



Hebrews 1:5-14 Better than the angels

Start by reminding yourselves of what we saw in verses 1-4. Why do you think angels get a mention in verse 4? (It might be helpful to glance ahead to Hebrews 2:2 to see where this whole argument is going....)

This passage aims to show from the Old Testament that Jesus is better than the angels.

What do you think of the idea that the Old Testament speaks about Jesus? Do you think this might cause issues for some people?

1. The Son enthroned (verses 5-6)

Look up the quotes from Psalm 2:7 and 2 Samuel 7:14. How does Jesus fulfil the Old Testament picture of kingship?

What does it tell us about the status of the Son that the angels are called to worship him?

NB. The quote *here* is from *Deuteronomy 32:43* in the Greek translation called the *Septuagint*, which was widely used in the first century. It was a verse used in the synagogue services, so would have been very familiar to first century Jewish

Christians. It may trouble people to find that this quote is not found in our English versions of Deuteronomy. The wording used in Hebrews is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, a set of 1st century documents discovered in Israel/Palestine in the twentieth century. Perhaps it preserves an older version of the text than the one used in our English Bibles. Small discrepancies like this don't need to shake our overall faith in the text of the Bible, but it is best to face up to the fact that it is a difficulty! It may be helpful to think that in the overall theological context, the fact that Jesus is the ultimate Word of God means that the different textual versions of the Old Testament are perhaps able to bear witness to him in different ways. If it is a big issue for anyone, feel free to direct them to me and I'll do my best to explore it with them.

2. The eternal Creator (verses 7-12)

How does Psalm 45 speak of the divine status of the Son?

Psalm 102:25-27 don't obviously speak of the Son in the original context. Why is it legitimate for the author of Hebrews to use these verses as he does here?

3. The Lord sat down (verses 13-14)

Psalm 110 is important for Hebrews in lots of ways. Take a look at verse 1 in its original context. What does it mean for us that Jesus is now seated at God's right hand?

Overall, do you think our society is becoming more interested in 'spirituality'? If so, how does the superiority of Jesus over the angels help us to speak into that?

How does this passage assure us that in Jesus we really see God revealed?

Thoughts for Junior Church

For younger children especially, it might be difficult to engage with the back and forth between the various Old Testament passages quoted here. On the other hand, the central idea that the Old Testament is fulfilled in Jesus is really foundational for the kids as they grow into the world of the Bible.

You might choose to focus on one of the images used - perhaps the image of the king from Psalm 2 and 2 Samuel 7. In that case, it could be useful to think about some of the promises made to the kings of Israel in those chapters, and how Jesus fulfils them.

Alternatively, you might want to major on the distinction between Jesus and the angels. It might be interesting to find out what view of angels, if any, the kids currently have! And then perhaps a simple compare and contrast through the passage:

Jesus is *God's Son*, the angels are *God's servants*.

Jesus has an *everlasting throne*, the angels are *just messengers*.
Etc.

If there are interpretive questions please do feel free to get in touch and I'll try to help.

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