

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

### "JESUS, KING OF ANGELS"

For individual study or group discussion

As we continue our Advent sermon series, *What Child is This?*, we consider the function and purpose of angels. The writer of Hebrews thus far has shown the supremacy of Christ in his roles as exalted ruler and the royal Son. In this week's passage, the Son of God is revealed as superior to the angels. **Jesus is the King of angels** as demonstrated by how *the angels worship the Son as his created servants* (vv. 6-7) and because *the Son is the righteous and eternal King* (vv. 8-9).

#### The angels worship the Son as his created servants (vv. 6-7).

Perhaps to a modern audience, the topic of angels conjures up images of *Precious Moments* figurines or maybe the battle-ready angels of Frank Peretti's best-selling novels. Neither of these characterizations represent what the Bible reveals to us about angels: their subservient role of executing God's divine commands and ministering to the Son of God. With glances back into the Old Testament, the author of Hebrews goes into great detail referencing the Scriptures, revealing Christ's superiority to the angels for his readers.

- In verse 6, we see Jesus referred to as the "firstborn" a term that indicates his eternal deity as the Son of God. Refer to John 1:14, Colossians 1:15 and 18, Philippians 2:6-11, and Revelation 1:5. Old Testament tradition defined "firstborn" as the eldest son who would inherit special privileges based on birth order. But according to these passages, how does Jesus inherit his privileges? How does the term "firstborn" point us to his Messianic role?
- Further in verse 6, the author points to Jesus' superiority by directing his readers to the Old Testament texts when he states, "Let all God's angels worship him." Refer to Deuteronomy 32:43 and Psalm 97:7. Note that the term "gods" in these passages is used to refer to the angels as John Calvin states, "*The Hebrew word, rendered angels, is Elohim—gods; but there is no doubt but that the Prophet speaks of angels; for the meaning is, that there is no power so high but must be in subjection to the authority of this king, whose advent was to cause joy to the whole world.*"<sup>1</sup>

#### The Son is the righteous and eternal King (vv. 8-9).

Have you ever witnessed a child who, after receiving a beautifully wrapped gift, prefers to play with the box rather than the present inside? Even after you have repeatedly offer the gift to the child, he ignores your appeals and plays with the box instead?

The author, in verses 8-9, presents the contents of the gift given to the Jewish Christians in the new covenant: Jesus Christ, the righteous and eternal King. The gift of God's Son is much better than the wrappings that the Law of the old covenant offered. Jewish tradition taught that the Law was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai by the angels. Therefore, the author demonstrates to his audience that because the angels serve and worship Jesus, he is better than the angels. He is the fulfillment of the law (Matthew 5:17) and God's precious gift. Verse 9 also uses Trinitarian language in order to identify Jesus and his exalted, Messianic role: "God, your God" refers to Father, "You" to Son, and "anointed" to Holy Spirit.

- Read Isaiah 61:1-3. What extent of restoration and renewal does Christ bring to his people as the Anointed One (v. 3)? Recall, from our studies in the *Gospel of Luke*, that Jesus began his ministry in the synagogue by reading this passage from the scroll of Isaiah (Luke 4:17-21). Discuss the ways in which our studies in Isaiah, Luke, and now Hebrews have deepened your understanding of the supremacy of Christ.
- Hebrews 1:9 echoes Psalm 45:6-7, a love song of the bride [Israel] extolling the virtues of her bridegroom [Christ]. How is Jesus' reign described?

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SPEAKER: Brian/Aaron

SERIES: Advent 2022

PASSAGE: Hebrews 1:6-9

## Family Dinner Table

### Angelology

Angels have been a long-standing American pop culture staple. Take, for example, the Christmas movie *It's A Wonderful Life* which features a guardian angel named Clarence. Clarence is on a mission to convince George Bailey that his life is worth living because the townsfolk of Bedford Falls value and love him. Author and professor Dr. Gene Edward Veith describes the culture's characterization of angels like Clarence: "The angelology of today's culture has the hallmarks of a domesticated religiosity. Spiritual beings 'are there for us.' Nice ones exist; mean ones do not. Unlike God, angels are on our level. They take care of us, but they are 'non-judgmental.' This new 'spirituality,' unlike traditional 'religion,' makes no demands, has no moral restrictions, and helps us feel good about ourselves. We get the good parts of religion — a sense of meaning, mystical experience, and life after death — without what Flannery O'Connor called 'the sweat and stink of the cross.'... Today's cultural cosmology is filled with sentimental angels and cynical demons, both of whom are assumed to exist on their own without the Lord of Hosts. This, of course, is how the real Satan wants it. His angels—whether in the guise of occult monsters, cute babies with wings, of angels of light bringing new revelations—seem to have free reign. And yet, one little Word can fell them."<sup>2</sup>

- What is the purpose of angels? Read Matthew 4:11, Luke 22:43, and Hebrews 1:6 and discuss as a family .

### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Salvation Army, supported partner ministry

### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Children's Nutrition Program of Haiti, world missions partner

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, John. *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*. StudyLight.org. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/cal/hebrews-1.html>. Retrieved 12/06/22

<sup>2</sup> Veith, Gene Edward. *Angels and Demons Go Pop Culture*. Ligonier.org. 07/01/2007. <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/angels-and-demons-go-pop-culture>. Retrieved 12/05/22.