

HEBREWS 1:9-14

"Jesus Who Created All Things Has The Power To Save Eternally"

This morning we're going to end the first chapter of Hebrews, but by way of reminder, the latter part of the first chapter is primarily dedicated to comparing the servants of God, who in this case are the angels, with the Creator of those servants who is Jesus Christ.

The idea being that we need to always keep in mind that our Lord Jesus is God and He is above all Kingdoms and authorities because He is the One who has created all things, therefore all things are in subjection to Him.

For this reason we can be encouraged in our faith in Christ because we know that our Lord is able to save and to deliver and to be with us to the very end as He gives us the grace and strength to love and serve Him in this world as we look forward to the next with Him.

We saw this comparison of angels to Jesus as we ended last week.

Hebrews 1:7-8 And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." But of the Son *He says*, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

And so the Son is clearly identified as God who rules over all and whose identifying characteristic is righteousness. For this reason the writer of Hebrews continues that thought in the next verse.

Hebrews 1:9 "YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS."

This verse, like most of the preceding verses in the first chapter of Hebrews, is a verse which is taken from the O.T. It comes from Psalm 45:6-7 and once again we see a specific example of how the writers of the O.T. were actually speaking of the Son of God, whether they fully realized it or not.

In this case it speaks of Jesus, who we're told loves righteousness and hates wickedness. This speaks of the just and holy God whom Jesus is. This by the way hasn't changed. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. He still loves righteousness and hates wickedness. We find forgiveness in Christ, but don't think that it makes no difference to Him that we may choose to sin instead of walking in His righteousness.

But because our Lord Jesus always delights to act according to His holy and perfect nature the Father is pleased and we read at the end of verse 9 ... "therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

The idea here is that Jesus is being anointed by the Father. In the O.T. we see how God anoints His Kings to serve Him as He sets them apart for a holy purpose. We see this very clearly in 1Samuel.

1SA 10:1 "Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, "Has not the LORD anointed you leader over his people Israel? You will reign over the LORD'S people and save them from the power of their enemies round about. And this will be a sign to you that the LORD has anointed you leader over his inheritance:"

We also see this in 1KI 1:39-40 "Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" And all the people went up after him, playing flutes and rejoicing greatly, so that the ground shook with the sound."

The anointing with oil in the case of anointing a King of Israel was a sign that God was choosing and empowering that person to serve Him and carry out God's will among the people. It was also a sign that the Holy Spirit was the One anointing him for the task as he relied on the Spirit's power to accomplish what God had set before him.

Jesus demonstrated this when, during the beginning of His earthly ministry, He was reading in the Synagogue from the prophet Isaiah.

ISA 61:1-3 "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor."

You'll remember that at the end of that reading Jesus told those gathered that those words were being fulfilled that day in Himself. By this Jesus was saying that He was anointed by the Father to accomplish our salvation. When the writer of Hebrews speaks of Jesus being anointed with the oil of gladness what he has in mind is, not only Christ fulfilling that which pleases the Father and Himself, but that His anointing covers us with a gladness because of the salvation He's given us.

We see this in PSA 133:1-3 "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore."

Aaron was a priest of God and Jesus Christ is our High Priest. His anointing with the oil of gladness isn't limited to Himself, it runs down His beard and on His royal robes and as we are hid in Christ, as we are united to Christ by faith, that oil, if you will, runs on us and covers us with a gladness that we belong to Him and that we too have been anointed with the Holy Spirit who enables us to love and serve our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

And hopefully, after the example of Israel rejoicing, because of the anointing of their new King Solomon, may we be able to say of Jesus, "Long live the King!" And all the people went up after him, playing flutes and rejoicing greatly, so that the ground shook with the sound." (1KI 1:39-40)

That's rejoicing, and that's what the oil of gladness found in our Savior can do for us if we're willing to love and to submit to our King Jesus.

Now, once again, the writer of Hebrews elevates Jesus to His rightful place as God and Creator as we continue in verse 10.

Hebrews 1:10-12 And, "YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT, AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END."

As we've noticed the contrast that is between Jesus and His angels, we now see the contrast between Jesus, who is eternal, and His own creation which is temporal. Jesus Christ is the very God who created all things.

In fact, this is the way the writer of Hebrews begins this letter.

HEB 1:1-2 "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe."

Let me give you three verses which we've seen before over the last two to three weeks as we've studied Hebrews. Again, keep in mind that it is Jesus Christ who is being referred to in each instance.

COL 1:16-17 "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

1CO 8:6 ..."yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live."

JOH 1:3 "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

With this in mind does this help in putting into perspective that Jesus, my Jesus and Savior and yours, has not only loved us as He died in our place on that cross, but has also shown Himself to be very God as He rose from the dead and who is the same Jesus who made the universe. Can I trust this Jesus with my life, both here and now and for eternity?

The answer is a resounding yes! This Jesus will see me through. This Jesus has anointed me with His Spirit. This Jesus has given me eternal life. This Jesus is Creator who is Almighty and who loves me with an everlasting love. I can; I must trust this loving Lord and Savior now and forever.

John 6:38-40 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day."For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

John 10:27-30 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. "I and the Father are one."

There's the tendency to look at the creation of God and our participation in it as though it was in control of our lives. And because of that perspective we don't see Jesus as the Almighty One, we see Him as a by-stander who seems to allow the world to bowl us over at times.

This simply isn't the case. We sometimes conclude that because His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are beyond ours that He has no intention of entering into our situation or into our lives in a way where He is personally involved. Again, I must remind us all that He entered into this world expressly to personally enter into our lives. And as Creator God He may be infinitely above us, but He's not divorced Himself from any part of our lives and that's why we need to trust Him and love Him.

We see this, as the comparison between the eternal and the finite is made by the writer of Hebrews. Speaking of the works of Jesus' hand we read this.

HEB 1:11-12 "They [the works of God's creation], will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end."

As hard as it is for us to sometimes let go of this world it's essential that we do because it will not last, but our Lord will and so therefore we must hold on to Him with the understanding that He is holding on to us and will never let us go.

As we continue in our text we see, once again, that the writer of Hebrews brings this comparison between Jesus and His angels back into focus.

Hebrews 1:13-14 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET "? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

The point here is that none but the Son of God could ever assume such a position of royalty and supremacy over all creation. Psa.110:1 is where we find this passage quoted above.

Psalms 110:1-4 ^{NAU} A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, *saying*, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies." Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You *as the*

dew. The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

This O.T. passage is ultimately speaking of Jesus Christ. And the inference is that the Father has given all things unto Him and has given Him all rule and judgment. The enemies of God are the enemies of Jesus and they will not stand on the day they are judged by our Lord. They will become His footstool to the degree that all who have rejected Him will be subjected to His final authority and judgment. God always has the final word.

Angels are not referred to as those who will be able to have such authority. This is given only to the Son. There is no comparison between the creature, be it humans or angels, and God the Son, and this is the point the writer of Hebrews wants to drive home.

But this doesn't mean that such creatures as angels don't play an important role in the Kingdom of God. We see this in the last verse of our text.

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Every one of God's people and His angels play a role and we need to understand what these roles are and how each are used by God to further His will. In the case before us the angels play a vital role.

I'd like to spend the rest of our time this morning giving you some insights into the role angels play in your life as well as mine. But always keep in mind that angels are not the ones to be elevated, but Jesus who uses them in our lives.

Angels are said to be ministering spirits and that they are sent out to render service. It's interesting that the Greek word for service is *diakonia*. You might recognize the word. A very close word in the Greek is diakonos, and it's where we get our English word deacon.

We recognize deacons as those within the body of Christ whose ministry is service to the body. And so, in a very real way angels are deacons appointed by God to serve those who will inherit eternal life. These deacons however are not chosen by the church, they are chosen by the One who is the foundation of the Church, Jesus Christ Himself.

But these Christ chosen deacons of the heavenly realm have a unique ability to serve God's people in a way where they are not restricted in the same way that you and I are restricted in this world. Next week we'll be looking into the nature of angels, (ie., are they purely spiritual only?). Angels are certainly unique in that they can certainly move in and through both this physical world we call earth and also serve at the throne of God in the present heaven.

As ones who are ministering to you and me this makes their job much more effective, because they're not limited to the same physical restrictions you and I have. If we personally want to minister to someone in Japan we would have to take the time to get a plane ticket, go to the airport, hop a jet and travel for a few hours, land in some airport where we rent a car and travel to our destination.

Not so with angels. God sends them and they arrive in moments. But notice in verse 14 that they are ministering spirits who are sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation." All ranks of heavenly angels are included here. They are all at our disposal as God sees fit.

The mightiest of angels are servants for us. Angels carry on a variety of functions. We read in PSA 91:11 "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;" and so our protection is one of their functions. I've shared this story before but it demonstrates this protection.

When I was a brand new believer in Gainesville, Fl. it was winter time and in my room I had a space heater to keep it warm, and so I had it cranked up as high as it would go. I was out in the living room reading when all of a sudden I was startled by someone who was exhorting me to immediately go into my room.

Now this was not someone I could see and it wasn't even someone I could hear, but it was quite distinct in my spirit that I had to get up immediately and go into my room. It was so profound that I immediately got up and ran into the room to find that the space heater's cord had gotten so hot that it had started on fire and was dripping drops of fire onto the rug; all of this directly under a curtain which would have caught on fire. The whole place would have gone up in flames had not one of God's ministering spirits alerted me to the problem.

We also see that angels will also guide us in certain ways. We read in GEN 19:15-16 "With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished." When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them."

More times than we may realize God has guided you and me through His angels. He may have guided you to take a different route home knowing that danger was there, or He may use His angels to guide you to a person whom the Lord wants you to minister to. All the while we may think its coincidence when in fact it's very likely an angel was instrumental in that instance.

Many times an angel may be used to encourage us.

JDG 6:12 "When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."

Have you ever been down and felt like the dirt of the earth when you were prompted to go to God's word and you open the word and find yourself at just the passage that encourages your heart and lifts your spirit?

Or maybe the Lord uses a message like this to speak to your heart and maybe you didn't want to come this morning. Maybe, just maybe, an angel was used to get you started this morning so you would be here.

Angels are used by God to encourage in just these ways as well as in many other ways, which again we may see as coincidence when in fact the Lord saw your need and sent one of His messengers to minister to you. Remember Elijah?

1KI 19:1-8 "Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them." Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God."

Angels can also deliver us from harmful situations. ACT 12:7-9 "Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision."

Sometimes the Lord may use an angel to enlighten us of certain things that we may not have known.

MAT 2:19-21 "After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead." So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel."

Here the angel actually entered into Joseph's dream. But Joseph was able to distinguish between just a dream and the reality of a message from God in that dream and he took immediate action.

It's not beyond the possibility of God to have an angel give you direction in a dream, although I would caution anyone to use discernment when trying to interpret every dream as from the Lord with some hidden message.

Angels even have the ability to strengthen us in times when we're weak. Even Jesus was ministered to in such a way and was strengthened by an angel.

LUK 22:42-44 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."

How he strengthened Jesus we can only guess, but it may very well have been just to comfort and be there as a friend while reminding Him of the Father's love, maybe quoting from His very word. Again, we must understand that if the Father knew of Jesus' needs in His despair He knows ours as well and will assist us with His strength.

People have always been intrigued by angels. Even today there seems to be a resurgence of angelology and it's not uncommon to see programs on T.V. which are devoted to angel encounters people have. They give their testimonies of how they were saved from a car wreck by an angel or were pulled from a raging river by an angel.

And it's most certainly true that angels do all of those things. The problem with all of this attention, which the world focuses on the supernatural and angelic, is that they define what the supernatural is according to their wisdom.

And in the process they bring attention to such spiritual encounters which are anything but from God. You see there are two groups of angels; those who followed God and those who rebelled. Those who followed God serve Him as they serve us and they give the glory to God.

There are those angels who are out to deceive the world. And what better way to do it than with false signs and wonders which are religious in nature. What better way to do it than by doing good things in the world and then pointing people to the angelic experience as an end in itself, or worse, to point people to themselves as though they were deserving because of their own goodness to be visited by an angel.

We hear of spiritual apparitions all the time which come in the form of biblical characters, not the least of whom is Mary the mother of Jesus. We often hear of miracles associated with such appearances. And yet what is the message this alleged Mary gives? Pray the rosary, seek Mary for help in time of need, do good works which will ensure your salvation, erect shrines to Mary and then make pilgrimages.

The true gospel isn't given and people remain in their sin all the while thinking that they've been touched by God when in fact they've been deceived by the father of lies. This is what invariably happens when people worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator, even when that creature happens to be spiritual in nature.

There is much much more that could be said of angels, but the writer of Hebrews simply wants us to put all things into perspective, which includes angels. The angels love serving God as they minister to us and they possess great power, but with all their power they are infinitely inferior to their Creator God, Jesus Christ.

One thing I should point out here is that God doesn't need angels to accomplish His will. He doesn't need anyone and yet He has graciously allowed them to personally enter into our lives as they serve Him. In like fashion God allows us to be used by Him to minister to one another and to the world with the greatest news this world could ever receive.

As I said earlier there is a great deal of biblical information regarding angels and we didn't even scratch the surface today. Next week we're going to take a little different direction in regards to

angels and much of what we'll find in the word of God regarding angels are things we may have never thought about. Are angels in fact spiritual, physical or both?

Do angels have wings? Are angels ever depicted as women as well as men? Are Seraphim and Cherubim around the throne of God a particular class of angel or something else entirely? We'll answer these and other questions on the subject of angels since there is so much confusion regarding this special class of servant. But no matter the importance of angels even they would be the first to draw attention away from themselves and direct it to their God and Creator.

Revelation 22:8-9 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. But he said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God."

The object of our message, the object of our salvation, the object of our eternal life is Jesus Christ and He is none other than our Almighty God who can accomplish all things when the things of this world can only ultimately fail.

When we keep our eyes on Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith we will be less likely to place our eyes on this world or the flesh or any situation in life which would try to crowd Him out.

May we ever realize the greatness of our God and Savior and like David may we exclaim...

"O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you." (PSA 63:1-4)