

# Hebrews 1:4-5 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18				EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE				DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)  
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 1:4: having become (AMPMSN) as much better than the angels, as He has inherited (3SRAI) a more excellent name than they. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [tosouto kreitton genomenos](#) (AMPMSN) [ton aggelon hosō diaphoroteron par' autous](#) [kekleronomeken](#)

([3SRAI](#)) [onoma](#).

**ICB:** The Son became much greater than the angels. And God gave him a name that is much greater than theirs. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

**KJV:** Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

**Phillips:** thus proving himself, by the more glorious name that he has won, far greater than all the angels of God. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** having become by so much superior to the angels as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

**Young's Literal:** having become so much better than the messengers, as he did inherit a more excellent name than they.

HEBREWS 1:4-14

JESUS IS BETTER THAN THE ANGELS:

SEVEN OT QUOTATIONS

(All taken from the Septuagint - LXX)

HEBREWS	OT QUOTE	PROVES THAT...
Hebrews 1:5	Psalms 2:7	Jesus is God's only begotten Son
Hebrews 1:5	2Samuel 7:14	God is His Father Jesus is the Son
Hebrews 1:6	Psalms 97:7*	Jesus is to be worshipped by angels
Hebrews 1:7	Psalms 104:4	Angels are His Ministers
Hebrews 1:8, 1:9	Psalms 45:6-7	Jesus Christ is God Forever and ever
Hebrews 1:10, 11,12	Psalms 102:25-27	Jesus is Immutable and Eternal
Hebrews 1:13	Psalms 110:1	Jesus is Honored as Victor over All

\*Psalm 97:7 - Some scholars favor this quotation as from Deut 32:43 which in the Greek (LXX) reads "*Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him*". Either quote substantiates the writer's main premise.

**HAVING BECOME AS MUCH BETTER THAN THE ANGELS: *tosouto kreitton genomenos* (AMPMSN) *tôn aggelôn*:**

- RBC [What Can We Learn From The Angels?](#)
- Heb 1:9 - note; Heb 2:9- note; Ep 1:21- note; Col 1:18-note; Col 2:10-note; 2Th 1:7; 1Pe 3:22 - note; Rev 5:11 - [note](#); Rev 5:12 - [note](#)
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

having become so much better than the messengers (YLT)

thus proving himself, by the more glorious name that he has won far greater than all the angels of God (Phillips)

having become by so much superior to the angels (Wuest)

Being made so much better than the angels (KJV)

as far superior to the angels (NAB)

[Taking a place and rank by which] He Himself became as much superior to angels (Amp)

Thus he became so far better than the angels (NET)

The Son became much greater than the angels (ICB)

I like **John MacArthur's** introductory comments to **Hebrews 1:4-14** - In this chapter we are going to be dealing with meat as opposed to milk. I cannot remember a passage on which I have spent more time. To some extent, it is like an iceberg. You can see the top clearly enough, but it may not appear too impressive or meaningful. We will be looking below the surface of this passage into its deep truths. In that sense, verses 4 through 14 are not easy to understand. If, even in a small measure, I can help make these truths more understandable, I have succeeded in what I asked God to help me do. Keep in mind that the book of Hebrews is written to Jewish people, primarily to Jewish believers but also to Jewish unbelievers. Both groups are pressed with the truth that the New Covenant is better than the Old—that Jesus Christ is the better Priest, and the better Mediator, and that He is the final Priest and the final Sacrifice at the same time. Throughout the book we have comparisons between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant and between Jesus Christ and everyone else, to show that Jesus is superior in every way. In the first three verses Jesus is shown as superior to everything and everyone. After unfolding all of the human "everyones" Christ is superior to, the Holy Spirit teaches us that Jesus Christ is also superior to angels. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

**NOTE:** Do not confuse this discussion of Jesus better than the angels with **the Angel of the LORD** a term found only in the Old Testament and referring not to a created angel but almost certainly to preincarnate appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Click** for a Scriptural analysis of the **Angel of the LORD**. It is very interesting to note that the term **the Angel of the Lord** does not appear in the New Testament after the incarnation of Christ He becomes a man, for there was no longer any need for a "pre-incarnate" theophany (appearance in the form of God) for the God-Man Christ Jesus.

**Spurgeon** comments - So you perceive that Christ is no created angel. He is sometimes compared to an angel. He is sometimes called the angel of the covenant, but he is not a created angel. He is higher in nature, higher in rank, higher in intellect, and higher in power than they. He is nothing less than very God of very God. The very man who suffered on Calvary. The angels are servants, but they are not sons; they are created, but they are not begotten. You see what he says to the Son—"I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

**Paul** had warned Timothy that "the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons (1Ti 4:1).

That these **later times** had already arrived in the first century church is clear for writing to the church at Colossae Paul warned the saints to reject false angelology saying "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and **the worship of the angels**, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind and not holding fast to the Head (Christ), from Whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. (Colossians 2:18; 2:19-note)

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. Basing his arguments upon familiar Old Testament verses, specifically quoting from the Greek translation, the **Septuagint (LXX)**, the author in eleven verses (Hebrews 1:4-14) brilliantly constructs a convincing contrast between Christ the Creator and the created angels, conclusively demonstrating that Christ is far superior to the angels and He Alone warrants the readers (and our) adoration, worship and obedience.

Modern Christianity enamored with widespread Scripturally "shallow" teaching on angels, is in desperate need of this sound doctrine which alone is able to nourish our faith (1Ti 4:6) and cause us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2Pe 3:18-note)

Scripture has considerable teaching on the topic of angels with some 108 direct references in the OT and 165 in the NT. Study of these passages reveals that God's primary purpose for creating the angels was to render worship and service to God and in turn serve as God's messengers and ministers to men. For a synopsis of "angelology" I would recommend taking an hour or so and reading through the passages in Torrey's topic on [Angels](#). Don't just read Torrey's conclusions (as good as I think they are) but as "you have an anointing from the Holy One" (1Jn 2:20), read the passages in context and allow your Teacher the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth (i.e., Be a Berean - Acts 17:11-note).

**Wuest** - The writer says that the Son was made better than the angels. The informal and abrupt introduction of angels, shows that the writer was addressing Jews, who were familiar with the important part the angels played in the Old Testament, particularly in the giving of the law.

**James Townsend** in Emmaus Journal (Vol 9. Page 97. 2000) writes the following summary of Jesus and angels...

#### **Superior to the Invisible Agents of Old Testament Revelation - Angels** (Hebrews 1:1-2:18)

A lot of modern people have caught the disease of *angelitis* (spawned from TV shows such as "Touched by an Angel"). When angels are promoted to the extent that God's Son is demoted, then such obsessions amount to

“the worship of angels” (see note Colossians 2:18). Angels were the invisible intermediaries involved in God’s giving the Old Testament revelation of the law (see Acts 7:38, 53 and Gal. 3:19). In order to show that God’s New Testament revelation in His Son is superior to the Old Testament revelation at Sinai, the author of Hebrews (Heb 1:1-2:18) cites evidence to show the Son’s superiority above all angels (who are unseen law-givers).

In Hebrews 1:1-3 the author forges seven scintillating statements about God’s Son, who is God’s supreme revelation (Heb 1:1–3). In Heb 1:4-14 he shows, by seven Scriptural citations, that He is “superior to the angels” (He 1:4-note) because no angel has ever been singled out as “the” Son (He 1:5-note; He 1:6-note), or addressed as “God” (He 1:8-note) or has had an eternal existence (He 1:10-note; He 1:11, 12-note).

The word “**angels**” appears twelve times in Hebrews 1:4-2:18. The law (or past revelation) was “spoken by angels” (He 2:2-note), but this last revelation (He 1:2-note) was spoken by God’s superior Son, so no one dare neglect the message “announced by” God’s Son (He 2:3-note) and attested by God the Father (He 2:4-note).

Angels were not only agents of the law-giving (Hebrews 2:2-note), but administrators over nations (He 2:5-note; Da. 10:13, 20, 21; 11:1, where angels are called “princes” ruling over nations). Yet God has not “subjected the world to come...to angels” (Hebrews 2:5-note), but eventually the world is to be subjected to the Son...

**Become** (1096) (**ginomai**) is a word the meaning of which is in contrast to that of **poieo** (poieo) which means “to make.” The latter means “to construct or fashion something out of existing materials.” The former is the word used of the universe coming into existence. It means “to become.” The Son became better than the angels, inferring that at one time He was lower than the angels. 2:7, 9 during His incarnation.

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** (which will usually lead to an erroneous interpretation) 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. Jesus Christ always existed, but He became better than the angels in His exaltation, a statement which is better understood when we learn that in His incarnation on earth He was “**made for a little while lower than the angels**... that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. (see note Hebrews 2:9)

**Better** (2909) (**kreitton/kreisson** from **kratos** = strong which denotes power in activity and effect) is the comparative degree of agathos meaning good (intrinsically good).

**Robertson** renders it as “**by how much more**”.

**Vine** comments that “**better** is here indicative of a higher position or rank”

As Wuest puts it Jesus is **so much superior to the angels**

**Better** is a **KEYWORD** (see key words) in Hebrews. This repetition of “better” demonstrates beyond all doubt to the Jewish reader that the **New** is better than the **Old** system. Study the uses below. What is **better**? You will need to read the surrounding context to answer this question.

## Hebrews A “Better” Book

### Uses of “Better”

**Hebrews 1:4** (note) having become as much **better** than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

**Hebrews 6:9** (note) But, beloved, we are convinced of **better** things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

**Hebrews 7:19** (note) (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a **better** hope, through which we draw near to God.

**Hebrews 7:22** (note) so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a **better** covenant.

**Hebrews 8:6** (note) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better** covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

**Hebrews 9:23** (note) Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with **better** sacrifices than these.

**Hebrews 10:34** (note) For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a **better** possession and an abiding one.

**Hebrews 11:4** (note) By faith Abel offered to God a **better** sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

**Hebrews 11:16** (note) But as it is, they desire a **better** country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

**Hebrews 11:35** (note) Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a **better** resurrection;

**Hebrews 11:40** (note) because God had provided something **better** for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

**Hebrews 12:24** (note) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks **better** than the blood of Abel.

**Angels** (32) ([aggelos/angelos](#)) is the Greek word used to describe a messenger sent in order to announce, teach or perform anything in place of one who has sent him. In Scripture **aggelos** refers to transcendent (exceeding usual limits) celestial spirit beings, messenger, superior in power and intelligence to man, who are

sent out (by God) to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation. (Heb 1:14-note)

Angels are often referred to as the **hosts** (for more discussion click here) of God (**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** (murias = indefinite large number that cannot be counted) **of angels**" (Hebrews 12:22-note) The writer of Hebrews writes that in the Old Testament God spoke

"the word... through **angels** " and that word "proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, (He 2:2-note)

Why would the writer even need to address the issue of Jesus **much better than the angels**? For one thing, from the very fact the writer had to address this issue implies that ancient Jews, even those who were now believers in the Messiah held angels in high regard. It is not surprising that Jews might have a high regard for angels, because Scripture teaches that the law had been given through angels (Acts 7:53).

**Paul** writes that "God gave his laws to **angels** to give to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people" (Gal 3:19NLT+).

Cherubim were woven into the veil of the tabernacle, and cherubim were fashioned of gold for the mercy seat. Furthermore, in the OT, angelic beings had made frequent appearance to the Jewish people (eg Da 8:16-note, etc).

Finally, it is evident from Paul's letter to the Colossians that those with a strong Jewish background (Col 2:16, 17-note) were being tempted to "delight in false humility and the worship of angels" (Col 2:18-note).

Those to whom this letter is sent were either already entertaining or being encouraged to entertain, teaching which elevated angels to a position rivaling that of Christ himself.

**Thomas Aquinas** explains that "Angels mean messengers and ministers. Their function is to execute the plan of divine providence, even in earthly things.

**John Calvin** - Angels are the dispensers and administrators of the divine beneficence towards us.

**Billy Graham** rightly declared "Of one thing we can be sure: Angels never draw attention to themselves but ascribe glory to God and press His message upon the heavens as a delivering and sustaining word of the highest order.

## Related Resources:

- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Angel](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Angel](#)
- [Questions about Angels & Demons](#)
- Nave Topical Bible [Angel \(a Spirit\)](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Angels](#)
- American Church Dictionary [Angels](#)
- American Tract Society [Angel](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Angels](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Angel](#)
- CARM Theological Dictionary [Angel](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Angel](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Angels](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Angel](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Angel](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Angels](#) [Angels \(2\)](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Angels](#) [Angel](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Angels](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Angel](#)
- Wilson's Bible Types [Angel](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Angel](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Angel](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Angels](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Angel](#)

AS HE HAS INHERITED A MORE EXCELLENT NAME THAN THEY: hosō diaphorōteron par autous kekleronomeken (3SRAI) onoma:

- Ps 2:7,8; Php 2:9, 2:10, 2:11
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

God gave him a name that is much greater than theirs (ICB)

thus proving himself, by the more glorious name that he has won far greater than all the angels of God (Phillips)

just as the name God gave him is far greater than their names (NLT)

as the glorious Name (title) which He has inherited is different from and more excellent than theirs. (Amp)

as the Name He possesses by inheritance is more excellent than theirs (WNT)

**Inherited** (2816) (**kleronomeo** [word study] from **kleros** = a lot + **nemomai** = to possess) is in the perfect tense which conveys the idea in context of the permanence of His inherited Name. The verse could be more literally translated

He inherited in times past with the present result that the inheritance is in His permanent possession.

The **perfect tense** of **kleronomeo** speaks of a past completed action and of the present abiding results. Jesus is the Heir Who forever possesses the more excellent name.

**More** (5118) (**tosoutos**) refers to a high degree of quantity and thus means so much, so great

**Excellent** (1313) (**diaphoros** from **diaphero** = be different, superior) pertains to that which is different and in the present context the focus is on different in "value" and thus His **Name** is outstanding, exceptional (forming an exception, not ordinary), superior (of extraordinary worth or merit, of higher rank, quality, or importance), surpassing (greatly exceeding others, of very high degree) and excellent.

**Diaphoros** signifies more distinguished, more eminent and is used elsewhere only (He 8:6-note) describing the Son's "**more excellent** ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises."

**Gilbrant on Diaphoros** - In classical Greek since the time of Herodotus (Fifth Century B.C.) this term means "different" but later (by the time of Josephus) came to include the meaning "outstanding, excellent." It is used 12 times in the Septuagint to translate 3 different Hebrew words. In Leviticus 19:19 it refers to "diverse" seed, and in Theodotion's version of Daniel (7:17,19) the reference of the beast being "different" has a qualitative sense of "greater" (in terms of power) as well as "different" (in terms of its description). In Romans 12:6 it refers to the diversity of spiritual gifts among believers. In Hebrews 9:10 it refers to the various kinds of ceremonial washings. A comparative form of the adjective, diaphorōteros, meaning "much different from, much better than, or superior to something or someone," occurs twice in the New Testament. It is used in Hebrews 1:4 and 8:6 in reference to Christ's name being superior to that of the angels and His ministry being superior to or more excellent than that of the high priests. (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

**Diaphoros** - 4x in 4v - Ro 12:6; Heb 1:4; 8:6; 9:10. **NAS** = differ(1), more excellent(2), various(1).

**Diaphoros** - 5x in **Septuagint (LXX)** - Lev 19:19; Deut 22:9; Ezra 8:27; Dan 7:7, 19)

**Name** (3686) (**onoma**) 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.

**Jesus** (Greek **iesous**, Hebrew = **Yeshua** = Jehovah is Salvation)... Who will save His people from their sins" (Mt 1:21), the "**Name** which is above every **name**" for as Peter declared...

there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other **name** under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

**Than they (par autous)** is more literally "alongside of them" which expresses the idea that the Son has a name more excellent in comparison to the angels. The writer has already shown that the "**Son**" is superior to the prophets and now presents Him as superior to the angels, a conclusion he proceeds to substantiate in the remainder of the chapter relying primarily on the reliable testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures, which again directly addresses the concerns of his Jewish audience.

## THE GLORY OF CHRIST'S OFFICE

**F B Meyer** in the **Way Into the Holiest** has the following chapter on Hebrews 1:4...

"He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name." Hebrews 1:4.

APART from Scripture, we should have been disposed to infer the existence of other orders of intelligent and spiritual beings besides man. As the order of creation climbs up to man from the lowest living organism through many various stages of existence, so surely the series must be continued beyond man, through rank on rank of spiritual existence up to the very steps of the eternal throne. The divine mind must be as prolific in spiritual as it has been in natural forms of life.

But we are not left to conjecture. From every part of Scripture come testimonies to the existence of angels. They rejoiced when the world was made, and they are depicted as ushering in with songs that new creation for which we long. They stood sentries at the gate of a lost paradise; and at each of the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem an angel stands (Rev 21:12-note). They trod the plains of Mamre, and sang over the fields of Bethlehem. One prepared the meal on the desert sands for Elijah; another led Peter out of gaol and a third flashed through the storm to stand by the hammock where the Apostle Paul was sleeping (Acts 27:23,24).

But in the mind of the pious Hebrew the greatest work which the angels ever wrought was in connection with the giving of the law. The children of Israel received the law "as it was ordained by angels" (Acts 7:53, R.v.). It was necessary, therefore, in showing the superiority of the Gospel to the Law, to begin by showing the superiority of him through whom the Gospel was given, over all orders of bright and blessed spirits, which, in their shining ranks and their twenty thousand chariots, went and came during the giving of the decalogue from the brow of Sinai (Psalm 68:17).

It is not difficult to prove the Lord's superiority to angels. It is twofold: in Nature and in Office.

**In Nature.** "He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb 1:4). In verse 7, quoted from Psalm 104:4 (R.v. marg.), where they are distinctly spoken of as messengers and ministers, they are compared to winds and flames.-winds, for their swiftness and invisibility; flames, because of their ardent love. But how great the gulf between their nature, which may thus be



compared to the elements of creation, and the nature of that glorious Being whom they are bidden to worship, and who is addressed in the sublime title of Son! (Heb 1:6-note; Psalm 97:7)

**In Office.** In Heb 1:14 they are spoken of as ministering spirits, "sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation" (RV). This liturgy of service is a literal fact. When struggling against overwhelming difficulties; when walking the dark, wild mountain-pass alone; when in peril or urgent need-we are surrounded by invisible forms, like those which accompanied the path of Jesus, ministering to him in the desert, strengthening him in the garden, hovering around his cross, watching his grave and accompanying him to his home. They keep pace with the swiftest trains in which we travel. They come unsoiled through the murkiest air. They smooth away the heaviest difficulties. They garrison with light the darkest sepulchers. They bear us up in their hands, lest we should strike our foot against a stone. Many an escape from imminent peril; many an unexpected assistance; many a bright and holy thought whispered in the ear, we know not whence or how-is due to those bright and loving spirits. "The good Lord forgive me," says Bishop Hall, "for that, amongst my other offenses, I have suffered myself so much to forget the presence of his holy angels." But valuable as their office is, it is not to be mentioned in the same breath as Christ's, which is set down for us in this chapter.

**He Is The Organ of Creation.** "By whom also he made the worlds." To make that which is seen out of nothing, that is creation: it is a divine work; and creation is attributed to Christ. "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth." "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (Col 1:16-note; John 1:3). But the word here and in xi. 3 translated worlds means ages. Not only was the material universe made by him, but each of the great ages of the world's story has been instituted by Jesus Christ.

When genius aspires to immortality, it leaves the artist's name inscribed on stone or canvas: and so Inspiration, "dipping her pen in indelible truth, inscribes the name of Jesus on all we see-on sun and stars, flower and tree, rock and mountain, the unstable waters and the firm land; and also on what we do not see, nor shall, until death has removed the veil-on angels and spirits, on the city and heavens of the eternal world."

This thought comes out clearly in the sublime quotation made in Psalm 102:10. That inspired poem is obviously inscribed to Jehovah: "Thou, Jehovah, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands." But here, without the least apology, or hint of accommodating the words to an inferior use, it is applied directly to Christ. Mark the certainty of this inspired man that Jesus is Jehovah! How sure of the Deity of his Lord! And what a splendid tribute to his immutability!

**Mark how the Epistle rings with the unchangeableness of Jesus**, in his human love (He 13:8), in his priesthood (Heb 7:24-note), and here in his divine nature (He 1:10, 11, 12-note). We live in a world of change. The earth is not the same today as it was ages ago, or as it will be ages on. The sun is radiating off its heat. The moon no longer as of yore burns and glows; she is but an immense opaque cinder, reflecting the sunlight from her disk. Stars have burnt out, and will. The universe is waxing old, as garments which from perpetual use become threadbare. But the wearing out of the garment is no proof of the waning strength or slackening energy of the wearer. Nay, when garments wear out quickest, it is generally the time of robustest youth or manhood. You wrap up and lay aside your clothes when they have served their purpose; but you are the same in the new suit as in the old. Creation is the vesture of Christ. He wraps himself about in its ample folds. Its decay affects him not. And, when he shall have laid it all aside, and replaced it by the new heavens and the new earth, he will be the same forevermore.

With what new interest may we not now turn to the archaic record, which tells how God created the heavens and the earth. Those sublime syllables, "Light, be!" were spoken by the voice that trembled in dying anguish on the cross. Rolling rivers, swelling seas, waving woods, bursting flowers, caroling birds, innumerable beasts, stars sparkling like diamonds on the pavilion of night-all newly made; all throbbing with God's own life; and all very good: but, mainly and gloriously, all the work of those hands which were nailed helplessly to the cross, which itself, as well as the iron that pierced him, was the result of his creative will.

**He Is The God of Providence.** "Upholding all things by the word of his power" (He 7:3-note). He is the prop which underpins creation. Christ, and not fate. Christ, and not nature. Christ, and not abstract impersonal law. Law is but the invariable method of his working. "In him all things live, and move, and have their being." "By him all things consist." He is ever at work repeating on the large scale of creation the deeds of his earthly life. And if he did not do them, they must be forever undone. At his word rainwater and dew become grape-juice; tiny handfuls of grain fill the autumn barns; storms die away into calm; fish are led through the paths of the sea; rills are sent among the mountains; and stars are maintained in their courses, so that "not one faileth."

**All power is given unto him in heaven and on earth.** Why, then, art thou so sad? Thy best Friend is the Lord of Providence. Thy Brother is Prime Minister of the universe, and holds the keys of the divine commissariat. Go to him with the empty sacks of thy need; he will not only fill them, but fill them freely, without money and without price; as Joseph did in the old story of the days of the Pharaohs.



**He Is The Saviour of Sinners.** "He purged our sins." We shall have many opportunities of dwelling on this glorious fact. Jesus is Saviour, Redeemer, and the High-Priest. This is his proudest title; in this work no angel or created spirit can bear him rivalry. In the work of salvation he is alone. No angel could atone for sin, or plead our cause, or emancipate us from the thrall of evil.

**But notice the finality of this act.** "He made purging of sins " (see Greek). It is finished; forever complete; done irrevocably and finally. If only we are one with him by a living faith, our sins, which were many, are washed out; as an inscription from a slate, as a stain from a robe, as a cloud from the azure of heaven. Gone-as a stone into the bottomless abyss! Gone-never to confront us here or hereafter! "Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also makes intercession for us" (Ro 8:34-note).

**He Is Also King.** And on what does his kingdom rest? What is the basis of that Royalty of which we constantly sing, in the noble words of the primitive Church? "Thou art the King of Glory, Christ." It is a double basis.

**He is King by right of his divine nature** "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Well might Psalm xlv. be entitled the poem of the lilies, as if to denote its pure and choice and matchless beauties. It celebrated the marriage of Solomon: but, after the manner of those inspired singers, its authors soon passed from the earthly to the heavenly; from the transient type of the earthly realm to the eternal and imperishable realities of the divine royalty of Christ.

**He is also King as the reward of his obedience unto death** "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him" (Php 2:8,9-note). Satan offered him sovereignty in return for one act of homage, and Christ refused, and descended the mountain to poverty and shame and death; but through these things he has won for himself a Kingdom which is yet in its infancy, but is destined to stand when all the kingdoms of this world have crumbled to dust.

As Christ emerged from the cross and the grave, where he had purged our sins, it seemed as if words were addressed to him which David had caught ages before: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (He 1:13-note; Psalm 110:1). This is the interpretation which the Apostle Peter, in the flush of Pentecostal inspiration, put upon these words (Acts 2:34). And, accordingly, we are told, "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God " (Mark 16:19). "He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (He 1:3).

**"He sat down."** Love is regnant. The Lamb is in the midst of the Throne. Behold his majesty, and worship him with angels and archangels, and all the throng of the redeemed. Prostrate yourself at his feet, consecrating to him all you are and all you have. Comfort yourself also by remembering that he would not sit to rest from his labors in redemption, and in the purging away of sins, unless they were so completely finished that there was nothing more to do. It is all accomplished; and it is all very good. He has ceased from his works, because they are done; and therefore he is entered into his rest. And that word "until" is full of hope. God speaks it, and encourages us to expect the time when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power; and when death itself, the last enemy, shall be destroyed (1Co 15:24, 25, 26).

**Hebrews 1:5** For to which of the angels did He ever say, (3SAAI) "THOU ART (2SPAI) MY SON. TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN (1SRAI) THEE"? And again, "I WILL BE (1SFMI) A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE (3SFMI) A SON TO ME"? ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Tini gar eipen \(3SAAI\) pote ton aggelon, Huios mou ei \(2SPAI\) su. ego semeron gegenneka \(1SRAI\) se? kai palin, Ego esomai \(1SFMI\) auto eis patera, kai autos estai \(3SFMI\) moi eis Huion?](#)

**KJV:** For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

**Phillips:** For to which of the angels did he ever say such words as these: 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you?' Or, again 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?' ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** For to which of the angels did He say at any time, Son of mine you are, I this day have begotten you? and again, I will be to Him as a Father, and He himself shall be to me as a Son?

**Young's Literal:** For to which of the messengers said He ever, 'My Son thou art -- I today have begotten thee?' and again, 'I will be to him for a father, and he shall be to Me for a son?'

**FOR TO WHICH OF THE ANGELS DID HE EVER SAY: Tini gar eipen (3SAAI) pote ton aggelon:**

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**For (gar - term of explanation)** ties the two halves of the chapter tightly together indicating the cause for something just stated, here specifically the reason that Jesus is superior to the angels. He then proceeds to interweave seven OT quotations to testify to the fact that Jesus is better.

**Spurgeon** - Christ is no created angel. He is sometimes compared to an angel, He is sometimes called the angel of the covenant, but He is not a created angel. He is higher in nature, higher in rank, higher in intellect, and higher in power than they. He is nothing less than very God of very God. The very man who suffered on Calvary.

Hebrew 1:5-14 emphasizes the superiority of the Son to the angels. The author already announced that the Son is superior to both the prophets and the angels. Now in Hebrews 1:5-14 this theme of superiority of the Son to the angels is further developed in **three series of contrasts** between the Son and the angels.

In the **first** (Heb 1:5,6) the author argued for the superiority of the Son from the standpoint of His position: The Son is the begotten of God, and all the angels are commanded to worship Him.

In the **second** (Heb 1:7-12) the description of the Son is more vivid. The angels are briefly described as winds and flaming fire (Heb 1:7). Then the author described some of the Son's characteristics in Heb 1:8-12: The Son's throne is eternal, He loves justice, He is the Creator, and He is eternal.

In the **third** (Heb 1:13,14) emphasis is placed on the role of the Son and the angels. The Son is commanded to sit at the right hand of God (Heb 1:13), but the angels are described as the ministering spirits for those who will inherit salvation (Heb 1:14).

By these three series of argument the author clearly demonstrates that the Son is superior to the angels in His position, His attributes, and His role.

And so beginning with Hebrews 1:5 there is a series of 7 quotations from the Old Testament, six from the Psalms which has much to say about the Messiah.

**J Vernon McGee** comments that Psalms (Songs) is "a **H-I-M book**—it was the **hymn** book of the temple, but it is all about **Him**; it is praise to Him. You have a more complete picture of Christ in the Psalms than you have in the Gospels."

**THOU ART MY SON. TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE: Huios mou ei (2SPA) su ego semeron gegenneka (1SRAI):**

- Heb 5:5; Ps 2:7; Acts 13:33
- 2Sa 7:14; 1Chr 17:13; 22:10; 28:6; Ps 89:26, 27
- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

today I have begotten You [established You in an official Sonship relation, with kingly dignity]? (Amp)

You are my Son. Today I have become your Father (ICB)

For to which of the angels did He say at any time, Son of mine you are (Wuest)

The first Scripture is quoted from the **Septuagint (LXX)** of Psalm 2:7 a coronation psalm when kings took their throne and a psalm widely accepted by the Old Testament Jewish rabbis as **Messianic** (a psalm that prophesied of the coming Messiah) and that it would be fulfilled through the lineage of King David (and so it was).

"I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

Paul quotes this passage in Acts 13:33+ as an allusion to the **resurrection** (context = **in that He raised up Jesus as it is also written** in Ps 2:7), but here is quoted by the writer of Hebrews as a prophecy of Jesus' **incarnation**, something that did not apply to angels who were created being.

Be wary of how some versions translate this verse. For example the normally well worded NET, translates it as **Today I have fathered You**, a translation that could be used to "justify" a very erroneous interpretation. Some cults for example teach that God the Father went in to Mary and "fathered" the Son. Virgin Birth of Christ One of the Mormon founders, Brigham Young, commenting on the Virgin Birth has unequivocally stated,

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not

begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who was the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle [body], it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession. Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven" (Journal of Discourses, 1:50–51).

Mormon doctrine also teaches that "When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He is our FATHER and our GOD, and the only God with whom WE have to do."

The Mormons could appeal to the NET translation (out of context of course) as a potential substantiation of this abominable heresy.

**Spurgeon** - If this refers to the Godhead of our Lord, let us not attempt to fathom it, for it is a great truth, a truth reverently to be received, but not irreverently to be scanned. It may be added that if this relates to the Begotten One in His human nature, we must here also rejoice in the mystery, but not attempt to violate its sanctity by intrusive prying into the secrets of the Eternal God. The things that are revealed are enough, without venturing into vain speculations. In attempting to define the Trinity, or unveil the essence of Divinity, many have lost themselves: here great ships have foundered. What have we to do in such a sea with our frail skiffs?

**Son (huios)** - **Son** is mentioned 4x in chapter 1. His name **Son** conveys the revelation of what and Who He is, the Son of God in contrast to the angels who in Job are spoken of as the "sons of God" (Job 1:6, 38:7) in a different context and with a different meaning. In both of these verses in Job the phrase "**sons of God**" is translated by the Greek Septuagint using **aggelos**, the same word translated "**angel**" in Hebrews.

The **NASB** translates Job 1:6 as

**the sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD" whereas the corresponding Septuagint (LXX) translation translates it as "the **angels of God** came to stand before the Lord (Job 1:6)

In summary, the angels of God were called "**sons**" in the OT but they are never referred to as "**My Son**".

**Wiersbe** adds that "While the angels collectively may be termed "the sons of God" (Job 1:6), no angel would be given this title individually. It belongs uniquely to our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Thou art My Son** - A perennial objection of the Jews to Jesus has been that God has no son since He is one God (Dt 6:4), so the writer begins by showing that their own Scriptures prove God to be both Father and Son. The idea of Jesus as the Son of God is woven throughout the NT.

**Luke** quoting a message from the angel Gabriel to Mary says of Jesus that

He will be great, and will be called the **Son** of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end. (Lk 1:32 33)

He goes on to relate that

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring **shall be called the Son of God**. (Luke 1:35+)

Notice that even though this announcement was less than a year before His birth, His sonship was still referred to as future. The sonship of Christ is inextricably connected with His incarnation and only after Christ's incarnation did God say, "**This is My Son**."

The gospel of Mark records that when Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River and the Spirit like a dove descended upon Him,

a voice came out of the heavens" declared "**Thou art My beloved Son**, in Thee I am well-pleased. (Mk 1:9 10, 11)

Later in His Ministry at His transfiguration

a cloud formed and began to overshadow them... and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "**This is My Son**, My Chosen One; listen to Him!" (Lk 9:34; 35)

In his introductory comments in Romans, Paul wrote that the "Gospel of God" was about

His Son, Who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, Who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord." (Ro

1:1, 2, 3, 4-see **notes** Ro 1:1;1:2; 1:3;1:4).

Here we see that the resurrection is the event that ultimately "declared" Jesus to be the Son of God because if He had been just any man, He could not have been resurrected from the grave, but He was the Son of God and death could not hold Him.

God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. (Acts 2:24)

Even the venerated

patriarch David... both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this day. (i.e., he was not resurrected as was the **Son**)" (Acts 2:29)

**Today I have begotten Thee** - When was Jesus **begotten** by God? When is "**Today**"?

In Acts Luke records a sermon by Paul in the Jewish synagogue at Pisidian Antioch where he says...

we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, (Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises the prophets had spoken) that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'THOU ART MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE.' (thus equating His resurrection with "**begotten**") (Acts 13:32, 33)

To be sure, Jesus became (or was "**begotten**") a **Son** at birth. He was declared to be a **Son** in resurrection. "**Today**" then began with His incarnation and extended up to the resurrection, which flung open the gates of salvation making possible the redemption of any who would enter through Him.

What angel has been resurrected from the dead and brought about redemption? Jesus is the Son not only because He was virgin-born into humanity, at that time being "made for a little while lower than the angels" (see note Hebrews 2:9), but also because He was **begotten** again from the dead. Just as you and I become "**sons of God**" (Gal 3:29, Ro 8:14, 19- see notes Ro 8:14; 19) in the fullest sense not by being born once but by being born twice, so Jesus Christ became **Son** in the fullest sense by being born not once, but twice. Jesus is **Son** in His resurrection (the first-born from the dead) as well as in His birth.

**John MacArthur** wrote that "Christ is never called the Son until His incarnation. Before that He was eternal God. It is therefore incorrect to say the Jesus Christ is eternally inferior to God because He goes under the title of Son. He is no "eternal son" always subservient to God, always less than God, always under God. Sonship is an analogy to help us understand Christ's essential relationship and willing submission to the Father for the sake of our redemption. As already mentioned, the **today** of verse 5 shows that His sonship began in a point of time, not in eternity. His life as Son began in this world. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

As a result of **Dr MacArthur's** preceding comments, critics questioned his belief in the deity of Jesus, and he was prompted to review his original statement made in 1983. Here is an excerpt of his comments regarding his correction and retraction...

Controversy continued to swirl around my views on "incarnational sonship," prompting me to reexamine and rethink the pertinent biblical texts. Through that study I have gained a new appreciation for the significance and the complexity of this issue. More important, my views on the matter have changed. Here are two major reasons for my change of opinion:

1. I am now convinced that the title "Son of God" when applied to Christ in Scripture always speaks of His essential deity and absolute equality with God, not His voluntary subordination. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' time understood this perfectly. John 5:18 says they sought the death penalty against Jesus, charging Him with blasphemy "because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."...

2. It is now my conviction that the begetting spoken of in Psalm 2 and Hebrews 1 is not an event that takes place in time. Even though at first glance Scripture seems to employ terminology with temporal overtones ("this day have I begotten thee"), the context of Psalm 2:7 seems clearly to be a reference to the eternal decree of God. It is reasonable to conclude that the begetting spoken of there is also something that pertains to eternity rather than a point in time. The temporal language should therefore be understood as figurative, not literal. ([Click full text of Dr MacArthur's retraction](#))

**AND AGAIN I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME: kai palin Ego esomai (1SFMI) auto eis patera kai autos estai (3SFMI) moi eis huion:**

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- [Hebrews 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Key Words in Hebrews: Son** - 25x in 22v (not all refer to God's Son) - Heb 1:2, 5 (2x), He 1:8; 2:6, 10; 3:6; 4:14; 5:5, 8; 6:6; 7:3, 5, 28; 10:29; 11:17, 21, 22, 24; 12:5 (2x), He 12:6, 7, (2x), He 12:8

Speaking to David **God** makes a promise that 2Sa 7:12-13

When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, (**Near fulfillment** of course refers to Solomon) and I will establish his kingdom. 13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom **forever**. (**Future fulfillment**: - this could not be fully fulfilled in Solomon who died but to Messiah who will receive a Kingdom from the Ancient of Days and that Kingdom [Da 7:13, 14-note] will endure forever - Da 2:44-note) 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men (Messiah of course did not commit iniquity so the last part of this verse cannot apply to Him).