

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Jan 2014

Hebrews

The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

Lesson #2: Superior to Angels

INTRODUCTION

Why do you think people in the secular world find it so easy to believe in angels?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Note: There are 108 direct references to angels in the Old Testament and 165 in the New. Angels were created before man, primarily to render special worship and service to God. They are spirit beings without flesh and bones, but do have bodies and can appear in human form. They are highly intelligent and have emotions. They do not marry and are unable to procreate (apparently created simultaneously) but each is a unique identity. They are not subject to death. A third of them fell but still exist as demonic beings. Angels are highly organized and divided into ranks of a very complex organization. We know some of their names. Their support of God's activity may have led to many of the Jewish misconceptions about the importance of angels, sometimes putting them before God. (Col 2:18)

Read Hebrews 1:4-14

Note: In biblical times, names related to character or some other aspect of a person's life.

1. What title (name) makes Christ better than the angels? Why?

Note: Even though He was anticipated in the Old Testament (Pr 30:4) He did not receive His title until He was "begotten" into time. This deals with the challenging concept of relationships associated with the Trinity – God the Father and God the Son. He has always been God, but at incarnation he gained the title "Son". Some say His sonship began at His birth, others say His "sonship" came into full bloom at His resurrection.

2. Why was His birth different from angels? From man?

3. What difference does it make that angels worship Him? (v. 6)

Note: To Jews, "first born" held special significance as a title, heir to the father's entire estate.

4. What is the significance of Jesus being called the first born?

5. Many people say that Jesus was just a special man, one of many angels or a prophet. How does verse 8 express God's claim of Jesus' deity? Jn 5:18; 10:30, 33

6. What difference does it make that Jesus' kingdom represents righteousness? Vv 8,9

Note: "In the OT God's character is described as "just" or "righteous." The Mesopotamian term itself comes from a river reed which was used as a construction tool to judge the horizontal straightness of walls and fences. God chose the term to be used metaphorically of His own nature. He is the straight edge (ruler) by which all things are evaluated. This concept asserts God's righteousness as well as His right to judge."¹

7. How does Jesus' existence show His superiority over angels? (vv 10-12) Jn 1:1; Heb 13:8

8. According to verse 14, what is the destiny of angels?

9. Why is Christ's destiny superior to that of angels? Phil 2:10

APPLICATION

How can you nurture a proper perspective of angels and Jesus?

What new role can Jesus play in your Christian walk?

¹ Utley, R. J. (1999). *Vol. Volume 10: The Superiority of the New Covenant: Hebrews*. Study Guide Commentary Series (15). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.