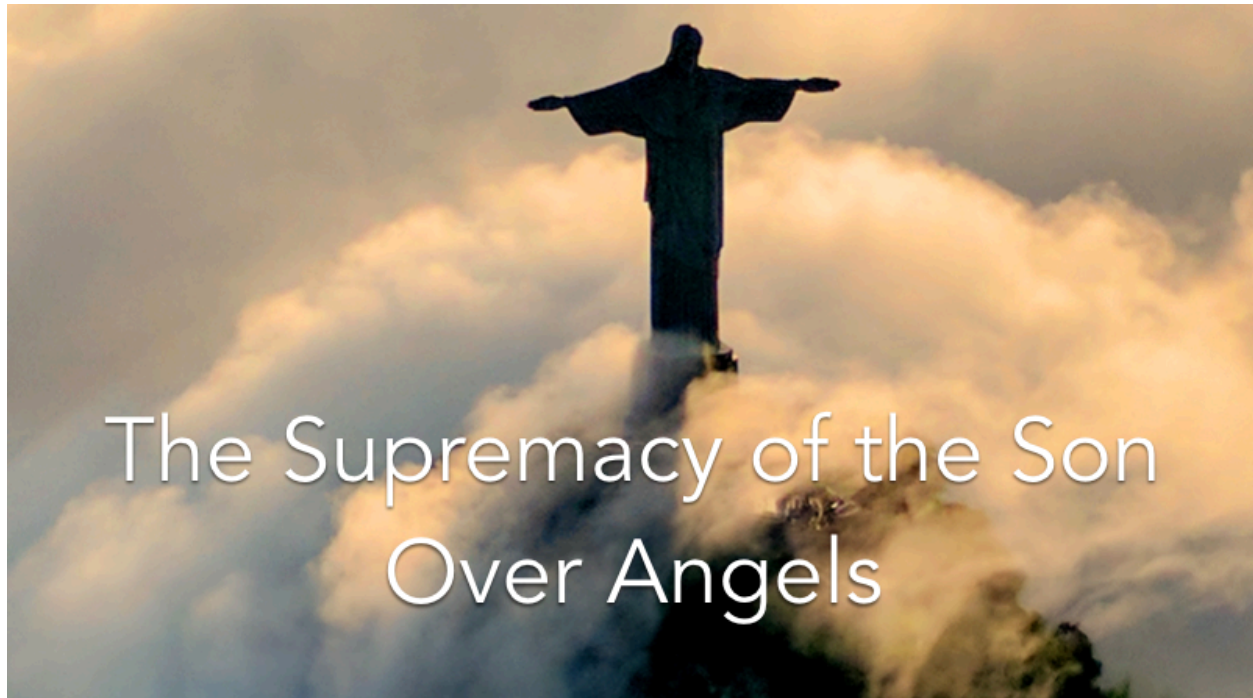


Sermon Series: *Hebrews: The Supremacy of the Son*



The Supremacy of the Son Over Angels

Introduction

Last week we began to make our way through the Letter to the Hebrews. The author jumped right in to his main point, which is that Jesus is the highest and best way that God has revealed himself to the world. Jesus is the most supreme means of divine revelation. In the past God spoke to us through the prophets, but now, in these last days in which we live, **God has spoken to us through his Son.**

Speaking to us through his Son is vastly superior to speaking through intermediaries and third party's, such as prophets because a son is much closer and more intimately related to the father than is someone who is merely a spokesman, or a servant. The author then offers us eight reasons why the Son is superior to prophets of old. We made our way through seven of those reasons last week. The Son is superior because:

1. The **Son is heir of all things**. No prophet is heir of all things.
2. **Through him God created the world**. He did not such thing through any mere prophet.
3. The **Son is radiance of God's glory**. The Son is as close and similar to the Father as sunbeams are to the sun. Nothing like this is ever said about any prophet.
4. The **Son is the exact imprint of God's nature**. The Son is exactly like the Father. He perfectly mirrors the character of God to the world. No prophet ever did this.
5. The **Son upholds the universe by the power of his word**. The Son maintains the continued existence of all things. This sun rises each morning and sets each evening because of the powerful command of the Son. No mere prophet does this.
6. The **Son is the one who made purification for sins**. No prophet ever gave his life to atone for the sins of God's chosen people. Only the Son willingly offered himself up as a substitute sacrifice for sinners who put their trust in God the Father. The only way to purified from your sins is through the Son. No prophet ever did this.
7. The **Son is seated at God's right hand**. After making purification for sins, after completing the saving work the Father sent him to do, the Son then sat down at the right hand of God. The right hand is the place of honor. The seat at God's right hand is reserved for only one person and this is the Son. There is one seat and one seat only at God's right hand. And here I need to clarify what I said last week.

These seven facts about the Son set him distinctly into a class by himself. The son we're talking about is Jesus of Nazareth. These seven truths lead us to the inescapable conclusion that there is no other person in the history of the world or in the of humanity like Jesus. He is unique. The claims of no other religion even come close to what is being here claimed of Jesus. Therefore, *Jesus and and Jesus alone is the only way any person can enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Salvation—enjoying the eternal kingdom with God—is possible only through this man. Jesus alone is the heir of all things. Through Jesus alone did God create the world. Jesus alone is the radiance of God's glory. Jesus alone is the exact imprint of God's nature. Jesus alone upholds the universe by the word of his power. Jesus alone made purification of sins. And Jesus alone is now seated at the right hand of power. Therefore, it is through Jesus alone that any person can enter heaven.

Last Sunday I said, "All roads lead to God, but only through Jesus can we happily enjoy God's presence." What I meant was that since every human being came from God, every human being will therefore return to him to give an account of our lives. Each one of us will either face him as Judge or as Father. It is only through faith in his Son, Jesus, that God will welcome anyone as Father. Outside of Jesus Christ, the risen & reigning Son, all persons will face God as Judge, not as Father. So you can be a devout person of any religion or

have no religion at and you will still end up standing before God as judge to answer for how you lived your life.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Because Jesus is the one through whom the Father ordained that sins be atoned for and forgiven, anyone who rejects Jesus will not have his sins forgiven or atoned for. Therefore, heaven will be closed to that person. God will judge the world through Christ¹, since through him alone has God made provision for purification from sins.

Acts 17:30-31 (ESV)

"The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

There's only one person who fits this description. There's only one person whom God raised from the dead. There's only one religion whose founder history has declared to have been raised from the dead. His name is Jesus. He is Christ, the anointed messiah. The son of David and the risen Son of God. This is why Jesus is so important. This is why we cannot stop talking about him. This is why the Letter to the Hebrews was written; to point people to Jesus because only through him can peace, purification, rest, forgiveness, love, acceptance, and eternal life be found. The Bible is very clear on this point.

Acts 4:12 (ESV)

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Salvation is found in Jesus alone, because Jesus alone is the Son of God. Salvation is not found through prophets, like Mohammad. Neither is salvation found through angels, like the Mormons teach. Neither is Jesus an angel, like the Jehovah's Witnesses teach. Jesus is the Son of God and the Son is superior to prophets and he is superior to angels, which brings us to the eighth reason why the Son is superior to all other messengers from God.

8. The **Son is a more excellent name than angel.** This launches us into the next step in the author's argument.

Son is Superior to Angels

Let's read the passage.

¹ Acts 17:30-31.

Hebrews 1:3-14 (ESV)

After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? (cited from Psalm 2:7)

Or again,

"I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? (cited from 2 Sam. 7:14)

⁶ And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

"Let all God's angels worship him." (cited from Dt. 32:43)

⁷ Of the angels he says,

"He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." (cited from Ps. 104:4)

⁸ But of the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

(cited from Ps. 45:6-7)

¹⁰ And,

"You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

¹¹ they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment,

¹² like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same, and your years will have no end."

(cited from Ps. 102:25-27)

¹³ And to which of the angels has he ever said,

"Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? (Ps. 110:1)

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Son Is a More Excellent Name Than Angel

Verses 4 and 5 make the argument that the name 'son' is far more excellent than the name 'angel.' It is far better to be called 'son' than 'angel.'

Hebrews 1:4-5 (ESV)

⁴ *having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.* ⁵ *For to which of the angels did God ever say, "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"?*

Angels are powerful beings. In Scripture, the near universal response when an angel appears is face-down, dumb-struck terror. In almost every Biblical encounter with an angel sent by God, the first words an angel speaks is, "Do not be afraid." There is good reason to fear angels. You'll recall that it was one angel who in one night took the life of every firstborn throughout the entire land of Egypt.² During the days of David God sent one angel to punish the nation and he struck down 70,000 throughout the land of Israel.³ And during the days of Hezekiah, after he prayed for deliverance, God sent one angel who in one night struck down an entire army of 185,000 Assyrians.⁴ Angels are mighty, terrifying, powerful beings. Being called 'angel' is a high honor and they are worthy of reverent respect.

However, being named 'angel' is nothing compared to being named 'son.' God says to Jesus, "*You are my Son, today I have begotten you.*" This is a quote from Psalm 2, which is a coronation psalm. This phrase was used in part of the coronation ceremony when Hebrew kings were installed on their throne.⁵

Being "begotten today" does mean that the king suddenly came into existence today but rather that he became king that day. It refers to him entering his royal office. It is as if God says of Jesus, "*You are my Son and today I have chosen you to be my royal representative to all men. You alone are my chosen & anointed one.*"

The point is that God never says anything like this of an angel. Angels are simply the servants of God. They are his ministers sent out to do his will in the world. No angel is ever named 'son.' Yet Jesus, on the other hand is named Son. He is intimately *related* to the Father. He is not merely a servant of God, like an angel. He is the *Son of God*. A son dwells in the house with the Father, while servants do not. Angels are created beings, while the Son shares his

² Ex. 12.

³ 2 Sam. 24:14-17.

⁴ 2 Kgs. 19:35.

⁵ Paul Ellingworth, [*The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*](#), New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1993), 111–112.

nature with Father.⁶ God the Father is in a unique and intimate relationship with the Son. No angel has this privilege. 'Son' is a far more excellent name than 'angel.'

The Son is God & Worthy of Worship

Verses 6,8, and 9 argue for the supremacy of the Son over angels because the Son is God and worthy of worship.

Hebrews 1:6 (ESV)

⁶ *And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."*

Hebrews 1:8-9 (ESV)

⁸ *But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." (cited from Ps. 45:6-7)*

If angels are great, mighty, and powerful, then how much greater, mightier, and more powerful is the one they worship? Worship is what the lesser does to the greater. Angels worship the Son. Since great and mighty angels are commanded to worship the Son, then we must conclude that the Son is superior to angels. If angels are worthy of respect, reverence, and obedience then of how much more respect, reverence, and obedience is the Son worthy of?

The Son is worthy of worship because he is more than a mere man. Angels aren't commanded to worship humans. Angels worship only God and yet verse 8-9 reveal to us that when the Psalmist wrote this he was actually writing about Jesus. Jesus is referred to as "God." *"But of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...' "God your God has anointed you"* to an eternal throne. This is describing what happened to Jesus after he was resurrected from the dead and then ascended into heaven. Jesus is acknowledged as being fully divine and having been granted an eternal throne. Jesus is enthroned at the right hand of God and from there he reigns forever and ever because he is God, not merely an exalted human man.

This claim is what makes Christianity distinct from every other religion in the world. Islam teaches that Jesus was just a prophet. Judaism teaches that he was just a misguided and mistaken rabbi. Yes, the followers of Jesus were so convinced that he was more than mere man, that he is God incarnate, that they were willing to die teaching this truth. John wrote,

⁶ The Son is "the exact imprint" of the Father's nature (Heb. 1:3).

John 1:1, 14 (ESV)

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."
"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."*

The Son is the eternal Word of God come in the flesh. Therefore, since the Son is now seated upon his throne, God commands all angles to worship him. If you have any respect for the power and authority of angels, then meditate on the fact that it is *they* who worship Jesus. If angels worship Jesus, then he must be God.

The Son is not just a mere man. The Son is God and therefore worthy of worship by angels and by men. If God granted Jesus an eternal throne and commanded angels to worship him, then let us all surrender to his sovereignty and rejoice in his reign. The Son of God is God and therefore worthy of our worship. This is not true of any angel.

Son is Eternal Creator

Verses 10-12 reveal the truth that the Son is the Creator of the earth and heavens and that he never changes nor will he ever die. The Son is THE Creator who is eternal.

Hebrews 1:10-12 (ESV)

¹⁰ *And,
"You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;
¹¹ they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment,
¹² like a robe you will roll them up,
like a garment they will be changed.
But you are the same,
and your years will have no end."*

Many people have thought that the universe is eternal. Sometimes it can seem like it. The sun rises and sets each day. The seasons come and go with great regularity. Year in and year out the earth generally looks the same. Storms come and go and yet mostly things return to their previous state. Even after great fires, forest eventually recover. Yet verses 10-12, which are cited from Psalm 102:25-17, teach that this universe had a definite beginning. Furthermore, it teaches us that God was that beginning and that God did his creative work through the Son. The earth and the heavens "**are the work of his hands.**" Jesus created all 100 billion stars in the sky as if they were simply clay in his hand. Jesus formed galaxies like a potter forms a coffee cup. This universe, which we're still exploring, Jesus created with the work of his hands. How powerful then is he?

This universe may seem eternal but it had a beginning and it will therefore have an end. Yet the power of the Son will never come to an end. The material elements of this earth will be changed like a garment. The Son will change the heaven's and earth one day like he would change a robe. He will shake out the old and wrap this world in a new robe. This heaven and earth will come to an end. They will both be replaced with a new heaven and a new earth.

But Jesus will *never come to an end*. He will never be changed. The Son will remain forever. Not only will his throne endure forever and ever, so will his person. My days and your days will come to an end, but his days will never end. My years will one day dry up, but the years of Jesus will continue on forever. He will never die again. He died once and therefore he cannot ever die again. God's rules demand that we die only once. What we do during the days of this one life that we've been given will then dictate where our souls will spend eternity. Remember, we're all eternal beings. We will either spend eternity in heaven with God the Father and God the Son, or will reject Jesus and spend eternity in hell being punished for our sins.

Angels are created beings. Jesus is not a created being. Jesus is the Creator. No angel created this world. All created things will one day wear out. Jesus will not wear out. Our years will one day come to an end. The years of Jesus will never come to an end. He remains forever. Therefore, he is far superior to any angel. Jesus is the eternal Creator. This can be said of no angel.

The Son is Served by God

The final premise in the argument that the Son is superior to angels comes in verses 13-14. The point is that the Son is superior to angels *because God serves the Son but angels serve him*.

Hebrews 1:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? ¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Angels are ministering spirits sent out to serve the children of God, *those who are to inherit salvation*. Angels are the servants of God. They are spiritual ministers (1:7) who go out in the world to do God's will. They are helpers sent out by God to help his children keep their faith and thus inherit the salvation that he has planned for them.

However, to what angel has God ever said, *"Sit down and relax at my right hand?"* The expected answer is of course, "None. No angel. God never said anything like this to any angel." In fact, God sends his angels out to do his will. He says to them "Go and do," but to the Son he says, "Come and sit. Relax at my right hand while I take care of your enemies and make them like a little stool for your feet."

This imagery is amazing. God the Father says to the Son, "You sit while I get you a foot rest." God the Father is here pictured as a servant of the Son. The Father invites the Son to have a seat while the Father remains at work bringing all his enemies in subjection under his feet.

Is there any angel to whom God ever said anything like this? No. Of course not. God the Father sent his Son into the world to do all his will. The Son perfectly obeyed, even to the point of death. Then, when the Son returned to heaven to be reunited with his Father, God then says to him, "*Sit down with me on my throne. Kick your feet up and I'll take care of all your enemies.*"

The Son is infinitely superior to angels. The Father serves the Son. God serves no angel. All angels serve him. The Son is therefore of incalculably more value and worth to the Father than any angel. Therefore, the Son should be of incalculably more value and worth to us. God the Father treasures and loves his Son. God is pleased with God the Son. Therefore, we should treasure and love the Son.

If we have respect and awe for angels, then how much more should we respect and stand in awe of the Son. If we are impressed with angels, then how much more impressed should we be with the Son. If we fear in the presence of angels, then how much more fear (i.e. respectful, healthy wonder and awe) will be in our hearts if and when we stand before the Son.

Conclusion

The name of Jesus is a far more excellent name than the name Michael, or Gabriel or the name of any other angel. Being called 'Son' is vastly superior to being called 'angel.'

Jesus is the Son of God. God the Father is happy to call him Son. The two of them are intimately acquainted. God never says of any angel "He is my Son." Only of Jesus does he say that.

And God commands his angels to worship his Son. No angel is to be worshiped. But the Son most certainly is to be worshiped, for God commands it. This means that the Son is God because God only commands God to be worshiped and never anything that is not God. God does not share his glory with fake gods.

Therefore, since God commands the Son to be worshiped, then the Son is God. The Son is eternal and he is creator. He will never grow old and die. Of his reign there will be no end. The Son is now seated at the right hand of God the Father. Therefore, worship him now with all your heart and soul.