

Jesus, Superior to Angels, and Everything Else

My prayer, today, is that we could get beyond knowing we SHOULD think Jesus is awesome, to REALLY feeling that way about him. The message of Hebrews is to help us appreciate Jesus, and all we have in him, and not turn away to anything or anybody else, as the basic solution to life and the means of our salvation.

I think it is very hard for us to imagine just how highly the Jews, regarded Moses, and the prophets, and angels! To the Jews, these beings were the most esteemed things in their world! And it was right that they had such a high view of them, because God had raised up Moses to speak to his people and lead them. God had spoken through the prophets and revealed much about himself and the future. And God had done mighty and awesome things for his people through his angels! None of this was to be discounted!

But all of them were to be superseded by someone inexpressibly superior, Jesus! Moses, and the prophets, and angels are awesome! But they cannot remain in the foreground, because Jesus is here! Jesus puts everyone and everything else in the background, not because THEY are worthless or of no value, but because HE is infinitely greater. When the Son rises in the morning sky on a summer day, the moon isn't seen, not because it isn't there but because of the vastly greater light of the Sun.

To really understand this passage, we might have to consider what the author would say if he were writing this to Christians in America

today. He might proclaim how Jesus is greater than your football team, or sports in general, or Hollywood, or pop, or country music, or rock and roll. He would tell us that Jesus is the One ultimately deserving our enthusiasm, our shouts, and cheers and worship! He might tell us Jesus is greater than liberal or conservative politics, reminding us that Jesus is the only one who can transform people and society. He might tell us that Jesus is greater than the name of science, reminding us that Jesus is the One who created all that science studies, and already knows all that scientist seek to figure out.

He might admonish us that Jesus is greater than “being on the right side of history” or being on the right side of public opinion, because Jesus himself is the truth and that truth, in the end, will be all that matters. He might tell us that Jesus is greater than all counselors, and psychologists or self-help writers; HE is the Shepherd of our souls, the Healer of our hearts, our Counselor and Friend! He might tell us that Jesus is greater than those with impressive academic credentials; he alone has all information and all knowledge on all subjects! Or he might write to us that Jesus is greater than celebrity pastors, and celebrity Christians; he is the Chief Shepherd, the Star of the Church and we are all under his feet!

I am not seeking to belittle sports or people or things that I have mentioned. Only seeking to show that...Jesus is infinitely greater than anything or anyone we might be tempted to value, or elevate above him. He is infinitely greater than anybody we might listen to,

or follow, or be impressed by. And.. He is infinitely greater than anything we might be tempted to turn back to, when life gets hard!

Mentally, we might say, “of course!” But do we believe that in our hearts! Are we walking in that? If we see Jesus for who he is, I believe we will start walking in this sense of immense privilege. Paul said, “Therefore, just as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, established in the faith as you were taught, and OVERFLOWING with thankfulness.” (Colossians 2:6,7) How can you overflow with gratitude? Only by knowing the wonderfulness of Jesus and all we have in him! If we are not living with this sense of privilege, we need a greater vision of Jesus.

The Jewish Christians to whom this letter was written, were undergoing severe persecution! Some had their homes ransacked and taken away from them. They had handled the initial suffering well, but had grown weary under their unrelenting trials. Some were tempted to turn back from Christ, to the old familiar Jewish systems and sacrifices. They were in danger of giving up, quitting, throwing away their confidence in Jesus.

Tough times do reveal what we really trust in to help, heal, and fix ourselves, or our life. Prolonged and severe trials have a way of burning away our words and our empty professions! And the things that we REALLY place our confidence in, are revealed by the fire. If those firey trials, reveal enduring confidence in Jesus, then they

have shown us the genuineness of our faith. But, if we REALLY trust in something else to solve life in hard times, that will show too!

The message of Hebrews is that Jesus is God's ultimate and final answer to our human condition. His work in removing our sins is completely sufficient! His work in bringing us to God is perfect! His presence with us, through trials and temptations, is all we ever need! Hebrews 7:25 "He is able to save completely those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede for them". However dark, and deep, the needs of your soul, no matter how desperately you need fixing, no matter the sins of your past or present struggles, he is able to save you completely! He is sufficient to save you today... and tomorrow! THEREFORE keep trusting him, keep looking to him. Keep drawing near to God, and do so boldly! and with confidence!

It is impossible to make too much of Him. It is impossible to elevate him too much. To love him too much. To worship him too much. It is impossible to have too much confidence in him. He is the one and only Savior you need!

In this passage, the writer of Hebrews, shows us the superiority of Jesus above angels. This is NOT intended to diminish angels, or devalue them as or dismiss them as irrelevant; In fact it is the reality that angels are wonderful beings, that show HOW WONDERFUL JESUS IS. The logic is: angels are awesome, but Jesus is vastly superior to even angels! And, this is not to say that angels have no

role in our lives now that Jesus has come! The book of Acts show the on-going work of angels, after Jesus ascended to heaven.

But his goal is to stir up our worship of Jesus and our confidence in Jesus, by helping us to comprehend just how far above angels Jesus really is. If you would be impressed by an angel standing at the end of your bed some morning, you should be countless times over more impressed with Jesus, with you, all the time!

First *Jesus is God's Son, God is Father to him. Verse 5 "For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son". No angel has the unique privilege of being the Son of God. That belongs to Jesus ONLY!

Even before there were angels, the Father and Jesus had this Father/Son relationship was completely unique, and personal and intimate; it was theirs alone.

Francis Shaeffer wrote that John 17:42 gives us "the opportunity to eavesdrop on an intimate conversation between God the Son and God the Father (before the heavens and the earth were created). (In John 17:42) Jesus says, "Father, you loved me before the creation of the world." So before (the first words in the Bible) "in the beginning," there was a loving Father. And before "in the beginning," there was a real Son loving, adoring, praising, and enjoying a very real Father."

This Father/Son relationship also reveals the divinity of Jesus. He is God's one and only Son. He is the same nature with the Father. He is the Eternal Son of God. John 1 says "In the beginning he was with God and he was God".

This unique privilege of Sonship places Jesus above angels, and far above anyone else in your life too. When you see that Jesus has the top position in the universe, you can stop being impressed by people, you can stop fearing people, you can stop trying to please people, you can stop being obsessed with what people think of you, or might be saying about you. You can stop bowing to what our culture says.

On the mountaintop God thundered from heaven, "This is My Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to Him!" Who are you really listening to today? Who or what really has your attention today? Are you paying attention to your own thoughts and opinions and feelings and fears? Are you listening to the latest messaging from the world? Or are you listening to God's Son! The Bible tells us to "Take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ!" Are you?

Two *God commands worship TO Jesus; He commands worship FROM angels. Verse 6 "when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." The role of angels is to worship Jesus! The lessor always worships the greater! Therefore Jesus is superior to angels!

Every person and everything in the universe is made to worship Jesus as LORD. The last sentence in the book of Psalms says, “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD”. Psalm 103:20 says, Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!

Along with the angels, we are to bless and worship Jesus Christ! Worship means to show Jesus extravagant love and extreme obedience. You get on your knees every day and say, “I submit my thoughts, and my emotions, and my will, to you today. I want you to be lifted up in the way I handle everything that comes at me today. I honor you as Lord today, all day long. I love you and I trust you with my needs and problems. I will not insult you by talking and living like I have no confidence in you. Instead I will boast of your goodness and greatness, and your salvation!

We also worship him with praise, and joy and songs, and even shouts of praise, and with thanksgiving. Psalm 95! “Come! Let us sing joyfully to the Lord! Let us shout for joy to the Rock of our Salvation. Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving! Let us shout with songs of praise to him; for the Lord is an awesome God!”

That is how we live life, Monday afternoon, and Thursday morning, Saturday night, in this frame of heart. We LIVE a life of worship of Jesus! You say, well that’s not really possible. Have you really tried it? Peter said, “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to

give the reason for the hope that you have...”. IE your life and words and your face WILL display the hope and solid optimism that come from exalting Jesus in your heart. And people start asking you, how did you get that?

But if we worship our fears or problems, or money, or a person, or something in our past, that will show too, and people won't ask us why we have so much hope! Let us all worship Jesus, along with all the angels!

Third *Jesus is addressed as “God”, with an everlasting Throne. Angels are addressed as servants. Verse 7 “In speaking of the angels he says, “He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire.” 8 But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;”. Angels are spirits, servants, flames of fire, awesome descriptions! BUT...Jesus is God - He is on the throne of the universe and will be forever and ever! Jesus will rule the world to come! If you want to be on the right side of history, follow Jesus!

Fourth *Jesus is unique among all others, not one in a group of many as are the angels. Jesus is THE anointed ONE! Verse 9 “God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.” The ESV says “beyond your companions”. There are many angels; there is one Jesus! Jesus is above all! He is beyond all. He has no rival, no equal! We are to view him that way! He can't be just one of your interests, or one of your friends. He has to be above and beyond everything and everyone!

Fifth *Jesus has the most joy, even more than angels. Verse 9 again, “Your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions.” The Contemporary English Version says, “I appointed you and made you happier than any of your friends.” Jesus is happier than the angels. He is superior to angels in every way!

Jesus said, “I have told you these things so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete”. Jesus alone can give you his own joy! He alone can make your joy total or full! Angels can't do that. Your spouse can't do that for you. Changing spouses couldn't do that for you. Your sports team can't do that for you. Getting rid of all your problems can't do that for you! Changing jobs or going to another church can't do that for you. There really is no other way in the universe to get this kind of joy, except Jesus!

Verse 9 God tells the Son WHY he has been given such joy: Because “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness”. A love for righteousness and a hatred of wickedness does not make a person sour, or glum, or angry, but instead brings an anointing of gladness, joy and happiness! If we love what God loves, and hate what he hates, God smiles on us and fills us with his joy. Psalm 68:3 “Let the righteous be glad and sing for joy!”.

Sixth *Jesus is The Creator, not a created being, as are angels. Verse 10 “He also says, “In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.” The One who creates has to be greater than the one who is

created. Jesus is Creator. Angels are the work of his hands. Jesus is superior because he made everything that has been made, things in heaven and things on earth, things that are invisible, things and visible. All things have been created through him and for him! Angels exist FOR him! We exist FOR him, because he made us!

Seventh *Jesus is the LORD to whom everyone (even his enemies) will be in submission, angels are servants. Verse 13 “To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”? Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? God never promised an angel that he would bring everything and everybody under his rule. Only Jesus sits at his right hand. Only Jesus reigns. All rebels, all enemies, all mockers, will be brought from their proud position to be under HIS feet! The Jesus we profess has all power and authority!

How do we get beyond knowing we SHOULD think Jesus is awesome to REALLY feeling that way about him? How do we get beyond just knowing we SHOULD appreciate Jesus and begin to really love, value and appreciate Jesus? How to begin to walk in this sense of immense privilege, overflowing with gratitude?

*Eagerly delve into the book of Hebrews with us. This book declares and explains the greatness of Jesus and all he has done for us all the way through! Consider this a serious course of study!

*Pray for the Holy Spirit to impress upon you the value of Jesus. That is called revelation. If you see him as he is, that will push everything else you ever loved or were impressed with, into the background! He will become your magnificent obsession. “Worship starts with seeing you”.

*Start actually doing what Jesus said to do. Jesus said, “Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” Daily obedience results in seeing more of Jesus! So...

You actually start to love your enemy. You start bearing with others instead of complaining about them. You start forgiving others. You start seeking first the Kingdom of God, putting the things of God first in your life in real practice, in what you show up for. You pray in secret. And you find that Jesus shows himself to you!

*Begin to acknowledge his real presence with you continually throughout your day. Jesus said, “I will never leave you or forsake you”. Jesus is with me here in the car or office or by the kitchen sink. He with me in this problem, this need!

*Consciously put your confidence in him with that problem that is immediately in front of you. You stop worrying about your life and instead you boast that he will take care of you. Jesus said I will never leave you or forsake you, “so that we may CONFIDENTLY

SAY the Lord is my helper. What can man do to me!” Do you see the boast in that?! You begin to say confidently that Jesus really does have the answers to my life!

Real faith boasts in the Lord. There is a certain kind of swagger in real faith! I am not sure I really have reached a place of faith until it becomes a boast! The Lord is my strength!! Even if war rises against me, in spite of this I will be confident! So the message this morning is a call to boast in Jesus, to see his greatness, and wonder and to make that the thing you confidently exult and boast in!

The whole book of Hebrews is to get you to boast in Jesus! To boast of His superiority, his supremacy, his sufficiency, as Savior and Helper.

Lord Jesus,

We worship you as Lord and God and Creator and Ruler and King forever! We say you are awesome! And it is our immense privilege to belong to you!

Amen.