

Jesus Christ, Superior to Angels, Part 2

Scripture: Hebrews 1:7–14

Code: 1603

INTRODUCTION

The book of Hebrews was written to exalt Christ--to show the Jewish reader that Christ is superior to everything and everyone. Our blessed, matchless Christ is the supreme Person of the book of Hebrews, just as He is in all the universe.

A. The Theme of Scripture

Throughout Scripture, the person of Jesus Christ is exalted. He is the theme of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.

1. Matthew 5:17--Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Christ was the fulfillment of Old Testament truth.
2. Luke 24:27--Jesus said the following to two disciples on the road to Emmaus: "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures [the Old Testament] the things concerning himself." The law, the prophets, and the writings make up the Old Testament. So Jesus taught concerning Himself from the Old Testament.
3. Luke 24:44-45--Jesus said to His disciples, "These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." No one, whether he is Jew or Gentile, will ever understand the Old Testament until he understands it in terms of Jesus Christ.
4. John 5:39--Jesus told the Jewish leaders, "Search the Scriptures [the Old Testament]; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."
5. Hebrews 10:7--"Then said I [Christ], Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me)."

The theme of the Old Testament is the Person of Jesus Christ. Although His life is not explained until the New Testament, He is nonetheless the theme and fulfillment of the Old Testament. But Jesus is also the theme of the New Testament. The apostle John said the following was the purpose of writing his gospel, which could well be the purpose of the whole New Testament: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). Jesus Christ is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments.

Consequently, it is no wonder that Jewish people who adhere to the old text have trouble interpreting it. They cannot understand it apart from Christ.

B. The Transition of Scripture

Whatever the Old Testament concealed of Christ, the New Testament revealed. Whatever the Old Testament contained of Christ, the New Testament explained. Whatever the Old Testament gave in precept about Christ, the New Testament gives in perfection. Whatever the Old Testament presented of Christ in shadow, the New Testament presents in substance. Whatever the Old Testament presented of Christ in ritual, the New Testament presents in reality. Whatever the Old Testament presented of Christ in picture, the New Testament presents of Christ in Person. What was foretold is fulfilled; prophecy became history.

1. Its completion

a) The veil that lingers

The New Testament presentation of Jesus Christ closes the meaning of the Old Testament. Second Corinthians 3:14-16 says, "Their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." There is no way that anyone will ever understand the Old Testament apart from understanding and knowing Jesus Christ. The veil remains until they turn to Christ. That's why it is so difficult for the majority of Jewish people to understand the Old Testament. In Judaism today there remains only a small group of Orthodox Jews; the great majority have wandered off into liberal Judaism because they cannot adhere to rituals that have no meaning apart from fulfillment.

b) The veil that is lifted

The writer of Hebrews gives this message to his people: Jesus Christ removes the veil and not only brings understanding of the Old Covenant, but also brings a better covenant because it explains the Old. Everything in the Old Testament is not obsolete; there remain basic principles and eternal truths of God. Everything did not pass away, only some things. The forms, types, and rituals passed away because the reality has come. But the principles of morality and God's attitude toward sin remain the same.

2. Its change

a) The temporary Old Covenant

Hebrews speaks of the temporary nature of the Old Covenant in the sense of its forms.

(1) Hebrews 8:13--"A New Covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and groweth old is ready to vanish away." That does not mean everything God said in the Old Testament is no longer true--that you now can covet, murder, or do whatever you want because Old Testament morality is gone. It means that the forms, rituals, types, pictures, and symbols of the Old Testament are no longer necessary because the reality has arrived.

(2) Hebrews 10:1--"For the law, having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make those who come to it perfect." The Old Testament sacrifices couldn't make a man perfect; they were merely pictures of Christ, who alone could bring perfection.

(3) Hebrews 10:9--"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." The tendency of the Jewish believers was to receive Christ and then hang onto the rituals of Judaistic symbolism. The writer of Hebrews is saying, "You've got the New, let go of the Old. You can't mix the two."

(4) Hebrews 11:40--"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Perfection was not provided for in the Old Covenant: there was only a picture of it. The perfection came in the better thing--the New Covenant.

Throughout Hebrews are other statements regarding the change from the Old to the New. For example, the Aaronic Priesthood needed to be changed because it was inadequate, and so did the rituals of Israel (7:12). The Old Testament priests were only a shadow of the heavenly Priest, Christ (8:1-5). The sacrifices were abolished (9:12-15). The old covenant was not faultless, so it decayed and vanished away (8:7, 13). The Old Covenant was merely a temporal shadow of things to come.

b) The eternal New Covenant

When we open up the book of Hebrews we see that the New Covenant isn't a shadow at all--it's the real thing. It isn't a picture; it's a Person. It's not the imperfect priesthood; it's the perfect Priest. It's not repeated sacrifices that couldn't alleviate sin; it's the one sacrifice that took care of sin once for all.

In Hebrews everything is eternal. We read about eternal salvation (5:9), eternal judgment (6:2), eternal redemption (9:12), eternal inheritance (9:15), and an eternal covenant (13:20). The New Covenant is eternal; the old was temporal and passing away.

The Old Testament principles and morality are still good. The things that are taught about God and man are still valid. But all the ritual and forms are gone because the reality has arrived. The heavenly High Priest has come; you don't need the priests of Judaism. The once and for all sacrifice has been accomplished, so we're to forget the continual sacrifices. Once the reality has come, the ritual, which prefigured it, is no longer needed. The Holy Spirit is saying this to the Hebrew Christian: "Make a total and complete break with Judaistic ritual. You don't need it so don't hang onto any of it." To the unsaved Hebrew He is saying, "Recognize the better covenant. Turn to Jesus Christ and embrace it."

Substituting Ritual for Reality

Many churches today are ritualistic. But you need to realize that there is no point in symbols, types, and liturgy because the reality in Christ is here. Why would I want to lead you in rituals that symbolize Jesus when I can say, "Let me take you to this verse and show you what it says about Him." The coming of Christ spelled the end of ritual.

It is tragic that the church today, like the early Hebrew Christians tended, has hung onto symbolism and rejected the reality. Symbolism is unnecessary. The Lord told us that only two symbols are important: one, the Lord's table, which remembers the cross; and two, baptism, which testifies to our identification with Christ. Apart from those two, no ritual belongs in the church of Jesus Christ. We are not to spend our time in forms and symbols when we have the reality. Many people think they are religious because they practice ritual, but they are substituting ritual for reality and form for a relationship. The tragic thing about those people is that so many of them are lost in the patterns of ritual and have missed the truth. We don't need pictures or illustrations; we have the realization of everything in Jesus Christ because He is the key Person in the New Covenant. Once He arrived, the rituals, types, and pictures were replaced by the reality.

REVIEW

To prove that the New Testament is better than the Old, the writer of Hebrews must prove that Jesus is better than anyone or anything attached to the Old Covenant. If it's a better covenant, it must have a better mediator. So the book of Hebrews attempts to prove that Jesus Christ is superior to

everything and everyone connected to the Old Covenant. So far we have learned that the Old Covenant was mediated to men by angels, and that the Jewish people revered and esteemed angels higher than any other created being. So if the writer is to show that Jesus is a better mediator with a better covenant, he must prove that Jesus is better than angels.

The proposition of Hebrews 1:4-14 is in verse 4: "Being made so much better than the angels." For a short time Jesus became lower than the angels (in His incarnation), but He was then exalted above them once more. Jesus was made lower in the sense that he became a man; He was not lower in the sense of His deity. The writer gives us five ways that Jesus is better than angels: His title, His worship, His nature, His eternity, and His destiny.

I. HIS TITLE (vv. 4-5)

II. HIS WORSHIP (v. 6)

LESSON

III. HIS NATURE (vv. 7-9)

Here the Holy Spirit shows the basic difference in the nature of angels and of the Son, Jesus Christ.

A. The Nature of Angels (v. 7)

"And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."

1. Their creation

The Greek word for "maketh" is poieo, which means "to create." The antecedent of "who" is Christ. So who created angels? Christ. And if Christ created angels, He must be greater than they are. Hebrews 1:2 says, "By his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds [Gk., aionas]." Christ made the entire universe. John 1:3 says that nothing was created without Him. Jesus made the angels, so we know they are created beings.

Hebrews 1:7 also indicates that the angels are Christ's angels--they are His possession. Verse 7 is a quote from Psalms 104:4. So again the writer of Hebrews uses the Old Testament to verify the superiority of Christ over angels.

2. Their characteristics

a) Rapid movement

The word "spirits" can also mean "wind." Angels are spirits, but because of the comparison with fire, we will interpret it as "winds." Why would angels be called winds? Because of their invisible, powerful, and rapid movement.

b) Fierce judgment

Verse 7 also call angels "flames of fire." Angels not only move rapidly to carry out God's bidding, but also are flames of fire. The phrase "flame of fire" fits in connection with divine judgment. So we see that angels are God's executioners. They mete out judgment on the earth.

(1) Genesis 19:13-16, 26--This is a familiar passage dealing with the prelude to the destruction of Sodom: "We [two angels] will destroy this place, because the cry of them has become great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spoke unto his sons-in-law, who married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law. And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men [angels in the form of men] laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him outside of the city" (vv. 13-16). Those angels were sent to destroy Sodom, and they had to take Lot and his family by force out of the city. Lot's wife was warned not to look back, but she did and was turned into a pillar of salt (v. 26). So angels appear in Genesis 19 as executioners.

(2) Psalm 78:49--"He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them." I don't believe that "evil angels" refers to demons; I believe they are angels of judgment. God sent his angels of judgment to bring anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble.

(3) Matthew 13:41-42--"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them who do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." In the Great Judgment angels are the executioners. In Hebrews 1:7 we see that angels are winds--they are powerful, swift, and invisible--and they are also agents of judgment. But most significantly, they are beings created by Jesus Christ and possessed by Him. Angels are created servants. They do not operate on their own initiative, but on the direction of God and Christ.

B. The Nature of Christ (vv. 8-9)

What is the difference between the nature of angels and the nature of Christ?

1. In eternity (v. 8)

a) The proof of deity (v. 8a)

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever"

The difference between angels and the Son is that the Son is the eternal God. People who say Jesus was just a man, an angel, a prophet, or some inferior god are lying and bringing upon themselves the curse of God. Jesus is God. The Father acknowledges the Son as God.

I believe verse 8 supplies us with one of the most powerful, clear, emphatic, and irrefutable proofs of the deity of Christ in the Bible. And there are many verses that corroborate it.

(1) John 5:18--"The Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." Jesus all along claimed equality with God.

(2) John 10:30-31, 33--Jesus said, "I and my Father are one.... The Jews answered him, saying, For

a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." The Jews understood Christ's claim, and that's more than I can say for a lot of so-called Bible scholars.

(3) Romans 9:5--This verse discusses Israel "whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." The King James translators put a comma before God instead of after. The verse should say, "Who is over all God, blessed forever."

(4) 1 Timothy 3:16--"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

(5) Titus 2:13--We're to be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

(6) 1 John 5:20--"We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God."

b) The rule of eternity (v. 8b)

"A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom."

The scepter is the symbol of rule. Jesus Christ rules eternity. He is the eternal King with an eternal Kingdom and a sceptre of righteousness. He rules justly and righteously.

2. In His incarnation (v. 9)

"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore, God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

a) His motives (v. 9a)

"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity."

Those words reveal not only the actions of Jesus, but also His motives.

(1) He loves righteousness

Christ didn't just do righteous things; He actually loves righteousness itself. How many times have we obeyed without joy, in an attitude of unwilling condescension?

(a) James 1:17--"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

(b) 1 John 1:5--"This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." God never varies. He's total light--perfect righteousness. If Jesus is God, then He must love righteousness and hate iniquity. And He does. Everything Jesus did sprung from His love for righteousness.

(c) Psalm 119:97--"Oh, how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day."

(2) He hates iniquity

Since Jesus Christ loves righteousness, He also hates iniquity. The word "iniquity" is anomia in the Greek text and means "lawlessness." Since Christ loves what is right, He would hate what is wrong. The two are inseparable. One cannot exist without the other. You cannot truthfully say, "I love righteousness, but I also like sin." Yet most of us act that way. When there is true love for God, there will be true love for righteousness and total hatred of sin. Jesus hated sin. You see it in His temptation, His cleansing of the Temple, and His death on the cross. The more you and I become conformed to Jesus Christ, the more we will love righteousness and hate sin. You can determine how close you are to being conformed to Christ by your attitude toward righteousness and sin. Unfortunately, most Christians would have to agree that although they love righteousness, they also love sin to a degree.

b) His majesty (v. 9b)

"God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Some commentators think the word "fellows" refers to men, but that's not the issue of the passage. The Greek word for "fellows" refers to an association--an association of messengers. Angels are God's messengers, but Christ is a greater messenger. Christ is exalted above the angels.

(1) The meaning of Christ's anointment

Verse 9 says that God anointed Christ. The only one who was ever anointed was the king. That was God's design in the Old Testament. When Jesus Christ was anointed, that indicated He was greater than angels. In Acts 10:38, Peter told Cornelius how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth.

The Old Testament anticipates God's anointed in Psalm 2:2. David is the type of the Lord's anointed. The word in the Old Testament for the coming Redeemer was the "Anointed One," which is transliterated "Messiah." The word "Christ" also means "Anointed One."

(2) The time of Christ's anointment

When was Christ anointed? When He went to heaven after His resurrection. It was at that time that the Father exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name (Phil. 2:9). He assumed his kingship at his ascension. He hasn't brought all His kingdom together yet, but someday soon He will. Jesus has a greater nature than angels. Hebrews 1:8-9 establish Christ's deity and His exalted position. It mentions His kingship. It reveals the excellence of His rule. It shows the perfection of His incarnate character. It displays His willing submission to God. It announces His coronation. And it reveals His preeminence.

IV. HIS ETERNITY (vv. 10-12)

The Holy Spirit quotes Psalm 102:25-27 to show that Christ is better because He is the eternal Creator.

A. The Creation (v. 10)

"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands."

To create in the beginning, Christ must have been before the beginning. Thus He is without beginning. John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word." If Christ laid the foundation of the earth and created the heavens, then He must have populated it with angels. So He is the creator of angels.

B. The Contrast (vv. 11-12)

"They shall perish [the heavens and the earth], but thou remainest; and they all shall become old as doth a garment, 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."

Jesus is no creature. He is eternal. He is immutable, which means that He never changes. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." The writer contrasts the passing of the temporal with the eternal.

The things that look so permanent will fold up someday. In 2 Peter 3:4, after being warned of God's judgment, the people say, "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Don't you believe it! Hebrews 1:11 says, "They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall become

old as doth the garment." When clothes get old, you throw them away. Then verse 12 says, "And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up." Did you know that God is going to roll up the heavens?

1. Revelation 6:14--"The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." During the time of the Tribulation, the heavens, as if stretched to all corners, rolls right up like a scroll. That's what's going to happen to the sky. The stars are going to fall to the earth. Every island and every mountain will be moved out of their places. The whole world is going to fall apart.

2. Revelation 8:7-10, 12-13--"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mixed with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and, as it were, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as though it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.... And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day shown not for a third part of it, and the night likewise" (vv. 7-10, 12). Verse 13 indicates that the next trumpet would be even worse. Our earth and sky, as we know it, is headed for a collapse. When the Bible says, "They shall perish," that's exactly what will happen.

Although creation will perish; Jesus will not. He will create a new heaven and a new earth. Men, worlds, and stars are subject to decay. But Jesus Christ never changes, and He is never subject to change.

V. HIS DESTINY (vv. 13-14)

The destiny of Jesus is greater than angels. The writer closes with the seventh Old Testament quote from Psalm 110:1. First he presents the destiny of Christ, and then the destiny of angels.

A. The Destiny of Christ (v. 13)

"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

1. An eternal reign

a) The theology

The destiny of Jesus Christ is that ultimately everything in the universe will be subject to Him.

(1) Philippians 2:10--"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." According to God's plan, Jesus Christ is destined to be the ruler of the universe and everything that inhabits it.

(2) 1 Corinthians 15:23-28--"Every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign,

till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet.... And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Only in His Sonship is Christ subordinate to God. Under His feet are placed all the kingdoms, authorities, and powers of the world.

b) The time

Christ puts everything in subjection under Him when He comes in glory at his second coming. Revelation 19:15-16 says, "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." The destiny of Jesus Christ is an eternal reign.

2. An eternal rest

Hebrews 1:13 says that Christ sits. There is never any mention in Scripture of angels sitting. Why? Because their work is never done. Fortunately, Christians are able to rest.

a) Hebrews 4:9--"There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God."

b) Revelation 14:13--"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors."

No angel sat down, but Jesus sat down because His work was over.

B. The Destiny of Angels (v. 14)

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

The destiny of angels is to serve forever those who are the heirs of salvation--and that's us! What are they going to do for us?

1. Protecting the saints from danger

In 2 Kings 6 Elisha and his servant were being menaced by the King of Syria, and they didn't have any way to defend themselves. Verses 15-17 say, "When the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! What shall we do? And he answered, Fear not; for they who are with us are more than they who are with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." Those were angels. They protect the believer from temporal danger.

2. Delivering the saints from danger

It was angels who took Lot and his family out of Sodom. It was angels that stopped the Lion's mouth when Daniel was thrown into a lion's den (Dan. 6:22).

It is marvelous to know that angels minister to us. And their destiny is to minister to us throughout eternity!

Jesus' destiny is to reign. Thus He is better than angels. We have discovered that the Son of God is superior to angels in every way through an examination of several Old Testament passages. Jesus is the Messiah. He is God in human flesh. He is the mediator of a New Covenant that is better than the Old. We have seen the deity of Jesus Christ established by His divine names: Son, Lord, and God. We have seen His deity established by His divine works: He created the universe and sustains it; He redeemed mankind and will eventually rule over all. His deity is established by divine attributes: He is omniscient, omnipotent, unchanging, and eternal. And His deity is established by the worship He deserves: He is the one to be worshiped by the angels and all creatures in the universe.

As a warning to those who would ignore what he wrote about the superiority of Christ, the writer of Hebrews says, "Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (2:1-3)? If God expected such a positive response to the law, which came through the angels, what response does He expect concerning the gospel, which came through Jesus Christ?

Focusing on the Facts

1. What is the theme of the Bible? Support your answer with Scripture.
2. Discuss the transition of Scripture.
3. How can the veil be removed that lays over the hearts of the Jewish people in general (2 Cor. 3:14-16)?
4. How does the book of Hebrews describe the temporary nature of the Old Covenant?
5. What are some of the eternal things Hebrews discusses?
6. What happened to the rituals of Judaism once the reality, Jesus Christ, came to man?
7. Who created the angels? What is the significance of that (Heb. 1:7)?
8. Why are the angels called "flames of fire" in Hebrews 1:7?
9. What is the main difference between angels and Christ (Heb. 1:8)?
10. Name some verses that corroborate the deity of Christ.
11. According to Hebrews 1:9, what motivated Jesus?
12. What will most Christians find out about themselves the more like Christ they become?

13. When was Christ anointed?
14. What can be inferred from the fact that Christ created the earth in the beginning?
15. What does it mean that Christ is immutable?
16. Describe what will happen to the earth during the Tribulation (Rev. 8:7-10, 12-13).
17. What is the ultimate destiny of Jesus Christ? When will that occur?
18. How do angels serve God's people?

Pondering the Principles

1. The Hebrews had to learn that they no longer needed to hang onto their rituals because the reality came in the form of Jesus Christ. Perhaps you, although not in the same way as the Hebrews, are hanging on to rituals. They can be in the form of a ritualistic approach to going to church, serving on a certain committee or in a ministry, or even reading the Bible. Certainly we should do those things, but not as a matter of ritual. Are there some other things you are doing in a ritualistic manner? What do you need to do to change your ritualistic approach to one that is motivated by a love for Christ? Deepen your relationship to Christ by reading and studying His Word daily. In addition, ask God to show you how you might get to know Christ better.
2. Hebrews 1:9 says that Christ loves righteousness and hates iniquity. Name some of your actions that reveal you love righteousness and hate iniquity. Are there some actions in your life that reveal you hate righteousness because you love sin? What are they? One of the best treatments of righteousness vs. unrighteousness is in 1 John. Spend the next half hour reading through 1 John. Record every verse reference dealing with righteousness and unrighteousness, noting the attitude and actions of those who adhere to each. Then determine how you might apply the most significant passages to further your active love of righteousness.

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