

In the Judaism of NT times their understanding of angels offered a standard of what was powerful, glorious and fearsome. Against this standard Jesus Christ stood out as far superior, even though just a few decades before the writing of Hebrews, He had walked the earth as a man. But He was God incarnate, and after dying a sinless death, He was raised and exalted to right hand of God the Father, having been declared to be the Son, a name far superior to that of angels. In every way He was superior to angels, a fact which the author of Hebrews supports with three reasons.

**I. Jesus is superior because He is the exalted, unique Son and angels are commanded to worship Him (1:4–6).** Three OT quotations are used to support this claim.

1. *Psalm 2:7* — This psalm speaks of God’s “Anointed One” (v.2, i.e., “Messiah). Even though eternally God the Son, Jesus as incarnate God was publically declared to be the “Son” at the resurrection as explained by Paul (Acts 13:32–33; Romans 1:4).
2. *2 Samuel 7:14* — This promise appears within the context of the LORD’s covenant promises to David, which as a whole look further than Solomon to a complete fulfilment in and by the Messiah, King David’s greater Son.
3. *Deuteronomy 32:43 and/or Psalm 97:7* — The “firstborn” (Hebr 1:6; cf. Ps 89:27) was a title of rank. Whichever is being cited here, it is clear that angels are called upon to worship the Son.

Together the point is being made that Jesus is uniquely the Son of God, an exalted title which no single angel ever received, but which called them to worship Him.

If the most powerful (divinely created) beings worship Jesus, then there is no reason to venerate angels or anything lesser, but rather follow their example and worship Jesus.

**II. Jesus is superior, because He is uniquely sovereign, and angels serve Him (1:7–9).** Two OT quotations are used to support this reason.

1. *Psalm 104:4* — In Psalm 97 fire and lightning did God’s will. In this Psalm His angels function as wind and fire, obeying swiftly and powerfully to do His will.
2. *Psalm 45:6–7* — This “royal psalm” is “a wedding song” (v.1) probably of a king in the Davidic dynasty. Though a wedding song, portions cannot be limited to an earthly, mere human king, and the author of Hebrews highlights that important feature (1:8–9): the King is addressed as God, sitting upon an eternal throne, ruling with perfect righteousness. (The companions are probably believers in the Messiah, cf. 2:10; 3:14. The “oil of joy” may be that of celebration, cf. 12:3.)

The Son rules in righteousness from an eternal throne, whom the angels serve. Therefore, Jesus the Son, is far superior to them.

Submit to one Master who is superior to all other claims of authority, even powerful, glorious angels.

**III. Jesus is superior because He is uniquely eternal Creator and Sustainer; angels are commissioned by Him to serve redeemed humans (1:10–14).** Two OT quotations support this.

1. *Psalm 102:25–27* — This prayer is addressed to Jehovah (vv. 1, 12), but also to One who comes at the appointed time to show mercy and reveal His glory (vv. 13, 16). In the Greek translation of verse 25, God addresses one called “the Lord” whom the author of Hebrews identifies as the Son. The Son, therefore, is the eternal Creator and Sustainer of the universe.
2. *Psalm 110:1* — By the time of Jesus’s earthly ministry, this was accepted as a messianic psalm (cf. Matt 22:43–44) and sitting at the right hand of God as a mark of deity (cf. Mark 14:62–64). God Himself serves the Lord by bringing His enemies into subjection. No angel has been exalted to so sit by God (rather they stand), nor be served by God (rather they serve Him).

The Son, who is the Messiah, is the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, and though He became a man, is not lessened but was exalted to a place where He is to be served. All angels have the place of “ministers”, commissioned by God to serve believers in Jesus Christ who are joint heirs with Him.

The Son is therefore far superior than angels or any other created thing and He has brought the believer into a position to be served by angels.

Jesus Christ, God the Son, is far superior to all angels. Be sure that you are an heir of salvation in Him and never let Him slip in your estimation from the high place which is His.

*For further reflection:*

- What all can you learn about angels from this passage? (Make a list.) What all do you learn about the Son?
- What might western Christians elevate instead of angels to compete with the superior place of Jesus?
- Are you an heir of salvation? How do you know?
- How can you judge how high you elevate Jesus in your life?
- How can you encourage one another is keep Jesus in the high place in your life which He deserves?