

2. Understanding Why Christ Is Greater than the Angels

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand how the Father views Christ. We saw that Christ is the express image of the Father and that Christ is God just as the Father is God. We also saw that Christ now sits at the right hand of the Father. Christ also has all authority because He is with God and He is God. Today, we are going to see how to help our children understand and explain why Christ is much greater than the angels.

In Hebrews 1:5-7, we read, “For to which of the angels did He ever say: ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You’? And again: ‘I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son’? But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him.’ And of the angels He says: ‘Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire.’” In just these three verses, we have four quotations from the Old Testament. In 2 Samuel 7, God made a covenant with David. Five verses are quoted in this chapter that relate to that covenant. Instead of giving our own opinions or the opinions of some recent person, these verses show us the importance of backing up what we teach from the Word of God. That is important because all Scripture is inspired by God.

Psalms 2 talks about the time when Christ will come back to set up His kingdom on the earth. In Psalm 2:7, we read, “‘I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, “You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You.”’” Although the entire chapter talks about Christ, this verse makes it very clear that the Father calls Christ, My Son. David had many descendants that served as kings of Israel and Judah. However, the Father said that only the Son of God would rule over the entire world.

Then, we see that the second quotation is taken directly from the covenant that God made with David. In 2 Samuel 7:12-14, God said to David, “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.” Verses twelve, thirteen and the first part of fourteen talk about the fact that the Father would establish the throne of One Son forever. However, the second part of verse 14 shows us that the sons of David that served as kings of Israel and Judah would be disciplined if they sinned. That is why only the first part of verse fourteen is quoted here in Hebrews to show that Christ is the Son of God.

God then shows in verses six and seven that Christ is greater than the angels because the angels worship Christ. The writer of Hebrews then quoted from the Greek translation of Deuteronomy 32:43 to show that the angels would worship Christ. We see an example of this worship at the birth of Christ. Luke 2:13-14 says, “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’” The worship of Christ by angels showed that Christ is greater than the angels. In fact, the next quotation shows the ministry of angels. Psalm 104:4 says, “Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.” God created the angels to be His ministers or servants.

In contrast, Hebrews 1:8-9 says, “But to the Son *He says*: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.’” These verses are a quote of Psalm 45:6-7 to show that Christ is the One who is the eternal ruler. Here, we see that it is the Father who calls Christ, God. It is the Father who says that Christ will rule forever. The word translated “scepter” was used to speak of the walking stick (staff) that a shepherd used. When it was applied to kings it talked about the stick that they used to carry out their rule.

Here, we see that Christ will rule with righteousness. Christ would do this because He loves righteousness and hates lawlessness. The Father then said that He is the One that anointed Christ with the oil of gladness. In verse one, we saw that Christ is the Prophet who spoke for God. In verse three, we see that Christ is the Priest who offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins. In verse eight, we see that Christ is the King who will rule for all eternity. As a result, the anointing of Christ speaks of the fact that the Father is the One who has recognized that Christ has all three of these offices.

In fact, the word “Messiah” means *the anointed One*. Isaiah 61:1-2 says, “‘The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.’” Christ read these verses except the phrase, “and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn,” in the synagogue of Nazareth as He began His public ministry. Then, Christ said in Luke 4:21, “And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” He stopped before He read the last part of verse two because He will fulfill that part at His second coming. Here, we see another example of how to help our children learn to minister from the Old Testament by understanding the context so that they know why Christ stopped in the middle of the verse.

Hebrews 1:10-12 says, “And: ‘You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.’” These verses are quoted from Psalm 102:25-27. That Psalm was a prayer of David to the Lord during a time when he was suffering. In this verse, David spoke of the fact that Christ was the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In the book of John, Christ is introduced as the Creator of all things. John 1:1-3 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Christ was in the beginning with God and all things were made through Christ.

However, the writer of Hebrews points out that the present heavens and earth will not last forever. In contrast, Christ will remain forever. The present heavens and earth are growing old just like a piece of clothing. The day will come when Christ will dissolve the present heavens and earth.

That event is compared here in Hebrews to the folding up of an old coat or other outer garment. In fact, the present heavens and earth will be changed. 2 Peter 3:10-13 says, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” Here, we see that before Christ begins His eternal rule that He will create new heavens and a new earth in which there will be true righteousness throughout eternity.

In contrast to the eternal rule of Christ, Hebrews 1:13-14 says, “But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” Here, we see that we are reminded again of the present position of Christ. Earlier in this chapter in verse 3, we saw that Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father at the present time. The day is coming when all of the enemies of Christ will become His footstool. Psalm 110:1 says, “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’” Christ is presently seated at the right hand of the Father. Here, in Psalm 110:1, we see that the Father said to Christ that the day will come when the Father will also cause all of His enemies to become His footstool.

At the time of the final judgment, all of the enemies will be forced to bow their knees to Christ. Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Here, we see that at the final judgment all will be forced to bow the knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This action will also bring glory to God, the Father. No angels will ever have people bow to them because the angels are actually servants that God has sent to minister to us who will inherit the eternal salvation that Christ has provided for us.

As we look at this first chapter of Hebrews, we are given many illustrations of how to help our physical and spiritual children learn to use the Old Testament to show that Christ is God. This chapter has shown us from the Old Testament that Christ is superior to all angels because He is the Son of God and is equal with God. We will see in the coming chapters how to show our children that Christ is superior to all others because He is God. As we help our children to grow in their understanding of the fact that Christ is God, they will be able to help others in their spiritual growth and understanding. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand why Christ is greater than angels.