



Sunday School Lesson
Hebrew 1:1-14
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Higher than Angels



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How would you help Christians being pressured to abandon their faith in Christ? These are being pressured to adopt another religion. This was the dilemma facing the writer to the Hebrews. Not only what could the best arguments be, but also what form of written expression would work best. Choices! Choices! And for a terribly serious issue.



The so-called Letter to the Hebrews isn't actually a letter, at least not in the form of letters of the first Christian century. In fact, it doesn't even claim to be a letter itself. In Heb. 13:22, the self-designation is "[my word of exhortation](#)" (τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως), which clearly marks the document as a Jewish homily in written expression. Thus the writer felt that the best way to present his arguments in favor of Christ was in a format very familiar to his Jewish Christian readers. In this form, the ideas about Christ and the responsibilities for Christian discipleship can be easily combined and interwoven. To persuade his readers of the legitimacy of Christianity, the writer argued that Christ as God's Son and our Savior makes tremendous demands upon those who follow Him.

But how to make the point of Christ being valid? These readers were not dummies. They had a deep background in Greek culture and ideas, but were also very deeply shaped by their Jewish heritage. How to speak to such an audience? Best through a skilled combination of the best aspects of both the Greek and Jewish backgrounds of his readers.

Thus we modern readers, who have very little background in either of these cultures, come to the book of Hebrews and often are puzzled by its contents and patterns of argumentation. Or, else we naively read our ways back into the text and turn the document into something different. The challenge then is to get into the Greek / Jewish world of the first Christian century. We can better grasp the ideas of this very important document of apostolic Christianity.

Our study tackles the first part of the presentation of Christ as the Son of God who stands at the center of our Christian faith.

I. Context

Relevant background material from the [previous studies in Hebrews](#) will be incorporated into this study. New materials will be added as they become necessary to our study of chapter one.

a. Historical

External History. Although in some older English translations the title of the book is “The Letter of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews,” this title was not a part of the original writing of the document. In reality, it was added several centuries after the writing of Hebrews in order to identify the document as it became a standard part of the New Testament documents. And it reflected a dominant viewpoint at that time. Yet, one should notice the location of Hebrews in the New Testament. The thirteen Pauline letters are listed in descending order of length beginning with the longest -- Romans -- down to the shortest -- Philemon. The exceptions to this are where two letters are written to the same church or individual. In those instances, the length of the first of these determined the position of both letters. The sevenfold General Letters section follows a similar pattern beginning with James and concluding with Jude. Hebrews is tucked between these two sections reflecting a partial association with Paul as his ‘fourteenth’ letter, but isn’t positioned lengthwise after Romans, where it should be as a full member of the Pauline corpus of letters.

To a large extent, in the early centuries of Christian interpretation, the authorship of Hebrews remained an open question. Since the time of the Protestant Reformation, the dominant view of NT scholars -- both Protestant and Roman Catholic -- is that Paul did not write it. Then who did? No one knows with certainty! As Werner Georg Kümmel puts it in his NT Introduction,

Since the author of Heb keeps his identity completely in the background—only the close connection with Timothy (13:23) points to the Pauline circle, if indeed the well-known companion of Paul is intended—the most diverse possibilities have been proposed, of which the following may be mentioned:

1. Paul. This proposal is represented nowadays even from the Catholic standpoint only very rarely⁶² and has proved to be untenable (§26.3).

2. Luke. Clement of Alexandria (see §26.2) on the basis of the kinship of style with Acts held that Luke was the translator of a letter written by Paul in Hebrew. But Heb is not a translation and varies so sharply in

style and theological distinctiveness that the author of Acts as the author of Heb is not really to be considered.

3. Clement of Rome. The old hypothesis which was already known by Origen (see §26.2) founders on the impossibility of conceiving that Heb and I Clem are the work of the same man, as well as on the assumption of literary dependence of I Clem upon Heb.

4. Apollos. Considered by Luther and represented with vigor by Bleek, this hypothesis has found many adherents.⁶³ This Jewish-Christian biblical scholar from Alexandria, who was also instructed in Greek rhetoric

(Acts 18:24 ff) and who carried on a mission alongside Paul but independently of him (1 Cor 1:12; 3:4 ff; 16: 12), could be conceived of as the author of Heb. But we do not know

whether Apollos was active as a writer, and it cannot be proved that he was the only one among the Christian διδασκαλοι of the apostolic times who could have written the letter to the Hebrews.

5. Barnabas. In accordance with the tradition attested by Tertullian, Barnabas has frequently been proposed as the author of Heb.⁶⁴ But could Barnabas, a Levite from Cyprus (Acts 4:36) who later took up residence in Jerusalem and was a highly regarded member of the community there (Acts 9:27; 11:22) have so completely abandoned the position of the primitive community with regard to the law and the cultus? Could he have been so rhetorically trained and so Hellenistically oriented as to become the author of Heb?

It is in reality no longer possible to determine the identity of the author. This conclusion was reached by Origen and has been adopted from the time of Eichhorn and De Wette down to and including most more recent scholars.

Because of the limited information available, only a few images of the author of Hebrews can be understood from inside the document itself. This is summarized well by Fred Craddock in the *New Interpreter's Bible*,

The author was a Christian who lived and thought within the apostolic tradition (Heb 2:3). Timothy had been a companion in ministry and might be again (Heb 13:23). The writer was temporarily distanced from the readers but expects to return to them soon (Heb 13:19, 23). Their situation is known in great detail,

Hebrews is a Jewish Christian sermon written anonymously to Jewish Christians encouraging them to remain committed to Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinful humanity.

either through their leaders (Heb 13:7, 17, 24) or by direct association. The writer joined strong pastoral concern with the authority of either person or office. Both the instructions and the exhortations of the letter reveal a person well educated in Greek rhetoric as well as in Judaism, especially Hellenistic Judaism formed in part by the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament. The Greek translation and not the Hebrew text provides the major lines and the subtler nuances of the writer's argument and appeal."

William Lane (Word Biblical Commentary, Logos Systems) contributes more to the internal profile understanding:

- * He possessed an architectural mind; he affirms a thesis and then develops it by way of analysis.
- * The writer's rhetorical skill is universally recognized.
- * The writer was evidently well educated by Hellenistic standards.
- * The writer may be characterized as an intensely religious man.
- * The writer, finally, was a pastoral theologian who adapted early Christian traditions to fashion an urgent appeal to a community in crisis

When and to whom was this document written?

The ancient title "To the Hebrews" reflects an early tradition that the first readers were Jewish Christians. But this is not entirely certain. The contents of the document somewhat suggest this but other ways of explaining the content can also be made with persuasion. The more common time frame for the writing of this document is toward the end of the first Christian century, although many NT scholars find indications inside the letter suggesting it was written closer to the middle of the first century. Again, Craddock summarizes the issue well by saying,

If we broadly identify the readers as Hellenistic Jewish Christians, perhaps the best guess for their location is Rome. When the writer says, "those from Italy

send you greetings" (Heb 13:24 NRSV), it is not clear whether the expression locates the writer or the readers in Italy. Similarities to 1 Peter, a letter written from Rome (1 Pet 5:13), argue for a Roman origin. However, early knowledge of Hebrews by Clement of Rome indicates a Roman destination, and what we know of the house churches in Rome makes that city a likely candidate as the location of the addressees.

My reading of this material leads me to the conclusion that the dating of the writing seems to be during the 60s of the first century, as implied from a few historically oriented markers inside the document, particularly in regard to the anticipated near destruction of the temple. But even these indicators are not precise. The place of writing and the destination of the document are less clear. The later added title "To the Hebrews" most likely indicates at least a later belief that the document was written to Jewish Christians. The *Conclusio* section, 13:18-25, which is the only true letter aspect of the document, does strongly suggest a group of Christians in a specific location, rather than Jewish Christians everywhere like James 1:1 indicates. But no internal markers give clear indication of where that location might have been. The strong Hellenistic tones of the content of the document do suggest that these Christians were residing somewhere outside of Palestine.

Internal History. The time and place markers inside chapter one are limited mainly to the narrative frame of the writer. In his rather formal prologue, vv. 1-4, his concern is with the OT prophets in this distance past, and the era of Jesus' public ministry in the near past. With the interpretative use of OT scriptures in vv. 5-14 time and place markers are scarce and do not play any significant role in the understanding of the passage. When they do surface, we will discuss them in the [exegesis section](#) of this study.

b. Literary

Genre. The issues relating to literary form arise at two levels. Although the document is labeled a letter, the only part of the entire document that follows an ancient letter format -- unlike all the letters of Paul -- is the last part, the *Conclusio* in 13:18-25. And it is very traditional in this. Interestingly, 13:22 calls the document a *παράκλησις* (*paraklesis*), that is, a sermon, as is reflected in the NRSV translation, "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, bear with my word of *exhortation*, for I have written to you briefly." Most NT scholars will call Hebrews an ancient sermon or homily, written somewhat along the lines of an ancient Greek epideictic oratory used to

confirm certain values and/or to praise significant individuals.

Inside chapter one, two distinct literary forms can be found. Verses 1-4 comprise a formal prologue (*ὁ πρόλογος*) in the style of ancient prologues. The origin of ancient [prologues](#) in the ancient world seems to arise from Greek theater, where the play writer would have an actor pose as a Greek god suddenly appearing to give the audience a synopsis of the content of the play to follow. This was done in a tantalizing manner to create interest and curiosity in the play. Literary use of this device served to introduce the basic position of the philosopher in the tractate. This

position would be developed and defended in the remainder of the writing. Consequently, a variety of patterns emerged in ancient literature, somewhat dependent on the style and intention of a particular writer.

The New Testament reflects some of this diversity with the scattered use of the Prologue. These are found in [Luke 1:1-4](#); [John 1:1-18](#); [Hebrew 1:1-4](#); and [1 John 1:1-4](#). Revelation [chapter one](#) somewhat moves in this direction as well.

The common intent is the same as that found in the Greek philosophical tractates and ancient Greco-Roman biographies: to lay a summarizing foundation for the remaining contents of the document. The NT pattern is mostly the construction of a single very long, syntactically well balanced sentence. That is the case in all but Jhn. 1:1-18, but [that prologue](#) (cf. [Greek text version](#)) has a very well defined literary balance, just with multiple sentences.

The second literary pattern in chapter one is found in verses 5-14. This material illustrates a very commonly used pattern of ancient Jewish scribal argumentation for a view point using scriptural texts as the authority base. One can examine these patterns in the various early layers of the [Jewish Talmud](#). The writer to the Hebrews makes particular use of passages from the Psalms to communicate his point of the superiority of Jesus to angels. See the [exegesis](#) below for treatment of individual OT texts; also cf. the [Rhetorical Analysis](#) section in the larger internet version of this study.

Thus what we can observe from the outset is that this writer was able to draw from well known

and widely accepted patterns of writing in both the Greco-Roman and the Jewish cultural traditions of his time. His skillful and insightful use of these literary forms added persuasiveness to his viewpoint.

Literary Context. Again the literary setting of our passage crosses two lines since two distinct pericopes are contained in the study.

Verses 1-4, as a Prologue, quite naturally come at the beginning and set forth the basic premise of the entire book: *although God had used the OT prophets as instruments of communication in the past, now the primary means of God speaking to through His Son Jesus Christ.* To a targeted readership with a deep religious heritage in Judaism, such a view point would certainly need explanation and defending. And that would have to be very persuasive if it were going to be effective. Every available skill in the art of persuasion would need to be utilized for the writer to make his case.

The subsequent contents of Hebrews is oriented to achieving this objective of explaining and defending the thesis set forth in the prologue.

The thematic emphases in the book stress Jesus' relation to angels (chaps. 1-2), to Moses and the Law (chaps. 3-4), to the priesthood and covenant (chaps. 5-12a), and finally paraenetical admonitions (chaps 12b-13a). The only traditionally letter aspect comes in the Conclusio in the second part of chapter 13. Verses 5-14 then plug into the first part of the discussion that compares Jesus to angels. Chapter two continues and expands that discussion in new directions.

II. Message

Literary Structure. From the discussion above, the internal arrangement of ideas in chapter one is clear: (1) the Prologue (vv. 1-4) and (2) the comparison to angels, part one (vv. 5-14). This will be the organizing structure for our study of these scripture verses.

a. Prologue, vv. 1-4

Greek NT

1:1 Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως πάλαι ὁ θεὸς λαλήσας τοῖς πατράσιν ἐν τοῖς προφήταις 1:2 ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων ἐλάλησεν ἡμῖν ἐν υἱῷ, ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων, δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας· 1:3 ὃς ὢν

NASB

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

NRSV

1 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. 3 He is the

NLT

1 Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. 2 But now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through

ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς, 1:4 τοσοῦτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτοὺς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

the Son he made the universe and everything in it. 3 The Son reflects God's own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of his command. After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven. 4 This shows that God's Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is far greater than their names.

Notes:

That God spoke through His messengers to His people is central to both Judaism and Christianity.

This single Greek sentence represents some of the finest and most polished Greek expression found anywhere in the New Testament. Only Luke 1:1-4, also a single sentence and a prologue, rivals it for top position. And yet, the two prologues are very different in their contents and orientation. The Lukan prologue is modeled after those typically found in ancient Greco-Roman biographies (βίος). But that in Hebrews has more of the ancient philosophical tractate orientation. And interestingly, both prologues are centered on a presentation of Jesus Christ as Son of God and Savior.

For a visual representation of the structure of this prologue in Hebrews see the [Block Diagram](#) in the larger internet version of this study. From that one can easily see that the core idea of this long sentence is simply: "God has spoken" (ὁ θεὸς . . . ἐλάλησεν). The book of Hebrews works off the foundational premise that God has spoken over the centuries. The verb tense as well as the expansion elements in this sentence make it clear that the writer was looking into the past to find indication of God having spoken to those from his day backwards to the time of the Old Testament. Also, one should not overlook the particular Greek verb used. Λάλεω (*laleo*) means and stresses oral speaking, rather than speaking through written means or other ways. Speaking through written

forms would necessitate alternative Greek verbs, such as λέγω etc. Thus the focus is upon how God orally communicated to His people.

The **expansion elements** focus on two means of speaking, both of which are humans rather than books: the prophets and Jesus. The prophets in the distant past and Jesus in the immediate past. Thus the writer reflects the perspective of his day that oral communication is far superior than written communication. The Jewish layer on top of that universal conviction was that divine revelation comes primarily through God speaking to individuals. What He communicates can and often times was written down, but not until late in Israelite history, and even the words of Jesus were not put in written record until some three plus decades after he spoke them.

For ancient Judaism and for Christianity, the belief that God speaks to His people is central. Thus the words of God spoken through individuals divinely commissioned to speak in God's behalf become the foundational authority determining the parameters of legitimate religious conviction. For Jews, Moses and the OT prophets stand as the primary authorized spokesmen for God. But for Christians, Jesus becomes an additional spokesman, and the apostles stand as commissioned spokesmen for Jesus after his ascension to Heaven. In Roman Catholic tradition, the pope through a doctrine of apostolic succession continues to speak for Jesus like the apostles. But Protestant Christians vigorously rejected that claim beginning with Martin Luther in the 1500s. Only Jesus and the apostles represent the

Down through the centuries God has spoken in two time periods. First He spoke to and through His prophets in the Old Testament era. Secondly, at the beginning of the last days of this present age He has spoken to and through His Son.

New Covenant spokesmen for God, in addition to the OT spokesmen.

Thus the idea of sacred scriptures in Judaism and in Christianity is grounded in the belief that these writings faithfully represent what God authorized these individuals to say in His behalf.

How did God speak according to the writer to the Hebrews? The expansion elements off the core declaration set forth several rich concepts.

In the sentence pre-field, that is, the modifiers in front of the central verb, two central points occur: God spoke in the past to the fathers by the prophets and in the last of these final days He has spoken again.

How did God first speak? **(1)** To the fathers (τοῖς πατέρας). This is translated either “to the fathers” (NASB) or “to our ancestors” (NRSV; NLT). The reference is obviously more than the writer’s and his readers’ own fathers. It alludes back to those who lived during the time of the Israelites, particularly those from the time of the prophets onward. In reality, it includes the Jewish ancestors who were the heart of the Jewish people during those centuries. **(2)** God spoke “in many and various ways” (Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως). These two adverbs have a variety of meanings in ancient Greek. Combined together as here they most likely suggest many times, many kinds of ways, and many types of ways. One point clear both here and in the OT text itself is the “many times” or “many fragments” aspect. Neither the OT nor the NT stand as one continuous speech of God to His people. Implied in this is something very important: *the Bible is not a systematic theology, nor a religious textbook*. It **contains** various theological perspectives and it **contains** the religious history and traditions of ancient Jews and early Christians. There is no place anywhere in the NT, for example, that contains a “Four Spiritual Laws” to salvation! Part of the reason for this is implied here: God spoke at various times and in various ways.

Together the emphasis is upon the full gamut of possible ways for God to reveal His will to the prophets for them to speak that will to the people. He came to the prophets in dreams, in visions, in theophanies, in direct oral communication -- among some of the ways. The diversity of meanings, which can’t be captured by just two English adverbs, is reflected

in our three translations: “in many portions and in many ways” (NASB); “in many and various ways” (NRSV); “many times and in many ways” (NLT).

The time marker “long ago” (πάλαι) helps distinguish the divine voice to the prophets from the latter “in these last days” (ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων). Also, it makes it clear that the fathers are not recent fathers; rather, they are those in the OT era.

To whom did God speak? **(3)** The prophets (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις). Is this a reference to the written records of their preaching? Or, to their preaching itself? The consistent emphasis on orality in the language of the Greek text favors the former, but does not exclude the latter, so long as it is understood as the record of the oral communication of God to the prophets and then through them to His people.

With these words the writer affirms the Jewish religious heritage of his initial readers. This heritage was important and had been the shaping influence in their lives leading into their Christian commitment. Becoming a Christian, contrary to what they were being told, did not mean abandoning that heritage. Instead, it meant affirming it in new and vital ways.

The second past tense time marker is “in these last days” (ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων). The phrase is potent with rich meaning. The writer still reaches back in time from his day, but to the time of Jesus’ early ministry several decades prior to the writing of this material. But, the characterization of that time reference is “last days.” A frequent apocalyptic Jewish thought structure with Christian modification is used here, and is found numerous times throughout the New Testament. All of time divides into two periods: this present age, and the age to come. The age to come in intertestamental Judaism was the era of divine blessing to be established by the Messiah upon his coming at some future time. The present age began with creation and would continue until the coming of the Messiah. A variety of characterizations can be found in apocalyptic Jewish writings: lawlessness, covenant Jews being persecuted and killed; Gentiles ruling over Jews etc. In the Christian adoption of this perspective the same traits remain generally in place but the characterizations tend to be more generalized, such as that of Paul in Gal. 1:4 “the present age of the evil one” (τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστώτος τοῦ πονηροῦ). One markedly



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difference made in the Christian adaptation is what we encounter here in Hebrews. The time toward [the end of the present age](#) is labeled the “last times / days.” [Variations of this](#) surface among different Christian writers. But generally, the first coming of Jesus marks the beginning of these last days, while the second coming of Jesus brings this present age to a close. This is the time frame clearly understood by the writer to the Hebrews. The second era in which God has spoken is the beginning of this last days marked by the earthly minister of Jesus.

The **expansion elements** following the core verb concentrate on elaborating God’s having spoken in these last days. **(1)** “to us” (ἡμῖν). Whereas God first spoke to the fathers, He has now spoken to us. For the writer “us” meant the believers of his day, and those who would follow in commitment to Christ. **(2)** “in the Son” (ἐν υἱῷ). Unlike the matching parallel earlier (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις) to the prophets, this reference to the Son has no article in the Greek. A qualitative tone to the prepositional phrase is introduced, which cannot be translated into English. Implicit in this is the superior quality of this second revelation.

The reference to the Son occasions a five fold expansion using relative clauses that serves to define and identify the Son in basic categories:

(A) whom he appointed heir of all things,
ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων,

(B) through whom he also created the worlds
δι’ οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας·

(C) He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καθαρισμόν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς,

(D) having become as much superior to angels
τοσοῦτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων

(E) as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον παρ’ αὐτοὺς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

The first two underscore the Son’s connection to the created order, both as heir and creator. As creator Jesus became the indirect agent through whom God worked to create the world. The third affirmation underscores his connection to the Father both at the point of relationship and of his sustaining and redeeming God’s creation. The final two statements, D and E, affirm the Son’s superiority to God’s angels, in large part because of the truths in the previous three affirmations. These two statements also transition into the following segment in vv. 5-14. The Greek syntax of these final two statements is perhaps among the most complex but the most eloquent classical Greek expression anywhere in the New Testament.

When viewed wholistically it becomes rather clear that the writer set up the affirmations in an ancient chiasm at an informal level, which can be diagrammed as follows:

- A heir of all things
- B creator of the worlds
- C sustainer and savior as God’s glory**
- D standing superior to angels
- E more excellent inheritance than the angels

The central point, and most important point for the writer, is section C: Jesus as the Father’s presence, and as the sustainer and savior of the world, now exalted to the Father’s right hand.

Thus Jesus is deeply connected to the created world, and with the Heavenly Father at the same time. All of creation belongs to him. He has been the Father’s instrument of creation. To that creation he

reflects the very presence of the Father. He sustains that creation. He purifies that creation through his redeeming death at Calvary. He now sits at the right hand of the Heavenly Father, the hand of power and authority. This means he is far superior to the heavenly angels. His name, i.e., his being and person, is vastly superior to theirs.

What's the connection to us today? Everything!

The timeless quality of this formal prologue means that the spiritual truths affirmed by the writer to the Hebrews remain unchanged by the passing of time. He is writing to us today as well as to his initial targeted readers. God has spoken, first to and through the prophets, and secondly to and through His Son Jesus Christ. Divine revelation is defined by these unchanging parameters.

b. Better than angels, part 1: vv. 5-14

Greek NT

1:5 Τίνι γὰρ εἶπέν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων, Υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ε' γ ω' σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε; καὶ πάλιν, Ε γ ω' ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν; 1:6 ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην, λ ε' γ ε ι, Καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ. 1:7 καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀγγέλους λέγει, Ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα, 1:8 πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν, Ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, καὶ ἡ ράβδος τῆς εὐθύτητος ράβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου. 1:9 ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν· διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς σου ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου. 1:10 καί, Σὺ κατ' ἀρχάς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοί· 1:11 αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις, καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον ἀλαιωθήσονται, 1:12 καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτούς, ὡς ἱμάτιον καὶ

NASB

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"? 6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." 7 And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." 8 But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. 9 YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS." 10 And, "YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; 11 THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT, 12 AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL

NRSV

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? 6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." 7 Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." 8 But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." 10 And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; 11 they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; 12 like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end." 13 But to which of the angels has he ever said,

NLT

5 For God never said to any angel what he said to Jesus: "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father." And again God said, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son." 6 And then, when he presented his honored Son to the world, God said, "Let all the angels of God worship him." 7 God calls his angels "messengers swift as the wind, and servants made of flaming fire." 8 But to his Son he says, "Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal power is expressed in righteousness. 9 You love what is right and hate what is wrong. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else." 10 And, "Lord, in the beginning you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. 11 Even they will perish, but you remain forever. They will wear out like old clothing. 12 You will roll them up like an old coat. They will fade away like old clothing. But

ἀλλαγῆσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν. 1:13 πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἶρηκέν ποτε, Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου; 1:14 οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσὶν λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν;

ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END." 13 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"? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

"Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? 14 Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

you are always the same; you will never grow old." 13 And God never said to an angel, as he did to his Son, "Sit in honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies, making them a footstool under your feet." 14 But angels are only servants. They are spirits sent from God to care for those who will receive salvation

Notes:

This second pericope constitutes the first section emphasizing Jesus' superiority to the angels found in 1:5 - 2:18. The material in 1:5-14 has a distinct structure and topic than in the following materials.

But also important for consideration is the single word γὰρ ("for") at the beginning of verse five. It occasions considerable commentary discussion. Why? Because the understanding of its meaning here determines the perception of the organizing structure of the contents of chapter one, and to some degree the entire book of Hebrews.

My conclusion, as illustrated in both the [Block Diagram](#) and [Semantic Diagram](#) in the larger internet version of this study, is that this causal coordinate conjunction serves a multitiered function. At the broadest level, it introduces the remainder of the book of Hebrews as an elaboration of and defense of the theological position taken in the prologue of the document in vv. 1-4. The stance on the superiority of divine revelation in Jesus to that of the Old Testament prophets had to be explained and defended to the initial targeted readership who valued their Jewish religious heritage greatly.

But at a more narrow definition of the syntactical function, γὰρ (*gar*) links up the last two amplifications about Jesus (statements D and E; see [above discussion](#)) to the emphasis on angels in 1:5-2:18, and especially in 1:5-14. Modern commentators tend to want to read an either/or choice into situations such as this. But time and time again it is clear that the NT writers intentionally use grammar constructions and words to convey multiple meanings simultaneously. Typically our problems arise in translation when the limits of the English language force the translator into an either/or option.

The writer carries his readers from the position in the prologue, vv. 1-4, to the first leg of its elaboration and defense in vv. 5-14. How is this section then structured? Unquestionably, the central theme is the superiority of Jesus to angels. It was anticipated in the statements in verse four:

(D) **having become as much superior to angels**

τοσοῦτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων

(E) **as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.**

ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτοὺς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

Now the writer sets out to prove that point. How?

Through extensive use of OT passages that stand as accepted authoritative sources of divine revelation to his readers. If successful, the writer then has established a first major point about Jesus. The next major task will be to establish the superiority of Jesus to Moses, which he does in chapters three and four.

His approach in vv. 5-14 is interesting and insightful. He inter-links a couple of two-part dominating emphasis upon Jesus and angels. See the [Semantic Diagram](#) and the [Rhetorical Analysis](#) sections for greater details and visual illustration. The adjective "dominating" is important, since all four subsections in these verses emphasize both Jesus and angels.

The first unit begins, v. 5, with a rhetorical question used to introduce scripture citation from Psalm 2:7 and then from 2 Sam 7:14 (also 1 Chron. 17:13): "to which one of the angels did He ever say..." (Τίτι εἶπέν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων...). The assumed answer is that God never said this to any of the angels. But He did say these things to His Son Jesus. What did He say?

First from Ps. 2:7, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you" (Υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε). The second is from 2 Sam. 7:14: "I will be his

Father, and he will be my Son" (Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν).

The effort to understand what the writer is doing with OT passages begins with a comparison of the quoted text to the original biblical language text. Usually that issue revolves around whether the NT writer is translating from a Hebrew text or using one of the manuscript traditions of the LXX Greek translation. Sometimes the wording of the cited text seems to be based on neither of the above text traditions.

Next the process includes some assessment of the most natural meaning of the text in its original setting, in comparison with the meaning attributed to it by the NT writer. Sometimes those two meanings are fairly close to each other, but at other times the distance between these two meanings is very great. Included in many of the OT quotes has to be how those passages were taken in Jewish interpretive history through the intertestamental era, if such is available.

Both of these considerations are necessary if the Bible student is to gain a clear understanding of how the NT is using the OT texts.

With these first two quotes, something interesting seems to be taking place:

- A You are my **Son**;
- B today I have **begotten** you
- B' I will be his **Father**,
- A' and he will be my **Son**

The twin issues of sonship and paternity bring these two passages together. This wasn't a creative act by the writer to the Hebrews. Several Jewish sources illustrate that this coupling of the two passages had taken place earlier as these two OT texts were understood as pointing to the expected Messiah [cf. R. W. Thurston, "Midrash and 'Magnet' Words in the New Testament," *EvQ* 51 [1979] 22–39; Kistemaker, *Psalms Citations*, 61–64, 78] as quoted by William L. Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, Logos Systems]. Likely, his Jewish Christian readers were familiar with this usage and could recognize the meaning attributed to the passages by the Hebrews writer from previous Jewish apocalyptic interpretation.

The two sets of texts compare to their OT originals as:

Ps. 2:7, NRSV / LXX
You are my son;
today I have begotten
you.
υἱός μου εἶ σύ
ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά
σε

Heb. 1:5a, NRSV / GNT
You are my Son;
today I have begotten
you
Υἱός μου εἶ σύ,
ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά
σε

2 Sam. 7:14, NRSV / LXX
I will be a father to him,
and he shall be a son to
me.
ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα
καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς
υἱόν

Heb. 1:5a, NRSV / GNT
I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son
Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα,
καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς
υἱόν

Comparing these two texts clearly indicates an exact quoting of the LXX text by the writer to the Hebrews. This, even though the NRSV translation of 2 Sam. 7:14 follows the Hebrew text rather than the LXX text.

In the larger passage in [Psalm 2:7](#), this statement was originally made to David by God: "I [David] will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me,..." The reassignment of these words to the expected Messiah were based on the understanding that God's anointed Deliverer would come in the descendants of David. The apocalyptic Jewish interpreters and the writer to Hebrews shared that conviction, but differed in the identification of who that person was. Also in [2 Sam. 7:14](#), the context is of these words being given to David by the prophet Nathan at God's direction.

The second pair of quotes, vv. 6-7, are directed to angels straightforwardly, and affirm the subordinate role of angels. They are taken from Deut. 32:43 (LXX) and then from Ps. 104:4 (LXX, 103:4):

Deut. 32:43, NRSV / LXX
worship him, all you gods!
προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ
πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ

Heb. 1:6, NRSV / GNT
Let all God's angels worship
him.
Καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ
πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ

Ps. 104:4, NRSV / LXX
you make the winds your
messengers,
fire and flame your minis-
ters.
ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους
αὐτοῦ πνεύματα
καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς
αὐτοῦ πῦρ φλέγον

Heb. 1:7, NRSV / GNT
He makes his angels winds,
and his servants flames of
fire.
Ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους
αὐτοῦ πνεύματα
καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς
αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα

In the quote from Deut. the LXX υἱοὶ θεοῦ in reality is the same as ἄγγελοι θεοῦ in the Hebrews text. This is based on the sometimes reference to the angels of God as "sons of God" beginning in [Gen. 6](#). Very likely this is correct, although other possibilities also exist. The writer to the Hebrews probably shifted υἱοὶ τοῦ ἄγγελου for clarification purposes to his readers. The NRSV translation again follows the Hebrew text, rather than the LXX. The Ps. 104 quote is taken

virtually in tact from the LXX.

Remember: at certain places the chapter numbering of the LXX is one chapter ahead of the English text. The quote comes from 103:4 in the LXX, which is 104:4 in the English Bible.

The lengthy introduction to the quote from Deut. 32 (“And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,...”) poses some interpretive issues. Possibly, it alludes to the angels celebrating Jesus’ birth in their announcement to the shepherds as recorded by Luke (2:13-14). This assumes the writer to the Hebrews knew this tradition, which had not yet been written down, since the gospel was written sometime after Hebrews. If so, one can understand how they were linked to Jesus.

These OT quotes have no Messianic interpretive tradition in either apocalyptic or scribal Judaism during the intertestamental period. The writer himself set up these links in his own understanding of the relevancy of the texts to Jesus.

Regarding the Ps. 104 quote, P. Blingworth (NIGTC, Logos Systems) helps explain a puzzling process here:

The meaning of the quotation is ambiguous in the MT, which may mean either:

- (a) who makes winds/spirits his angels/messengers ... , or
- (b) who makes his angels into winds.

The LXX cannot mean (b). In the context of the psalm, which refers to “clouds” and “winds” in v. 3, it probably means “who makes winds his messengers.”

The point of the quotation in Hebrews is to show that the angels are (only) λειτουργοί — as v. 14 will confirm. The context in Hebrews therefore calls for the translation “he makes winds his angels, and a flame of fire his servants.”

The third pair of quotes, vv. 8-13, come back to the Son as the dominate focus. The first one comes from Ps. 44:7, and the lengthy second one comes from following Ps. 102:25-27 (LXX) rather loosely.

Ps. 45:6-7, NRSV / LXX
Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity; you love righteousness and hate wickedness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions

Heb. 1:8-9, NRSV / GNT
"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος
ράβδος εὐθύτητος ἢ ράβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου
ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν
διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς σου
ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιᾶσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου

Ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος,
καὶ ἡ ράβδος τῆς εὐθύτητος ράβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου.
ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν·
διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς σου
ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιᾶσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου.

Ps. 102:25-27, NRSV / LXX
Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you endure; they will all wear out like a garment. You change them like clothing, and they pass away; but you are the same, and your years have no end.

κατ' ἀρχὰς σὺ κύριε τὴν γῆν ἔθεμελίωσας
καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοὶ
αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται σὺ δὲ διαμενεῖς
καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται
καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἀλλάξεις αὐτοὺς
καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται
σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ
καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν

Heb. 1:10-12, NRSV/GNT
In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end."

Σὺ κατ' ἀρχὰς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἔθεμελίωσας,
καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοὶ·
αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις,
καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται,
καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτούς,
ὡς ἱμάτιον καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται·
σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ
καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν.

The abbreviated introduction, “But to his Son he says,...”; “And,...” (πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν,...; καί,...), signals a reapplication of these declarations to the Son as the manifestation of the Father in glory. In their original context Ps. 45 was an affirmation of David to God who then anointed him with gladness. Now, the Davidic successor, Jesus, receives the same blessing. Ps. 102 lifts praises to God the Lord. Now the key, Lord, signals an application to Jesus as Lord. Both texts affirm the permanence of the Sonship of Jesus.

The fourth pair in vv. 13-14 contain a quote from Ps. 110:1 and a rhetorical question affirming

subordination of angels. First, the use of Ps. 110:1.

Ps. 110:1, NRSV / LXX
Sit at my right hand
until I make your en-
emies your footstool.

Heb. 1:13, NRSV / GNT
Sit at my right hand
until I make your en-
emies a footstool for
your feet

κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου
ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς
σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν
ποδῶν σου

Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου,
ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς
σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν
ποδῶν σου

With his introductory, "But to which of the angels has he ever said,..." (πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἶρηκέν ποτε,...), the writer comes full circle back to the framework found in the first set of rhetorical questions in v. 5. This psalm was referring to God's blessing given to David, now is reinterpreted to apply to David's successor, Jesus. No angel was ever made this promise.

The second part of this fourth segment is a rhetorical question posed by the writer to bring his discussion to a climax: "Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" (οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσὶν λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν;). The theme of the subordination of angels again surfaces from vv. 6-7. The subordination concept is twofold: (1) Angels are to worship the Son (vv. 6-7), and (2) they are to minister to those the Son has saved (v. 14).

Clearly and dramatically the writer to the Hebrews has made his point of the superiority of Jesus to God's angels. And his case has demonstrated the evidence from the OT that largely places Jesus as the successor to David as Son. Yet, this Son is more than David. He is the divine glory, the very presence of God himself. He is the medium of divine creation; the one who sustains and purifies that creation in redemption.

Excursus: The Idea of Angels

Some summary attention needs to be given to the idea of angels in chapter one of Hebrews as it fits into the rest of the document and in the New Testament generally. I suspect most modern Protestant understanding of angels is far more dependent on traditional Roman Catholic theology than it is on biblical teachings.

R. K. Harrison ("Angel," *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*) provides a lengthy but helpful overview of biblical understanding:

Superhuman or heavenly being who serves as God's

messenger. Both the Hebrew malak [מַלְאָךְ] and the Greek angelos [aŋgelos] indicate that these beings also act decisively in fulfilling God's will in the world. But these two terms also apply to human beings as messengers (1 Kings 19:2; Hag 1:13; Luke 7:24). "Angels" are mentioned almost three hundred times in Scripture, and are only noticeably absent from books such as Ruth, Nehemiah, Esther, the letters of John, and James.

The Old Testament. From the beginning, angels were part of the divine hierarchy. They were created beings (Psalm 148:2,5), and were exuberant witnesses when God brought the world into being (Job 38:7). By nature they were spiritual entities, and thus not subject to the limitations of human flesh. Although holy, angels could sometimes behave foolishly (Job 4:18), and even prove to be untrustworthy (Job 15:15). Probably these qualities led to the "fall" of some angels, including Satan, but the Bible contains no description of that event. When angels appeared in human society they resembled normal males (Gen 18:2, 16; Ezek 9:2), and never came dressed as women.

In whatever form they occurred, however, their general purpose was to declare and promote God's will. On infrequent occasions they acted as agents of destruction (Gen 19:13; 2 Sam 24:16; 2 Kings 19:35; ; etc.). Sometimes angels addressed people in dreams, as with Jacob (Gen 28:12; 31:11), and could be recognized by animals before human beings became aware of them, as with Balaam (Nu 22:22). Collectively the divine messengers were described as the "angelic host" that surrounded God (1 Ki 22:19) and praised his majesty constantly (Psalm 103:21). The Lord, their commander, was known to the Hebrews as the "Lord of hosts." There appears to have been some sort of spiritual hierarchy among them. Thus the messenger who instructed Joshua was a self-described "commander of the Lord's army" (Jos 5:14-15), although this designation could also mean that it was God himself who was speaking to Joshua.

In Daniel, two angels who interpreted visions were unnamed (7:16; 10:5), but other visions were explained to Daniel by the angel Gabriel, who was instructed by a "man's voice" to undertake this task (8:15-16). When a heavenly messenger appeared to Daniel beside the river Hiddekel (Tigris), he spoke of Michael as "one of the chief princes" (10:13, 21). This mighty angel would preside over the fortunes of God's people in the latter time (12:1). Thereafter he was regarded by the Hebrews as their patron angel. In the postexilic period the term "messenger" described the teaching functions of the priest (Mal 2:7), but most particularly the individual who was to prepare the way for the Lord's Messiah (Mal 3:1).

Two other terms relating to spiritual beings were prominent at various times in Israel's history. The first was "cherubim," a plural form, conceived of as winged creatures (Exod 25:20), and mentioned first in connection with the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden (Gen 3:24). Apart from their functions as guardians, however, nothing is said about their character. When the wilderness tabernacle was being fashioned, God ordered two gold cherubim to be placed on top of the "mercy seat" or lid of the covenant ark to screen it. These came to be known as the "cherubim of the Glory" (Heb 9:5). Cherubim designs were also incorporated into the fabric of the inner curtain (Eze 26:1) and the veil of the tabernacle (Exod 26:31).

Solomon placed two wooden cherubim plated with gold leaf in the Most Holy Place of the temple, looking toward the Holy Place. They stood ten cubits (about fourteen feet) high and their wings were five cubits (about seven feet) long. Near Eastern archeological excavations have shown how popular the concept of winged creatures was in antiquity. The throne of Hiram at Byblos (ca. 1200 b.c.) was supported by a pair of creatures with human faces, lions' bodies, and large protective wings. It was above the cherubim that the Lord of hosts sat enthroned (1 Sa 4:4).

The seraphim were also thought of as winged, and in Isaiah's vision they were stationed above the Lord's throne (6:1-2). They seemed to possess a human figure, and had voices, faces, and feet. According to the vision their task was to participate in singing God's praises antiphonally. They also acted in some unspecified manner as mediums of communication between heaven and earth (Isa 6:6). The living creatures of Ezekiel 1:5-14 were composites of human and animal parts, which was typically Mesopotamian in character, and they seem to have depicted the omnipotence and omniscience of God.

The Apocrypha In the late postexilic period angelology became a prominent feature of Jewish religion. The angel Michael was deemed to be Judaism's patron, and the apocryphal writings named three other archangels as leaders of the angelic hierarchy. Chief of these was Raphael, who was supposed to present the prayers of pious Jews to God (1 Tobit 2:15). Uriel explained to Enoch many of his visions (1 Enoch 21:5-10; 27:2-4), interpreted Ezra's vision of the celestial Jerusalem (2 Esdras 10:28-57), and explained the fate of the fallen angels who supposedly married human women (1 Enoch 19:1-9; cf. Gen 6:2). Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, and Uriel (1 Enoch 40:3, 6) reported to God about the depraved state of humanity, and received appropriate instructions. According to contemporary thought, Gabriel sat on God's left, while Michael sat on the right side (2 Enoch 24:1). The primary concern of these two angels, however, was supposedly with missions on earth and affairs in heaven, respectively. In rabbinic Judaism they assumed a character which, while sometimes dramatic, had no factual basis in divine revelation.

The New Testament. Against this background of belief in angels who were involved in human affairs, it was not surprising that the angel Gabriel should be chosen to visit Zechariah, the officiating priest in the temple, to inform him that he was to become a father, and that he had to name his son John (Luke 1:11-20). Gabriel was not referred to here as an archangel, the Greek term *archangelos* [*ajrcavggelo*], appearing only in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 to describe an otherwise unnamed executive angel, and also in Jude 9, which refers to "Michael the archangel." Six months after his announcement to Zechariah, Gabriel appeared to Mary to inform her that God had selected her to become the mother of Jesus, the promised Messiah (Luke 1:26-33).

Nothing in Gabriel's behavior is inconsistent with Old Testament teachings about angels. It has been pointed out frequently that, just as they were active when the world began, so angels were correspondingly prominent when the new era of divine grace dawned with the birth of Jesus. On three occasions an angel visited Joseph in a vision concerning Jesus (Matt 1:20; 2:13, 19). On the first two occasions the celestial visitor is described as "the angel of the Lord," which could possibly be a way of describing God

himself. On the last visit the heavenly messenger was described simply as "an angel of the Lord." In the end, however, the celestial beings were most probably of the same order, and were fulfilling among humans those duties normally assigned to such angels as Gabriel (Luke 1:19).

There is nothing recorded about the actual form of the latter, but Zechariah appears to have recognized the angel immediately as a celestial being, and was terrified (Luke 1:12). His penalty for not having learned anything from his ancestor Abraham's experience (Luke 1:18; cf. Gen 17:17) would only be removed when his son John was born (Luke 1:20). When Gabriel announced to Mary that she would bear Jesus (Luke 31), she seems to have been more disturbed by his message than his appearance. The birth of Jesus was announced to Bethlehem shepherds by the angel of the Lord, and since he was accompanied by the divine glory he may well have been the Lord himself. The message of joy having been proclaimed, the heavenly host of angels praised and glorified God (Luke 2:13-14) for a short period, as they had done at the creation of the world (Job 38:7), after which they departed.

During his ministry, angels came and ministered to Jesus after he had resisted the devil's temptations (Matt 4:11). Again, when Jesus was submitting himself to God's will in the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:40-44), an angel came from heaven to strengthen him. At the resurrection, the angel of the Lord rolled back the stone from Jesus' burial place (Matt 28:2), and he was described as having a countenance like lightning and garments as white as snow (Matt 28:3). Again, this celestial being performed a service of reassurance and love for Mary and Mary of Magdala, who subsequently reported seeing "a vision of angels" (Luke 24:23). In John's Gospel Mary Magdalene saw two angels in white clothing, sitting in the empty tomb, just before she met the risen Lord (John 20:12-16).

In Acts, the imprisoned apostles were released by an angel (5:19). Philip was ordered by an angel to meet an Ethiopian official (8:26-28), while another celestial being appeared to Cornelius (10:3). The angel of the Lord released Peter from prison (12:7-11), and subsequently afflicted Herod with a fatal illness (12:23). When Paul and his companions were about to be shipwrecked the apostle assured them of the presence of a guardian angel (27:23-24).

Paul referred subsequently to angelic hierarchies ("thrones, powers, rulers, or authorities") when proclaiming the cosmic supremacy of Jesus (Col 1:15-16; cf. 1 Peter 3:22), and prohibited the worship of angels in the Colossian church (Col 2:18) in an attempt to avoid unorthodox practices. His reference to "angels" in 1 Corinthians 11:10 may have been a warning that such things observe humans at worship, and thus the Corinthians should avoid improper conduct or breaches of decency.

The angelology of 2 Peter and Jude reflects some of the intertestamental Jewish traditions concerning "wicked angels." In Revelation there are numerous symbolic allusions to angels, the worship of which is forbidden (22:8-9). The "angels of the seven churches" (1:20) are the specific spiritual representations or personifications of these Christian groups. A particularly sinister figure was Abaddon (Apollyon in Greek), the "angel of the bottomless pit" (9:11), who with his minions was involved in a fierce battle with Michael and his angels (12:7-9).

Jesus accepted as valid the Old Testament references to angels and their functions (Matt 22:30), but spoke specifically of the "devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41) as destined for destruction. He fostered the idea of angels ministering to believers (cf. Heb 1:14), and as being concerned for the welfare of children (Matt 18:10). He described angels as holy creatures (Mark 8:38) who could rejoice when a sinner repented (Luke 15:10). Angels were devoid of sexual characteristics (Matt 22:30), and although they were highly intelligent ministers of God's will they were not omniscient (Matt 24:36).

Christ claimed at his arrest in Gethsemane that more than twelve legions of angels (numbering about 72,000) were available to deliver him, had he wanted to call upon them for assistance (Matt 26:53). He taught that angels would be with him when he returned to earth at the second coming (Matt 25:31), and that they would be involved significantly in the last judgment (Matt 13:41,49). Finally, angels set a model of obedience to God's will in heaven to which the Christian church should aspire (cf. Matt 6:10).

Some writers contrast the celestial beings with "fallen angels," of which there are two varieties. The first consists of unimprisoned, evil beings working under Satan's leadership, and generally regarded as demons (Luke 4:35; 11:15; John 10:21). The second were imprisoned (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6) spirits because they forsook their original positions in heaven. For New Testament writers they were particularly dangerous. The precise difference in function and character is not explained in Scripture, but some have thought that the latter were the "sons of God" who cohabited with mortal women (Gen 6:1-2). This view, however, is strictly conjectural. Presumably the imprisoned angels are the ones who will be judged by the saints (1 Cor 6:3).

In a material world that is also populated by good and evil spirits, the Bible teaches that the heavenly angels set an example of enthusiastic and resolute fulfillment of God's will. They acknowledge Jesus as their superior, and worship him accordingly. Angels continue to perform ministering duties among humans, and this function has led to the concept of "guardian angels," perhaps prompted by Christ's words in Matthew 18:10. It is not entirely clear whether each individual has a specific angelic guardian, but there is certainly no reason for doubting that an angel might well be



assigned to care for the destinies of groups of individuals such as families. These celestial ministries will be most effective when the intended recipients are receptive to the Lord's will for their lives.

What can we glean from all of this? Mostly a reaffirmation of our conviction that Jesus is the center of our faith. This Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of wicked humanity in a sinful world. With his incarnation, he got his hands dirty in identifying with what he had created. But in exaltation, he took his rightful place at the right hand of the Father enjoying the worship of angels, even as they had at his birth. Certainly, such a one is worthy of our praise, our devotion, our faithful commitment to serve him! May we follow the example of the angels in their praise and service of the risen Savior and Lord!

Greek NT

1:1 Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως πάλαι ὁ θεὸς λαλήσας τοῖς πατράσιν ἐν τοῖς προφήταις 1:2 ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων ἐλάλησεν ἡμῖν ἐν υἱῷ, ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων, δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας· 1:3 ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καθαρισμόν τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς, 1:4 τοσοῦτω κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων ὅσα διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτοὺς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

1:5 Τίνι γὰρ εἶπεν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων, Υἱὸς μου εἶ σύ, ε' γ ω' σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε; καὶ πάλιν, Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν; 1:6 ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην, λ ε' γ ε ι, Κ α ι' προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ. 1:7 καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀγγέλους λέγει, Ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα, 1:8 πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν, Ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος τῆς εὐθύτητος ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου. 1:9 ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν·

NASB

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"? 6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." 7 And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." 8 But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. 9 YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH

NRSV

1 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. 3 He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? 6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." 7 Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." 8 But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." 10 And, "In the beginning, Lord, you

NLT

1 Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. 2 But now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he made the universe and everything in it. 3 The Son reflects God's own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of his command. After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven. 4 This shows that God's Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is far greater than their names.

5 For God never said to any angel what he said to Jesus: "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father." And again God said, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son." 6 And then, when he presented his honored Son to the world, God said, "Let all the angels of God worship him." 7 God calls his angels "messengers swift as the wind, and servants made of flaming fire." 8 But to his Son he says, "Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal power is expressed in

διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεός ὁ θεός σου ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου. 1:10 καί, Σὺ κατ' ἀρχάς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἴσιν οἱ οὐρανοί· 1:11 αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις, καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον ἀλαιωθήσονται, 1:12 καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτούς, ὡς ἱμάτιον καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν. 1:13 πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἶρηκέν ποτε, Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου; 1:14 οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσὶν λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν;

THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS." 10 And, "YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; 11 THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT, 12 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." 13 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"? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; 11 they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; 12 like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end." 13 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"? 14 Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

righteousness. 9 You love what is right and hate what is wrong. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else." 10 And, "Lord, in the beginning you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. 11 Even they will perish, but you remain forever. They will wear out like old clothing. 12 You will roll them up like an old coat. They will fade away like old clothing. But you are always the same; you will never grow old." 13 And God never said to an angel, as he did to his Son, "Sit in honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies, making them a footstool under your feet." 14 But angels are only servants. They are spirits sent from God to care for those who will receive salvation

Greek NT Diagrammed

1-2

Πολυμερῶς
καὶ
πολυτρόπως
πάλαι
λαλήσας
τοῖς πατράσιν
ἐν τοῖς προφήταις
ἐπ' ἐσχάτου
τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων

1 **ὁ θεὸς...ἐλάλησεν**

ἡμῖν
ἐν υἱῷ,
(1) ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων,
(2) δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας·

3

ὃν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης
καὶ
χαρακτήρ
τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ

φέρων τε τὰ πάντα
τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ,
καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος

(3) ὃς...ἐκάθισεν
ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης
ἐν ὑψηλοῖς,

4

(4) τοσούτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων
παρ' αὐτοὺς

(5) ὅσα διαφορώτερον...κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

5

2 **Τίτι εἶπέν**
γὰρ
ποτε
τῶν ἀγγέλων,

*Υἱὸς μου εἶ σύ,
ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε;*

3 **(τίτι εἶπέν)**
καὶ
πάλιν,

*Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ
εἰς πατέρα,
καὶ
αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι
εἰς υἱόν;*

6

4 **λέγει,**
δὲ
πάλιν
ὅταν...εἰσαγάγη τὸν πρωτότοκον
εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην,

*Καὶ
προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ.*

7 καὶ
μὲν
πρὸς...τοὺς ἀγγέλους

5 λέγει,
Ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ (ἐποίησεν)
πνεύματα
καὶ
τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ (ἐποίησεν)
πυρὸς φλόγα,

8 δὲ
6 (λέγει)
πρὸς τὸν υἱόν,
Ὁ θρόνος σου... (ἐστίν)
ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος,
καὶ
ἡ ῥάβδος... (ἐστίν) ῥάβδος
τῆς εὐθύτητος τῆς βασιλείας σου.

9 ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην
καὶ
ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν·
διὰ τοῦτο
ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς σου
ἔλαιον
ἀγαλλιᾶσεως
παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου.

10 καί,
7 (λέγει)
Σὺ κατ' ἀρχάς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας,
καὶ
ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοί·

11 αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται,
δὲ
σὺ διαμένεις,
καὶ
ὡς ἱμάτιον
πάντες...παλαιωθήσονται,

12 καὶ
ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον
ἐλίξεις αὐτούς,
ὡς ἱμάτιον
καὶ
ἀλλαγῆσονται·
δὲ
σὺ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ
καὶ
τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν.

13 δὲ

8 πρὸς τίνα τῶν ἀγγέλων
εἶρηκέν
ποτε,

Κάθου
ἐκ δεξιῶν μου,
ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου
ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου;

9 ¹⁴ **οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσὶν...πνεύματα**
λειτουργικὰ
εἰς διακονίαν
ἀποστελλόμενα
διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν;

Semantic Diagram

I	1	1	Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ θεὸς	
								γὰρ	
A	1	2	2	Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	(ὁ θεὸς) Son
								καὶ	
	2	3	(2	Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ θεὸς)

B	1	4	Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	(ὁ θεὸς)	Angels
								καὶ	
	2	5	Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	(ὁ θεὸς)	
								δὲ	
II	1	6	(Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ θεὸς)	Son
								καὶ	
C	2	7	(Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ θεὸς)	
								δὲ	
	1	8	Perf	Act	Ind	3	S	(ὁ θεὸς)	Angels

D	2	9	Pres	---	Ind	3	P	πάντες	

Summary of Rhetorical Structure

These fourteen verses illustrate how one early Christian writing made use of OT scripture texts in order to argue his case for the superiority of Christ. The OT passages come as a part of the writer's defense of the superiority of Jesus. Thus sacred scripture texts become the authority base that validates the writer's contention about Christ. Psalm 2:7; 2 Sam 7:14, 1 Chron 17:13, Deut 32:42 LXX (Ps. 97:7); Psalm 104:4, 45:6-7, 102:25-27, 110:1; 34:7; 91:11 form the OT foundation of the writer's arguments in chapter one. His manner of using these texts here is with simple contextual introduction followed by a quote of each text. The texts are arranged in the pattern illustrated above in order to make each point. The [exegesis section](#) of this study will analyze the source of the writer's OT texts, which primarily was the Septuagint (LXX).

In statement one, one finds very eloquent Greek with a high literary tone in the tradition of classical Attic Greek. Rhetorical balance and rhythm are major elements, as is visually illustrated in the block diagram of the text. However, in the defense, statements 2-9, one encounters a very scribal Jewish approach to thought expression and lines of argumentation. Thus a balance of high level Jewish and Greek writing skills are present.

The core rhetorical structure is twofold. The assertion is made that God has spoken (statement 1). Then all the following statements represent an elaboration and defense of this initial statement as seen in the connector γὰρ, which links the two sets of statements together.

The beginning core statement simply asserts: God has spoken (ἐλάλησεν). The modifying expansions build a past / present contrast. The main prefield set plays off the participle form, λαλήσας, setting up the past time frame. Thus a one - two sequence is established: "after having spoken... he spoke."

This adverbial temporal participle is extended front and back. The modal adverbs, Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως πάλαι, qualify the participle from the prefield along with the temporal adverb πάλαι. Added to the main verb prefield is the shift to present time ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων. This has the effect of placing the then/now contrast close to each other for heightened emphasis. Thus two elements qualify the main verb: the details of the past "after having spoken" (λαλήσας), and the setting up of the contrastive now "he has spoken" (ἐλάλησεν). From the writer's perspective both speaking actions of God are past time, since he is writing this several decades after Jesus had lived and died. In order to highlight the distinction between these two past times, two time indicators are used: "long ago" (πάλαι) and "in these last days" (ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων).

The post-field of the participle sets up a twofold balance to that in the pre-field: "to our ancestors" (τοῖς πατράσιν) and "by the prophets" (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις).

In typical classical Greek fashion, the verb and its subject are widely separated in the main clause. The

sequence is Subject...Participle...Verb (ὁ θεὸς...λαλήσας...ἐλάλησεν), which emphasizes God as the speaker in both instances.

In the post-field of the verb ἐλάλησεν comes a twofold expansion: "to us" (ἡμῖν) and "by the Son" (ἐν υἱῷ). This matches exactly the rhetorical structure of the participle post-field.

The mentioning of the Son at the end of this already lengthy sentence provides the opportunity for the writer to then set in place a long string of relative clause expansions of the reference to the Son. Five relative clauses, each with expansion elements, attach qualifications to the reference to Jesus as God's Son:

whom he appointed heir of all things,

ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων,

through whom he also created the worlds

δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας·

He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καθαρισμόν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς,

having become as much superior to angels

τοσοῦτω κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων

as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

ὅσα διαφορεώτερον παρ' αὐτοῦς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

Of course, no English translation could successfully reproduce the exact thought structure of the Greek text either grammatically or meaning wise. The NRSV translation used above has out of necessity to break up these subordinate clauses into shorter English expressions in order to follow accepted patterns of idea expression in English. The qualifiers of the Son in these relative clauses flesh out the writer's understanding of Christ in a formulaic pattern. His Christology is set forth here, and in large measure will be defended throughout the remainder of this document.

The connecting link between statement one and statements two through nine is defined by the postpositive coordinate conjunction γὰρ ("for"). Thus begins a defense as well as elaboration of the writer's understanding of the Son who stands as the channel of divine revelation for all time beginning with the earthly life of Jesus. The first aspect of this defense is a comparison of Jesus to the angels. It takes up the remainder of chapter one of Hebrews. The theme of superiority will give tone and direction to the remainder of the entire document.

In statements 2 through 9, the superiority of Jesus to angels is traced in an alternating pattern between a dominating focus on Jesus (statements 2-3 and 6-7) and on the angels (statements 4-5 and 8-9). See Semantic Diagram on previous page for visual illustration.

The two sets of emphasis on Jesus as God's Son (statements 2-3 and 6-7) stress his superiority in two separate manners. Statements 2 and 3 stand as rhetorical questions with a reverse emphasis: "to which one of the angels did He (God) say...?" (Τίνοι εἶπέν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων...καὶ πάλιν,...). The content of God's words is a quote, first from Ps. 2:7 and then from 2 Sam. 7:14 (cf. also 1 Chron. 17:13). The second set (statements 6 and 7) simply asserts that God says to His Son the affirmations found in Ps. 45:6-7 and Ps. 102:25-27. The clearly implied answer to both questions is that God never said any of this to an angel.

The two sets of emphasis directed to the angels (statements 4-5 and 8-9) underscore their subordinating role to the Son. Statements 4 and 5 are introduced by God says. Then the content of the divine speaking is given as OT scripture texts, first from Deut. 32:43 LXX (cf. also Ps. 97:7) and next from Ps. 104:4. The second set (statements 8 and 9) are mixed patterns. Statement 8 returns to the beginning formula "to which one of the angels has he ever said....?" (πρὸς τίνα τῶν ἀγγέλων εἶρηκέν ποτε...). Some variation from statements 2 and 3 does exist here as can be seen in the wording of the Greek text. A quote from Ps. 110:1 stands as the content of God's speaking. Statement 9 continues the rhetorical question pattern but is formed off the concepts of Pss. 34:7 and 91:11 without quotation.

Greek Text Analyzed

1:1

Πολυμερῶς : Adverb of manner - **L-N (89:81)**: “pertaining to a number of different manners in which something may be done—‘in many ways, in many different ways.’” ; **L-N (63:19)**: “pertaining to that which occurs in many parts—‘fragmentary, in many parts.’” ; **L-N (67:11)**: “a number of related points of time—‘often, many times.’”

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two adverbs - and

πολυτρόπως : Adverb of manner - **L-N (89:82)**: “pertaining to occurring in many ways or manners—‘in many ways.’” ; **L-N (58:29)**: “pertaining to that which occurs in many kinds of ways—‘in many ways.’”

Translation patterns: NASB - *in many portions and in many ways*; NRSV - *in many and various ways*; NLT - *many times and in many ways*

πάλαι : Adverb of time - long ago

ὁ θεός : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - God

λαλήσας : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ptc (Adv: Temp) - Nom - M - S - λαλέω - after having spoken (verbally)

τοῖς πατέράσιν : 3 - Dat (Ref) - M - P - πατήρ, -τρός, ὁ - to our fathers

ἐν τοῖς προφήταις : 1 - Loc (Place) / Ins (Agency) - M - P - - in the prophets (writings) / through the prophets (persons)

1:2

ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου : Adj (Subst) - Gen (Time) - M - S - ἔσχατος, -η, -ον - in, during the last

τῶν ἡμερῶν : 1 - Gen (Ref) - F - P - ἡμερα, ἡ - of these days

τούτων : Dem Pron - Gen - F - P - οὗτος, αὕτη, τοῦτο - of these (days)

ἐλάλησεν : 1 Aor (Culm) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - λαλέω - he has spoken

ἡμῖν : Pers Pron - Dat (Rev) - P - ἐγώ - to us

ἐν υἱῷ : 2 - Loc (Place) / Inst (Agency) - M - S - υἱός, ὁ - in / by his son

ὃν : Rel Pron - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - S - ὅς, ἧ, ὅ - whom

ἔθηκεν : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - τίθημι - He ordained, placed,

κληρονόμον : 2 - Acc (Pred Obj) - M - S - κληρονόμος, ὁ - heir

πάντων : Adj (Subst) - Gen (Ref) - N - P - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - of all things

δι’ οὗ : Rel Pron - Gen (Indir Agency) - M - S - ὅς, ἧ, ο - through whom

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction used here as adjunctive correlative adverb - also

ἐποίησεν : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - ποιέω - he made

τοὺς αἰῶνας : 3 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - P - αἰών, αἰῶνος, ὁ - the ages

1:3

ὃς : Rel Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - S - ὅς, ἧ, ὅ - who

ὢν : Pres (Desc) - Ptc (Adv: Concessive) - Nom - M - S - εἰμί - although being

ἀπαύγασμα : 3 - Nom (Pred) - N - S - ἀπαύγασμα, -ατος, τό - the radiance

τῆς δόξης : 1 - Gen (Ref) - F - S - δόξα, ἡ - of the glory

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two nouns - and

χαρακτήρ : 3 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - χαρακτήρ, τρῶς, ὁ - the image, likeness

τῆς ὑποστάσεως : 3 - Gen (Ref) - F - S - ὑπόστασις, -εως, ἡ - of his being, existence

αὐτοῦ : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - M - S - αὐτοχς, -ή, -ό - his

φέρων : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adv: Concess) - N - M - S - φέρω - although bearing, carrying

τε : Post positive coordinate conjunction linking two participles - and

τὰ πάντα : Adj (Subst) - Acc (Dir Obj) - N - P - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - all things

τῷ ῥήματι : 3 - Inst (Means) - N - S - ῥῆμα, -ατος, τό - by the (spoken) word

τῆς δυνάμεως : 3 - Gen (Desc) - F - S - δύναμις, -εως, ἡ - of his power

αὐτοῦ : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - M - S - αὐτοχς, -ή, -ό - his

καθαρισμὸν : 2 - Acc (Pred Obj) - M - S - καθαρισμός, ὁ - a cleansing

τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν : 1 - Gen (Obj) - F - P - ἁμαρτία, ἡ - of sins

ποιησάμενος : 1 Aor (Const) - Mid (Reflex) - Ptc (Adv: Temp) - Nom - M - S - ποιέω - after having made himself

ἐκάθισεν : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - καθίζω - he sat down
ἐν δεξιᾷ : Adj (Subst) - Loc (Place) - F - S - δεξιός, -ία, -ον - at the right hand
τῆς μεγαλωσύνης : 1 - Gen (Ref) - F - S - μεγαλωσύνη, ἡ - of the majesty
ἐν ὑψηλοῖς : Adj (Subst) - Loc (Place) - M - S - ὑψηλός, -ή, -όν - in the highest
1:4

τοσοῦτω : Dem Pron - Dat (Ref) - M - S - τοσοῦτος, τοσαύτη, τοσοῦτον - so much in regard to this one
κρείττων : Comp Adj (Pred) - Nom (Pred) - M - S - κρείττων, κρείσσω, -ονος - better, superior
γενόμενος : 2 Aor (Const) - Dep - Ptc (Adv: Modal) - γίνομαι - having become
τῶν ἀγγέλων : 2 - Abl (Comp) - M - P - ἄγγελος, ὁ - better than the angels / superior to the angels
ὅσῳ : Rel Pron - Dat (Ref) - M - S - ὅσος, -η, -ον - as much as concerning that one
διαφορώτερον : Comp Adj (Pred) - Nom (Pred) - N - S - διαφορώτερος, -α, -ον - greater, superior
παρ' αὐτούς : Pers Pron - Acc (Measure / Comparison) - M - P - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - beyond them
κεκληρονόμηκεν : Perf (Const) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - κληρονομέω - he has inherited,
ὄνομα : 3 - Acc (Dir Obj) - N - S - ὄνομα, -ατος, τό - a name

William Lane, Word Biblical Commentary (Heb 1-8, Logos Systems)

The expression τοσοῦτω...ὅσῳ, "as far above ... as," is excellent Greek but is used elsewhere in the NT in this precise form only in Heb 10:25. It is a very common formula in classical authors and can be found in writers plying a good literary Greek in the hellenistic period as well (*Ep. Arist.* 13, 182, 290; *Sir* 3:18; 4 *Macc* 15:5; Philo, discussed by Williamson, *Philo*, 93–95).

τοσοῦτω ...ὅσῳ : correlative construction the more this the more that, as much as this, as much as that . Thus as much as he is as much as his name is. Both of which are superior to the angels.

Translations:

NASB: having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

NRSV: having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

NLT: This shows that God's Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is far greater than their names.

NIV: So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

TEV: The Son was made greater than the angels, just as the name that God gave him is greater than theirs.

Message: far higher than any angel in rank and rule.

Mine: in regard to such a one having become superior than angels as much as the name he inherited is superior beyond them

1:5

Τίνι : Interrog Pron - Dat (Indir Obj) - M - S - τίς, τί - to whom
γὰρ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing an explanatory causal independent clause - for
εἶπέν : 2 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind (Interrog) - 3 - S - λέγω - die he say
ποτε : Adverb of time - ever, at any point of time
τῶν ἀγγέλων : 2 - Gen (Identify) - M - P - ἄγγελος, ὁ - of the angels
Υἱός : 2 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - υἱός, ὁ - my son
μου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - ἐγώ - my
εἶ : Pres (Desc) - Ind (Dec) - 2 - S - εἰμί - you are
σύ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - S - σύ - you
ἐγώ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - S - ἐγώ - I
σήμερον : Adverb of time - today, this day
γεγέννηκά : Perf (Cons) - Act - Ind - 1 - S - - I have birthed, given you birth, sired*
σε; : Pers Pron - Acc (Dir Obj) - S - σύ - you
καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses, the second one being implicit serving to introduce the scripture quote as the direct object of the implicit verb εἶπέν - and
πάλιν : Adverb of sequence - again, once more
Ἐγώ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - S - ἐγώ - I
ἔσομαι : Fut (Pred) - Ind - 1 - S - εἰμί - I will be
αὐτῷ : Pers Pron - Dat (Ref) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - to him, in regard to him
εἰς πατέρα : 3 - Acc (Ref / Comp) - M - S - πατήρ, -τρός, ὁ - as / like a father

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction introducing two independent clauses inside a scripture quote - and

αὐτός : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - he

ἔσται : Pres (Desc) - Ind - 3 - S - εἰμί - he is

μοι : Pers Pron - Dat (Ref) - S - ἐγώ - to me, in regard to me

εἰς υἱόν : 2 - Acc (Ref / Com) - M - S - υἱός, ὁ - as, like a son

1:6

ὅταν : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial indefinite temporal clause - whenever

δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing a second sentence standing in mild contrast to the preceding one - but, and

πάλιν : Adverb of sequence - again, at another time

εἰσαγάγη : 2 Aor (Const) - Act - Subjunctive (Potential) - 3 - S - - he may bring in, introduce

τὸν πρωτότοκον : Adj (Subst) - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - S - πρωτότοκος, -ον - the first born

εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην : 1 - Acc (Measure) - F - S - οἰκουμένη, ἡ - into the household, house

λέγει : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ind (Potential) - 3 - S - λέγω - he will say

Καὶ : Coordinate conjunction used here as a part of a scripture quote intending by the Hebrew writer to link this quote back to the preceding one - and

προσκυνησάτωσαν : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Imper (Entreaty) - 3 - P - προσκυνέω - let them worship

αὐτῷ : Pers Pron - Dat (Dir Obj) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - him

πάντες : Adj (Attrib) - Nom - M - P - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - all

ἄγγελοι : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - P - ἄγγελος, ὁ - angels

θεοῦ : 2 - Gen (Poss) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - of God, God's

1:7

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction introducing two sentences, here with second sentence continuing the string of quotations - and

πρὸς τοὺς ἀγγέλους : 2 - Acc (Ref) - M - P - ἄγγελος, ὁ - the angels

μὲν : Particle of emphasis - indeed

λέγει : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - λέγω - he says

Ὁ ποιῶν : Pres - Act - Ptc (Adj: Subst) - Nom (Subj) - M - S - ποιέω - the one making, creating

τοὺς ἀγγέλους : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - P - ἄγγελος, ὁ - the angels

αὐτοῦ : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - his

πνεύματα : 3 - Acc (Pred Obj) - N - P - πνεῦμα, -ατος, τό - spirits

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two implicit verbs ἐποίησεν in the scripture quote - and

τοὺς λειτουργοὺς : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - P - λειτουργός, ὁ - ministering servants

αὐτοῦ : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - his

πυρὸς : 3 - Gen (Ref) - N - S - πῦρ, πυρός, τό - of fire

φλόγα : 3 - Acc (Pred Obj) - F - P - φλόξ, -ογός, ἡ - flames

1:8

πρὸς τὸν υἱόν : 2 - Acc (Ref) - M - S - υἱός, ὁ - to the son

δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction linking two sentences with second having mild contrast to the first one - but, and

Ὁ θρόνος : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - S - θρόνος, ὁ - your throne

σου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your

ὁ θεός : 2 - Vocative - M - S - θεός, ὁ - o God

εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα : 3 - Acc (Measure) - M - P - αἰών, -ῶνος, ὁ - unto the ages

τοῦ αἰῶνος : 3 - Gen (Time) - M - S - αἰών, -ῶνος, ὁ - of the age

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking the two independent clause scripture quotes - and

ἡ ράβδος : 3 - Nom (Subj) - F - S - ράβδος, -ου, ἡ - the rod

τῆς εὐθύτητος : 3 - Gen (Obj) - F - S - εὐθύτης, -ητος, ἡ - of uprightness, (for enforcing uprightness)

ράβδος : 3 - Nom (Subj) - F - S - ράβδος, -ου, ἡ - the rod

τῆς βασιλείας : 1 - Gen (Obj) - F - S - βασιλεία, ἡ - of your kingdom

σου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your

1:9

ἠγάπησας : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Pred) - Nom - M - S - ἀγαπάω - having loved (participle reaches back to ὁ θεός above; cf. diagram for visual illustration. It could also be taken as substantival reaching back to the same reference point: he who loved...)

δικαιοσύνην : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - S - δικαιοσύνη, ἡ - righteousness

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two participle phrases - and

ἐμίσησας : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Pred) - Nom - M - S - μισέω - having hated (this is parallel to ἠγάπησας above)

ἀνομίαν : 1 - Act (Dir Obj) - F - S - ἀνομία, ἡ - lawlessness

διὰ τοῦτο : Dem Pron - Acc (Cause) - N - S - οὗτος, αὕτη, τοῦτο - because of this

ἔχρισέν : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - - he anointed

σε : Pers Pron - Acc (Dir Obj) - S - συ - you

ὁ θεός : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - God

ὁ θεός : 2 - Nom (Apposition) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - God

σου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your

ἔλαιον : 2 - Acc (Assoc) - N - S - ἔλαιον, τό - with the (olive) oil

ἀγαλλιάσεως : 3 - Gen (Desc) - F - S - ἀγαλλίασις, ἡ - of gladness

παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους : 2 - Acc (Assoc) - M - P - μέτοχος, ὁ - along side your partners, co-laborers

σου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your

1:10

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking a series of quotes with an implicit λέγει reaching back to verse seven - and

Σὺ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - S - συ - you

κατ' ἀρχάς : 1 - Gen (Time) - F - S - ἀρχή, ἡ - from the beginning

κύριε : 2 - Vocative - M - S - κύριος, ὁ - Lord

τὴν γῆν : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - S - γῆ, ἡ - the earth

ἐθεμελίωσας : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind - 2 - S - θεμελιώω - you have laid the foundations of, firmly established

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses inside the scripture quote - and

ἔργα : 2 - Nom (Pred) - N - P - ἔργον, τό - the works

τῶν χειρῶν : 3 - Gen (Subj) - F - P - χεῖρ, -ρός, ἡ - of your hands

σοῦ : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your

εἰσιν : Pres (Desc) - Ind - 3 - P - εἰμί - they are

οἱ οὐρανοί : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - P - οὐρανός, ὁ - the heavens, sky

1:11

αὐτοὶ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - P - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - they

ἀπολοῦνται : Fut (Pred) - Mid (Causative) - Ind - 3 - P - ἀπόλλυμι - they will come to destruction, ruin

σὺ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - S - συ - you

δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing independent clause with mild contrast - but, and

διαμένεις : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ind - 2 - S - διαμένω - you remain

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses inside the scripture quote - and

πάντες : Adj (Subst) - Nom (Subj) - M - P - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - all (people)

ὡς : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial comparative dependent clause - as, like

ἱμάτιον : 2 - Nom (Subj) - N - S - ἱμάτιον, τό - a garment, clothes, inner garment

παλαιωθήσονται : Fut (Pred) - Pass (NAE) - Ind - 3 - P - παλαιόω - they shall, will be made old, ancient

1:12

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses inside the scripture quote - and

ὡσεὶ : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial comparative dependent clause - just like

περιβόλαιον : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - N - S - - an outer garment, cloak

ἐλίξεις : Fut (Pred) - Act - Ind - 2 - S - ἐλίσσω - you will roll (them) up

αὐτούς : Pers Pron - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - P - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - them

ὡς : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial comparative dependent clause - like, as

ἱμάτιον : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - N - S - ἱμάτιον, τό - a garment, clothes, inner garment

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction used here in adverbial ascensive function - also
ἀλλαγῆσονται : Fut (Pred) - Pass (NAE) - Ind - 3 - P - ἀλλάσσω - they will be changed
σὺ : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - S - σύ - you
δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses with mild contrast between them
- but, and
ὁ αὐτὸς : Intens Pron - Nom (pred) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - the same
αὐτοῦ : Pres (Desc) - Ind - 2 - S - εἰμί - you are
καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses - and
τὰ ἔτη : 3 - Nom (Subj) - N - P - ἔτος, -ους, τό - your years
σου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - σύ - your
οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν : Fut (Pred) - Act - Ind - 3 - P - ἐκλείπω - they will not leave off, cease
1:13
πρὸς τίνα : Interrog Pron - Acc (Ref) - M - S - τίς, τί - to which (one)
δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses with mild contrast between them
- but, and
τῶν ἀγγέλων : 2 - Gen (Identity) - M - P - ἄγγελος, ὁ - of the angels
εἴρηκέν : Perf (Cons) - Act - Ind (Interrog) - 3 - S - - has he ever said
ποτε : Adverb of time - ever
Κάθου : Pres (Desc) - Dep - Imper (Com) - 2 - S - κάθημαι - be seated, sit down
ἐκ δεξιῶν : Adj (Subst) - Abl (Sep) - N - P - δεξιός, -ά, -όν - at my right [could not track down the reason for
the plural number rather than singular number; commentaries, lexicons etc. ignored this aspect.]
μου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - ἐγώ - my
ἕως ἄν : Subordinate conjunction with particle of indefiniteness introducing adverbial temporal indefinite
dependent clause - until
θῶ : 1 Aor (Const) - Ind - Subjunctive (Potent) - 1 - S - τίθημι - I place, lay
τοὺς ἐχθρούς : Adj (Subst) - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - P - ἐχθρός, -ά, -όν - your enemies
σου : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your
ὑποπόδιον : 2 - Acc (Pred Obj) - N - S - ὑποπόδιον, τό - as your footstool
τῶν ποδῶν : 3 - Gen (Adv) - N - P - πούς, ποδός, τό - for your feet
σου; : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - S - συ - your
1:14
οὐχὶ : Adverb of emphatic negation introducing interrogative statement expecting strong agreement - are
not --
πάντες : Adj (Subst) - Nom (Subj) - N - P - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - all
εἰσὶν : Pres (Desc) - Ind (Interrog) - 3 - P - εἰμί - are not all
λειτουργικά : Adj (Attrib) - Nom - N - P - λειτουργικός, -ή, -όν - ministering
πνεύματα : 3 - Nom (Pred) - N - P - πνεῦμα, -ατός, τό - spirits
εἰς διακονίαν : 1 - Acc (Purpose) - F - S - διακονία, ἡ - for service, ministry
ἀποστελλόμενα : Pres (Desc) - Pass (NAE) - Ptc (Adj: Pred) - Nom - N - P - ἀποστέλλω - being sent
διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Subst) - Acc (Advantage) - M - P - μέλλω - for the sake
of those going to
κληρονομεῖν : Pres (Desc) - Act - Infin (V: Obj) - κληρονομέω - to inherit
σωτηρίαν; : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - S - σωτηρία, ἡ - salvation