especially those who were inclined toward a Gnostic worldview which saw material things (such as the incarnation) as evil. The author feels that the problem was substantial enough to begin separating the supremacy of Christ from angels and angel worship. According to the law, only God should be worshipped (**Exodus 20:1-4**). In our passage today the author shows that Christ is greater because "He has inherited a more excellent name than they," which has to do with His position and name as "Son" sitting at the right hand of the Father. The place He occupies and the work He does affords Him "a better name" (the word angel "angelos" means messenger, while the name Jesus "Jeshua" means savior, and Christ "Christos" means messiah/anointed one). The author of Hebrews uses seven quotations from the Old Testament to contrast angels and Jesus.

**Jesus is the UNIQUE SON of the Father (Hebrews 1:5)**  
Angels are referred to as "sons" of God in the Old Testament (**Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalm 29:1**), but never in the way that the bible refers to Jesus Christ. It is in the same way that His creation is His children, yet not in the same way that Christ is. The first quote comes from **Psalm 2:7** (which was an important Psalm of the early church, since they immediately saw that the text referred to the coming messiah/anointing; see **Psalm 2:2**), which emphasizes the unique relation of the Son to the Father. This relationship was finally witnessed at the resurrection of Jesus (**Romans 1:4 cf. Acts 13:33**), which accounts for the idea the word "today" has in the text. The phrase "today I have begotten you" does not refer to time, but to relationship. This is clear in the context as verses 10 through 12 infer the eternal nature of the Son. The second quote is from **2 Samuel 7:14**, which shows us the "living" aspect of the word of God. 2 Samuel obviously has importance for the people of Israel at the time of the

16 OCT. 2005 PASTOR MIKE GUNN



writing, but as the author was recording these words, God was communicating a larger meaning for the text. Verses 12 and 13 help us to see that these promises could only be accomplished in the messiah—not in Israel or Solomon. The key idea is that Jesus is God’s unique Son, and that in His incarnation, death, and resurrection he was “*declared to be the Son of God.*”

### **The Son is SUPERIOR over the Angels (Hebrews 1:6-7)**

The author begins with idea that Jesus is the “firstborn” brought into the world. Firstborn does not convey birth timing as much as it does birth right and authority in inheritance. The word (protokos) carries the idea of preeminence (see **Genesis 49:3** cf. **Colossians 1:15-17**). The remaining verses point to this idea that Christ is preeminent over creation, and not to the idea that Christ is a created being.

### **Because Angels are to Worship Jesus (Verse 6)**

This quote is from **Deuteronomy 32:43** and **Psalms 97:7** (note these quotes are taken from the Septuagint LXX version which is the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament). Most likely the author of Hebrews used these texts from the Septuagint to emphasize the deity of Jesus, since the *Him* in both passages refer to God, who alone is to be worshipped (**Exodus 20:1-3; Romans 1:25**). Subsequently great men like Peter (**Acts 10:25-26**) Paul and Barnabus (**Acts 14:11-15**), as well as angels (**Revelations 19:10**) did not accept worship, but our verse tells us that He (Jesus) is to be worshipped, and we see that He accepts worship regularly (**Hebrews 1:6; John 9:30-38; Matthew 15:25; Matthew 28:17; Revelation 4:10-11**).

### **Because Jesus is the Creator of the Angels (Verse 7)**

This quote comes from **Psalms 104:4** emphasizing the fact that the angels are created by Jesus, and they are created for service (see **Hebrews 1:14**). This contrasts Jesus’ permanent and eternal stature to the angel’s transitory and impermanent status (*winds and fire*).

### **The Son is the ETERNAL God and Savior (Hebrews 1:8-9)**

This quote from **Psalms 45:6-7** builds the author’s case that not only is Jesus uniquely God’s Son, He is God! He is called God by God, and He is given sovereign reign over creation, which is reserved for God only. The verse goes on to quote **Isaiah 61:1,3** to bring out the fact that Christ is anointed as the Messiah to set the captives free, and deliver them from their sin and making them righteous (see **Luke 4:18-19**).

### **The Son is the IMMUTABLE CREATOR of All Things (Hebrews 1:10-12)**

This is mostly a quote from **Psalms 102: 25-27** which ostensibly appears to be the dagger in the heart of any notion that Jesus is a created being, and something less than God. This verse in Psalms is clearly talking about God, and clearly expressed in the person of Jesus Christ. He laid the foundation of the earth, Heaven and earth are the works of His hands, in spite of the fact that bible is clear that “*In the beginning, God created the heaven’s and the earth*” (**Genesis 1:1**). Not only is the Son the creator, but He is also immutable (unchangeable), which is an attribute reserved for God (**Malachi 3:6**). He is also seen as eternal, which is another attribute of His Father (**2 Peter 3:8-9**).

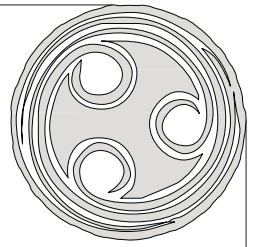
### **The Son is the ROYAL JUDGE in the End (Hebrews 1:13-14)**

**Psalms 110:1** is one of the most quoted Psalms in the NT, and considered by the early church to be very important in that they felt that this chapter gave clear reference to Christ’s ascension into power as King of His kingdom. The gospel preached His kingdom (see **Mark 1:14-15**). Jesus can not be seen as a peasant boy with no authority, or no impetus to power. Jesus is the resurrected savior, who is to come and be the judge of all who are His enemies, and will establish His kingdom, which is both present and future. It is present in the church, as righteousness is upheld and the gospel is preached, but it will be perfectly established when Christ comes as victor at His second coming.

Jesus' superiority over the angels highlights His superiority over any other person ever to live. He is the eternal creator and sustainer of the universe; He is our sovereign redeemer who has secured our salvation and sanctification! There is no reason to love and worship any other god, person or activity in His place. HE IS WORTHY OF OUR PRAISE!

## sermonnotes

### ... To The Heart



---

#### **pastors**

mikegunn ::  
mike@vivaharambee.com  
bradsessler ::  
brad@vivaharambee.com  
marksteeds ::  
mark@vivaharambee.com  
bryanzug ::  
zug@vivaharambee.com

#### **deacons**

bryannelson :: administrator  
bryan@vivaharambee.com  
aaronyoungren :: music  
aaron@vivaharambee.com  
mike&sandysmith :: prayer  
prayer@vivaharambee.com  
jennyrygel :: hospitality  
jenny@vivaharambee.com