

Hebrews 1-6

Jesus is Superior to Angels

Angels are spiritual beings created by God. The word “angel” means messenger, and they are chiefly messengers of God and ministers to mankind. They are stronger than Man, but not all-powerful; they are greater than Man in knowledge, but not all-knowing; they are able to move between heaven and earth, but they are not omnipresent.

Hebrews says that Jesus is superior to angels not only because he is God’s Son, God’s own “radiance,” (Heb 1:3) but also because he became “for a little while lower than the angels,” (Heb 2:7) in that he became a man.

How did Christ become “for a little while lower than the angels”? Read Philippians 2:6-11.

1. By his life as “fully man,” in physical body (e.g. John 4:6) and mind (e.g. Luke 2:52, Heb 5:8)
2. By the death to which he was subject (Heb 2:9, 5:7). Angels do not die.
3. By being subject to temptation. (Heb 4:15-16)

The humanity of Jesus helps us in what ways?

It is because of Jesus’ humanity that his death atoned for us all. Heb 2:14-18, 5:8-9

And because of his humanity, he is a priest understands us and identifies with us in a way no angel ever could. Heb 4:15-16

It was this miracle that the angels celebrated at the birth of Christ, shouting “Glory to God in the highest.”

Jesus is Superior to Moses and the Aaronic Priesthood

While Moses was one of God’s most faithful servants (Heb 3: 2, 5), and the priests were appointed by God, Jesus is God’s own son (Heb 3:1-6, 5:6-7).

Exhortations

The superiority of Christ leads to exhortations and warnings. The word “therefore” is used many times in Hebrews to encourage us, in light of the superiority of Christ,

NOT to...

- “drift away” Heb 2:1-3
- have a “sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God” Heb 3:12
- “fall short” of entering Christ’s rest by following the example of disobedience set by the Israelites Heb 4:1-11

but to instead...

- “hold firmly to the faith we profess.” Heb 4:14
- “fix” our thoughts on Jesus. Heb 3:1, 12-14
- make “every effort ... so that no one will fall.” Heb 4:11 (see also 2 Peter 1:4-6)
- “leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity.” Heb 6:1
- “show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.” Heb 6:11

The direst warning comes in Chap 6, when absolute apostasy is described, but immediately compared to the “anchor for the soul, firm and secure” that we enjoy.