

**A More Excellent Messenger**  
**Hebrews 1:4-14**

**Intro:** Who would have guessed that, in the 21 century, western civilization would become completely fascinated by angels? They are everywhere you look, there are angels: angel jewelry, angel posters, angel telephone "hot lines," angel "good luck" charms, angel toys and games. An astonishing number of new books have been written about angels, not to long ago there was a television show about angles and a couple of popular movies made about them.

Curiously enough, there was a similar preoccupation with angels among those to whom the letter of Hebrews was addressed. The preoccupation on angels or "angelology" can be traced through the Qumran or Dead Sea scrolls, literature and can be seen in the record of some first century rabbinical teaching. An energetic belief in angels also existed in the Greek culture of the time; particularly the teachings of the Gnostics, whose dualistic belief in two entirely separate worlds -- the spiritual and the material -- assigned great importance to the "mediating" ministry of angels. Some of the Gnostic teaching about angels had been absorbed into popular Jewish beliefs and therefore into early Christian beliefs as well.

The reason for this distortion came as a result of God's use of angels as His messengers to man. The people just assumed that they were somehow special and therefore elevated them to a place of worship and honor that God never intended. The writer of Hebrews, in our text this morning, is setting the record straight regarding angels or God's messenger.

The writer of our text today tells us the truth about angels and the fact that we have a more Excellent messenger than they.

**[Read Hebrews 1:4-14/pray/release Jr Church]**

I recently read about an e-mail that was making it's way around the internet; perhaps you've already received it. It says, **"When you find a penny, an angel has tossed it to the ground when you're frowning to give you a smile." At the end of the message it said, "I hope that you feel as lucky as I do, as I am so very fortunate to be graced with angels such as you in my life."**

There is some truth contained in that email but much more misconceptions than truth.

Shortly after 9/11 I remember receiving an email picture that someone had drawn and it simply was a picture of the NYC skyline with smoke rising out of it and as the smoke rose to heaven it changed into angels. The picture sent the message that everyone who died that day were somehow changed into angels our carried away into heaven by angels. Somehow, and the theologians aren't sure how or when it happened, but somehow the world has developed this idea that when we die we become angels. But of course that simply isn't the case; in fact the Bible teaches us that someday we will judge the angels.

Another distorted concept of angels is that every person has a guardian angel, and angel that looks after every person. There is a commercial on TV right now for Capital one where a man is running down the pathway to catch his plan. He is talking on his cell phone and not paying any attention to what he is doing. When he gets to where he would normally enter the plan the pathway has already been pulled away from the plan and he falls to the tarmac; immediately the scene changes to an angel who says I should have seen that one coming. The truth is, there are a few places in scripture that might indicate that selected people and selected time have angels that look after them, for example very young children (Matt 18:10), and those who come to Christ (Luke 15:9-10). Some have said the Rev 1:20 indicates that each believing congregation has a guardian angel looking over it and Rev 12:7-8 certainly indicates that there will be a time when the angels of heaven will fight the battles for God's people. But the idea of each person having a guardian angel simply isn't a Biblical teaching.

The author of Hebrews is telling us that God has in these last days sent a more excellent messenger than the angels; He has sent us His Son who is **a more excellent messenger**. What makes Jesus a more excellent messenger? One who can be trusted more than the angels?

**Jesus is a more excellent messenger because of...**

1. **His Excellent Name** Vv. 4-5

a. **He is Son**

- i. Angels collectively are sometimes referred to as "...sons of God..."
  1. Job 1:6, "**Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.**"
  2. No angel has ever been given that name individually
- ii. This name, Son, is uniquely reserved for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- iii. There are two quotes here in verse 5:
  1. First Ps. 2:7 "**...Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee...**"
  2. Second 2 Sam 7:14 "**...I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son...**"

b. **He is Jesus Christ**

- i. There are several angles named in scripture:
  1. Michael = His name means "**who is like God?**"
  2. Gabriel = His name means "**Man of God.**"
  3. Satan = He is given more than 40 different names; all however, express all the different aspects of his one and only characteristic – His evil nature
- ii. The Lord Jesus Christ has a more excellent name than all of these.
  1. **He is not merely mighty like Michael; He is Almighty**
  2. **He is not just a messenger like Gabriel; He is, Himself the Word**
  3. **He is not only a star like Lucifer; He is the Son**
- iii. Other angels came as ministering spirits; they were sent to minister or attend Him:
  1. Attend at His Birth
  2. Attend at His Resurrection
  3. And they will attend His Return
- iv. What is this more excellent name? Jesus the Christ the very Son of God.
- v. **No angelic name can compare with the name of God's son – Jesus Christ.**
  1. Jesus means = *Jehovah-saved*
  2. Christ means = *anointed of God*
  3. Jesus' name is above the name of all the angels because only He was anointed by to save the world.

c. **His name can Change things**

- i. **His name will change a filthy sinner into a saint, "...for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12**
- ii. **His name will change a cripple into a servant, "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. <sup>7</sup>And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. <sup>8</sup>And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. <sup>9</sup>And all the people saw him walking and praising God." Acts 3:6-8**
- iii. **His name will change an atheist into an apologist, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; <sup>11</sup>And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:10**

- d. Phil 2:9 tells us, "**...God...hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:**"

Jesus is a more excellent messenger because of...

2. His **Earthly Fame** Vv.6-7

- a. Not only does He have an excellent name but He also has **earthly fame**.
  - i. The experts differ on whether verse 6 should read "**And again, when he bringeth...**" or "**And when he again bringeth...**"
    1. It may not seem like a big deal which way you read it but there is more than 2000 years between the two views.
    2. In some ways it really doesn't matter which way you read it
      - a. Angels worshipped Him when he stepped off His throne to be born in that barn in Bethlehem, waking the sleeping Judean Hills with their songs of praise.



3. Not so with Christ.
  4. The authority under which He governs is upheld by His personal integrity.
- vi. **Christ's spirituality** is seen next.
1. **"...God, even they God, hath anointed thee..."**
  2. God's anointing added a spiritual dimension to the ministry to task for which a man was called.
  3. Moses anointed Aaron; Samuel anointed David; Elijah anointed Elisha – a priest, a prince, a prophet, each anointed for his office and each anointed by another man.
  4. The Lord has been anointed by God
  5. There is no higher anointing than that.
- b. **The Glory of His Power** V. 10
- i. It was He who both founded the earth and fashioned the heavens
  - ii. We read, **"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands."**
  - iii. Oh, what power indeed:
    1. Power to launch into space more worlds than man can count
    2. Power to bring forth from nowhere countless stars and their satellites
    3. Power to toss them into unusual orbits throughout intangible space and with invisible ties to hold them whirling and moving with such mathematical precision that we can predict the visit of a comet or the occasion of an eclipse years in advance.
- c. **The Glory of His Permanence** V. 11-12
- i. Although the suns and stars will perish, He will remain unchanged.
  - ii. Motion produces friction; friction produces wear; wear produces disintegration
  - iii. The whole material universe is like some vast clock slowly running down
  - iv. Our sun is burning out at the rate of 4,200,000 tons of heat every second.
  - v. Without any direct, catastrophic intervention from on high, all things will eventually fold in upon themselves.
  - vi. Because stars and universes have their life cycles.
  - vii. Astronomers have photographed the rubble and debris of stars that have exploded and vanished from the sky; but verses 11-12 say, **"They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; <sup>12</sup>And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."**
  - viii. A billion, billion years from now the Lord will still be sitting upon His throne, deathless In His energy and force, presiding over the destinies of yet unborn worlds and ages.
  - ix. What a contrast with the decaying and obsolete ways of our world today!
  - x. We have made our way out of that decaying life style and today we align ourselves with the permanent Christ.
- d. **The Glory of His Position** Vv. 13-14
- i. **"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? <sup>14</sup>Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"**
    1. No angel has ever been invited to share God's throne.
    2. Satan, the only one who tried to grasp that throne, was hurled shamefully out of heaven
    3. Angels, even the greatest and mightiest of them, are t servants of those whom Christ redeems.

Conclusion: