

## Text: Heb 1.5-6

The beginning of Hebrews is a masterful composition of Christology, putting our Lord Jesus at the pinnacle of our thought.

The themes of the prologue play out in the rest of the book. Jesus is the theme of Hebrews.

But the book isn't merely theological, it is meant to reach us very personally and practically. We will see words like this throughout:

Therefore, let us...

For this reason, we must...

The book of Hebrews is very applicational. You need to respond to what God is saying in this book.

I want to remind you of something from our introductory lessons: this was mentioned in Constable's notes, but I think he picked it up from another commentary. There is an alternation between Exposition and Exhortation in Hebrews. I am working on that notion as we work through the book.

The rest of our chapter is heavy on Exposition.

The first Exhortation related to chapter 1 is the first few verses of chapter 2.

However, I found this interesting comment in one commentary:

"The first major unit of the body of the epistle begins at this point and extends through the dramatic appeal of 4:14–16 for the readers to avail themselves of the resources available to them at 'the throne of grace' (4:16)."<sup>1</sup>

What does Heb 4.14-16 say?

Heb 4.14-16 ¶ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold fast our confession.**<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.<sup>16</sup> Therefore **let us draw near with confidence** to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

---

<sup>1</sup> Zane C. Hodges, "Hebrews," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 781.

In other words, our exposition in chapter 1 is leading us to falling deeper in love with Jesus.

The first point of exposition has to do with *The More Excellent Name* that Jesus has as compared to angels.

You might think, “Well, of course! Jesus is the eternal Son, no doubt he has a more excellent name than angels.”

Except: that isn’t the point. His name is even better than that.

Read Heb 1.5-14, text 5-6

The paragraph has “breaks” throughout, around the word “say:”

- For to which of the angels did He ever say (5)
- And of the angels He says (7)
- But to which of the angels has He ever said (13)

**Proposition:** The ascension of Christ to the Father’s right hand marks the most important event in history.

## I. The name granted to the Son, not angels (5)

### A. The significance of naming in Hebrews

1. Two names (or titles) occupy much of Hebrews
  - a. Son
  - b. High priest
2. These titles form the focal points of “all the major ideas in Hebrews concerning Christ”
  - a. His work as High Priest is most important
  - b. His identity as Son is foundational<sup>2</sup>

### B. The place of angels in Judaism

1. As mentioned before, angels seen as behind the prophetic revelation
2. Not just Jewish tradition, Scriptural support:

---

<sup>2</sup> This whole point developed from Buist M. Fanning, “A Theology of Hebrews,” in *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, ed. Roy B. Zuck, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 370.

Dt 33.2 He said, “The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And **He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones**; At His right hand there was flashing lightning for them.

Ps 68.17 The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; **The Lord is among them *as at Sinai***, in holiness.

Ac 7.53 you who received **the law as ordained by angels**, and yet did not keep it.”

Gal 3.19 ¶ Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, **having been ordained through angels** by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.

### C. The place of the Son over angels

1. No angel is named Son (multiple angels called “sons of God” notwithstanding)
2. The emphasis is to prioritize the revelation that is the Son (also as previously mentioned)
  - a. He is not arguing against angels
  - b. He is contrasting the revelation of angels [through prophets] with revelation in a Son

### D. The great naming of the Son (Psalm 2.7, 2 Sam 7.14)

1. The parallels of thought in the two quotations
 

“You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You”  
“I will be a Father to Him  
And He shall be a Son to Me”
2. Both passages are seen as Messianic texts by the Jews
  - a. Ps 2: enthronement psalm, the idealized language looks beyond David
  - b. 2 Sam 7.14: Davidic covenant, applied to Solomon, but incapable of complete fulfilment by Solomon

c. Consequently, the Jews saw these as referring to a Son who was to come

Concluding this section, we see Jesus named as Son and heir of David: elevating and confirming the superior role of the Jesus.

## II. The order imposed on the angels, to worship the Son (6)

### A. The source of the quotation

1. Again, the author quotes from the LXX, either Ps 97.7 or more probably Dt 32.43

Ps 97.7 Let all those be ashamed who serve graven images,  
Who boast themselves of idols; Worship Him, all you gods.

Dt 32.43 "Rejoice, O nations, *with* His people; For He will  
avenge the blood of His servants, And will render vengeance  
on His adversaries, And will atone for His land *and* His  
people."

2. LXX changes:

a. Ps 97, the word "gods" is changed to "angels"

b. Dt 32.43, in the LXX Odes (songs copied out of context and added to OT as a separate book), adds "and let all the angels of God worship him" — exactly as here

Note, ultimately the message of the Psalm and Deuteronomy, as quoted, are the same, although Dt seems a better source.

B. In the Deuteronomic context, the order is in the context of Messiah's victory

Dt 32.43 "Rejoice, O nations, *with* His people; **and let all the angels of God worship him**; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And will render vengeance on His adversaries, And will atone for His land *and* His people."

1. The context of Hebrews focuses on the fruit of Messiah's victory over sin (when he sat down at the Father's right hand, v. 3)

2. The command to the angels is in consequence of Messiah's victory (Dt 32.43, LXX in Odes)

Now we see the angels explicitly commanded to do homage to the Son for his mighty work.

### III. The details that elevate our understanding

#### A. Key terms that need explaining

1. Verse 5: Today — when is “today”?
2. Verse 6:
  - a. Again: what word does “again” modify?
  - b. Firstborn: what does “firstborn” imply?
  - c. The world: which “world” does the author refer to?

#### B. The terms explained

1. When is “today”? (5)
  - a. “Today” relates to “begotten”
    - 1) Begotten cannot mean the Son had a beginning
    - 2) Refers to some “incipient event” in the Son's story, some kind of beginning point
  - b. Five views
    - 1) Eternal generation
      - a) But this isn't really a beginning point
      - b) The concept really comes from later theology, so is read into this text, not out from this text
    - 2) Incarnation
    - 3) Baptism
    - 4) Resurrection
    - 5) Ascension

Each of these last four possible

## c. Context: vv. 3c-4 point to enthronement

When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

- 1) After the atonement, he sat on the throne
- 2) Sitting on the throne elevated him above the angels
- 3) Sitting on the throne gave him the higher name

## d. Today

- 1) you are my Son (Ps 2.7)
- 2) I am your Father (2 Sa 7.14)

## 2. What word does “again” modify?

## a. Choices:

- 1) The bringing of the firstborn into the world (as per our trans)
- 2) The issuance of another saying “again... he says” (see “again” in v. 5)

## b. Significance

- 1) Some argue from the first option that this refers to the Second coming, when he “again” brings the Son into the world
- 2) However, the context argues for the consequences of the first coming: the victory over sin calls for the worship of the angels

## 3. What does “firstborn” imply?

- a. It is a title, not a “birth order”
- b. Example: Solomon

“Solomon exercised the sovereignty of the Davidic house as Israel’s king even though he was the tenth son of David chronologically (1 Chron. 3:1–5). The title describes rank and honor here.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Heb 1.6.

## c. Psalm 89.27

Ps 89.27 “I also shall make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.

## 4. Which “world” does the author refer to?

- The word “world” originally means “habitable land” as opposed to desert wastes
- Then comes to mean “world inhabited by men” as opposed to the heavens

This supports those who hold to the Second Coming view of “again”

## c. But: Heb 2.5, only other use of term in Heb, “the world to come”

Heb 2.5 ¶ For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.

Heb 2.8 YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.”  
For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

- This world to come is not put under the angels
- This world to come includes all things, all creation (2.8)

## d. And again, the context of enthronement, vv. 3-4

**Conclusion:**

**Proposition:** The ascension of Christ to the Father’s right hand marks the most important event in history.

Again, we see the importance of Jesus Christ.

Hear him.

Worship him.