

Hebrews 1:3-4

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/heb/heb-1/hebrews-13-4/>

Christ is the exact representation of God and all things exist because of Christ. He is seated at the right hand of God and is greater than the angels.

Throughout these verses (and the rest of the chapter) Paul is showing the greatness of Jesus. Jesus is the creator and heir of the world, as we saw in the previous verses. In these verses, we see that He is also the *radiance* of God's *glory* and the *exact representation of His nature*. His word is so powerful that everything that exists only continues to exist because of the *word of His power*. Said another way, everything that exists continues to exist because Jesus says so. After Christ died on the cross and finished His work on earth, He went up to heaven and sat at the *right hand* of God, the *Majesty on high*.

Unlike Jesus, no angel has ever sat at the *right hand* of God. Because Jesus lived faithfully and obediently on earth, He is *much better than the angels* and *inherited a more excellent name than they*. This *name* that is more *excellent*, which Christ has *inherited*, is Son.

It is important to notice that Paul never refers to Jesus by His *name* or by "Christ," but instead uses the *name* Son. The emphasis is placed on the better *name* being Son, and Jesus has been given that *name*. He came down for the *purification of sins* of men, and He returned to take His rightful seat only after His mission had been fulfilled. Jesus received the *name* Son because of His obedience as a servant on earth. He was given the *name* Son and the inheritance of all things because He did what His Father asked Him to do.

Reading this as Christians in the 21st century, it might seem odd that Paul is making it clear that Christ is above the angels. But during that time there was a sect of Judaism that gave great prominence to angels. In laying out the purpose of angels, instructing the angels to worship the Son, and proclaiming Jesus as greater, Paul is making it clear that Christ is superior to the angels, He should be worshipped by them (and subsequently by man), and angels are not to be worshipped. Paul is also setting up an argument he will make in the next chapter that if the word delivered by angels (the Old Testament) is important and should be obeyed, then all the more the *word* delivered by Jesus should be heeded. It is by His *word* the entire world is sustained.

It might also be confusing that these verses refer to Jesus being named Son only after He completed His work on earth, these verses also make it clear that Jesus has been the Son of God from eternity past and created the world. Jesus is God. So how could Jesus be honored as “Son”? Further, this passage indicates Jesus obtained a *better name than the angels* after His time on earth, although Jesus, as God and the creator of all things created the angels. The answer to this dilemma is that Jesus receives of the title of “Son” for the work He did as a *human*. Although Jesus made creation, He became a part of creation by becoming a human, and because of His obedience as a human He will receive all of creation as an inheritance as a human. Jesus was already the Son of the Trinity. He was the Son of God, the eternal second person in the Trinity. When the Son became a man, named Jesus, he was made a little lower than the angels for a time, and because of His obedience Jesus was rewarded with a great reward, to be called King over humanity, and be elevated over all creation.

Paul will expound on this in the following verses, which are taken partly from [Psalm 2:7](#). This psalm relates to the Davidic Covenant God made with King David, which is fulfilled by Christ who was in the Davidic line. David likely wrote this psalm with his son Solomon in view, but Solomon ultimately failed in being faithful to God. Christ, however, was of David’s line, and lived perfectly faithful to God’s will, thus receiving the reward of rulership over the earth, a kingdom which will last forever.

This type of covenant is what was called a “Covenant of Grant,” just like the covenant God made with Abraham. A Covenant of Grant cannot be broken, though its benefits can be withheld if those in the covenant are unfaithful. Though Solomon failed to faithfully fulfill the covenant, God did not withdraw the covenant from the Davidic line. Christ fulfilled it. Because of this, Jesus is called Son, by God (v. 5), in an adoption ceremony which legitimizes the Covenant of Grant. Now, believers are partakers of this covenant; we can never lose out on our salvation in Christ, but if we are unfaithful in obedience, we can lose future rewards. This is what the book of Hebrews is about: believers should live faithfully, or else we’ll miss out on rewards from the King. The covenant won’t end (we won’t be cast out of God’s family, we won’t lose our justification before God’s throne), but we can lose rewards for failing to live faithfully.

Biblical Text:

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.