

# Great Son

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now I want to go back to Hebrews chapter 1 and the second section of this chapter. Now you may have noticed that it's full of quotes from the Old Testament.

I'm going to come back to that in a little while. But I want to begin by asking you the question which I hope is maybe sometimes a question that you ask yourselves. Why are we doing this? Now where are you here today?

Well maybe some of you guys are here because you were dragged along today by those in charge of you. But most of you, some of you, others may have been dragged along as well. But why are we here? Why have you got up early this morning to come to church?

Why do you do that every week? Why do we do these things? And I think that's a really significant question because I don't want anyone to be here ritualistically just for the sake of it.

And I don't think it does us any good if that's why we're here. I think it's important to ask the questions or to maybe not ask the questions but consider the importance first of all of looking into your heart.

[ 1 : 14 ] You're here because you need to be here to meet with Jesus Christ because your heart needs Him. Your heart's in a mess without Him. Your heart is black and dirty without Jesus cleansing.

And because He made us to worship Him. That's why we're here. He's made us to. I know we don't need to be here to worship Him. But He's made us to be in company with His people because it reflects what we're going to be doing in heaven.

And He wants us on His day to be coming together to worship Him. So as we look at our, but also as we look at the church. The church is in a mess. The church in Scotland is in a mess.

I don't know what it's like in San Diego, but it's in a mess in Scotland. And the church isn't declaring a clear message throughout the land. And in parts of the church, it doesn't even believe the Bible anymore.

So we need Jesus Christ and we need to get back again and again to Jesus Christ as the core of what we are. As church, otherwise we don't have anything and there isn't anything we have.

[ 2 : 20 ] But also we need to look at society, don't we? We need to look at the world in which we're living. In Scotland here, we live in a society, a generation that is increasingly militantly atheistic.

Militantly atheistic. Zealously atheistic. Fundamentally, dogmatically atheistic. And there is increasingly no place for Christianity in the marketplace of ideas in the society in which we live. It is banished from these places. Not only banished but hated. And we need to stand strong on our understanding of who Jesus Christ is.

In our lives and in our thinking. We know that he has transformed our lives as believers. We know in his power. And we also know that he has transformed the lives and worship of these people.

And we know that the ordinary people, and I'm not speaking about the chattering classes or the political dogmatists, I'm speaking just about ordinary people in the street.

[ 3 : 32 ] I think they're open to the gospel. I think they're open and interested in God. People are looking for belonging. They're looking for forgiveness. They're looking for more than just the meaninglessness of being atoms that have been brought together just by chance.

They're looking for intimacy. They're looking for a bigger picture in life. Not just the living for the weekend. The feeling of hangover on the Sunday morning or Monday morning.

But we will never tell them about Jesus if he's just so small that we can't even worship him. If we've kind of made him manageable and small and able to be just locked away in a tiny little box, we'll never tell him to others.

We'll never share him with others. We'll never live our lives worshiping him and serving him if he's this small. We will never do that unless we recognize him as he is revealed to us in Scripture. And Hebrews is a book given by the direction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit that is making Jesus Christ a big Christ.

[ 4 : 47 ] Recognizing who he is to challenge them, to challenge us, to remind us, to draw us to himself as the answer for our life and the answer for this world in which we live.

Remember last week we saw that the Hebrews, Christians, the Hebrew Jews who had become Christians to whom this was written, were kind of, were in danger of drifting back into Judaism. They were in danger of not seeing the relevance or the significance or the importance of Jesus Christ in their lives. Because they were being opposed, because they were being ostracized for their faith, because it was hard work being Christians, because they were finding it in society in which they lived a real struggle.

And I don't think it's that different for us today. So here we have this tremendous section where again the Holy Spirit is reminding us that Jesus is supreme.

If you go away with nothing else today, please go away with that from God's own living word. Again, just before we look at the magnificent seven quotes that are here.

[ 5 : 53 ] Can I just say, well, you might have read this or might have listened to this and thought, well actually what has this got to do with me? Because here the writer is comparing the supremacy of Jesus with angels.

And that's really what the whole passage is about. And well, I know that. Maybe you say, well, I know Jesus is superior to the angels. I don't have a problem with that. I don't have any issues with that.

So really this chapter is kind of irrelevant to me, because I don't make Jesus inferior to the angels. But can I say a couple of quick things about that? One, we've been reminded first of a very important unseen world, the unseen spiritual world that does include angels.

We don't talk about, well, in our tradition we don't talk that much about angels. But there's hundreds of references to angels in the Bible. And Jesus mentions angels all the time. He knows all about them.

And he's quite happy to mention angels. And it's reminding us that there is this unseen world. I'll say a little bit more about that just at the end. So don't mock or decry the teaching on angels.

[ 7 : 02 ] But also, because the writer, when he's writing about Jesus being superior to angels, is writing into a real situation. This was a real situation.

It was a real problem to these people. In the Jewish tradition, angels were very, very important. And it seems that some of them were tempted to make angels, particularly the Archangel Michael, more important and superior to Jesus himself.

So there was this issue in which they were shrinking Jesus down and making Him unimportant and making angels very important. I'm not sure if it was to the point of worshiping Him.

That was a problem in the church in Colossae. But certainly, they were getting towards that, where it was a real issue. They were taking something good, but they were putting it in the wrong place.

They were putting it in ahead of Jesus. So it may not be for us that we take angels and worship them instead of Jesus. But maybe today there is something good that you're tempted to put, or I'm tempted to put, ahead of Jesus in the same way.

[ 8 : 13 ] Something good in itself. Maybe it's your reformed theology. Maybe it's your denominational links. It's the congregation here. Maybe it's your family. Maybe it's your career.

All good things in and of themselves, but they're not to replace Jesus. They're not to become superior to Jesus. We're not to focus all our energy and efforts on Him as if they're worth worshiping, because they're all fleeting and passing away.

And good though they may be in themselves, they must be placed in the order of things where Jesus Christ, for us as Christians, as believers, is supreme and Lord overall.

So I just want to go through very quickly, very briefly, these seven magnificent quotations that are taken from the Old Testament that is used here by God to describe who Jesus is.

So we've got this great link between the Old and the New. It's a great link between the readiness of Jesus being prepared in the Old Testament and Jesus known in the New Testament.

[ 9 : 19 ] In verse 5 we're told, To which of the angels did God ever say, You're my Son, today I have become your Father. And in this quote from Sam 2 that we were singing, Sam 2 that speaks

about Jesus, it reminds us today, I hope, why it's very important for us to keep singing the Psalms, their gods, and it's a God's order of praise for the Old Testament church, and one that we continue singing with New Testament light.

And we see that they also speak about Jesus, so it's important for us to keep singing them. But we also enjoy singing the glorious truths that are revealed through the New Testament covenant and the truths that we sing in the hymns that we do.

But here is this reminder that Christ is eternally the Son. He's always been the Son of God, but he has declared the Son of God in power at his resurrection.

And this Sam is prophesying this resurrection of Jesus Christ where he is ascended and he sits, as we saw last week at the right hand of the Father, Paul and 2 Corinthians.

No, sorry, it's not, it's in Acts, it's Peter in Acts chapter 13. If you'll look up this with me because it'll help put it into place for you in Acts chapter 13 and at verse 32, it is Paul is preaching and he says, We tell you the good news, the good news is the same word for gospel, the good news of the gospel.

[10:58] What God promised to our fathers, he has fulfilled for us their children by raising up Jesus as it's written in the second Sam, you are my son, today I've become your father.

The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words. I will give you the holy and sure blessing promised to David. And it's associated then his declared sonship with this enthronement and with his exultation in heaven.

Jesus Christ, if we pray to Jesus Christ, we remind ourselves we're praying to one who is enthroned in heaven today.

He is sustaining this whole world, sustaining your ability to be here today. God is enthroned, Jesus Christ, it doesn't get bigger than that.

And in Romans 8, 14 and 2 Corinthians 3, we're reminded because of what he's done, we too are sons and daughters of Jesus Christ, which means we will also reign with him.

[12:05] So it is bringing to us a bigger picture of our lives, bigger than just our career, bigger than just even what we're doing. And I know sometimes it doesn't seem very, maybe significant when you're younger, but when you're getting really old like me, it becomes very significant because you know you haven't got long to live.

And you know life is passing quickly and death becomes something that's more real. And the reality of eternity is something that is greater and so we think about it more.

And it's an encouragement for all of us to remember where our sonship lies, our daughter who lies. It's in Jesus Christ and we live forever with him. He's usually significant, he's the son. But also then secondly he says, or again, I will be his father and he will be my son.

And this is a quote from 2 Samuel 7 verse 14. And it's speaking originally of David and then of David's son Solomon and his greater son Jesus.

Speaking of the Messiah, it's a messianic promise. It's a given to David to remind him that he would have another son who would be on his throne, but it's pointing forward to a greater son who would live on the throne forever and ever.

[13:32] Because Solomon failed, didn't he, in his life ended in sadness. And sometimes when we look at the promises of God, maybe sometimes people around Solomon's time look at the promise of God and say, David, God's promise has failed.

And yet sometimes we need to stand back and wait and see the bigger promise, the bigger fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Maybe today you feel a promise of God in your life has failed, you've asked him, you say he's promised, he hasn't given.

I'm saying wait on him and know that he can never break his promise. His promise will be fulfilled. It might not be the way we expect, it might not be the way we're looking for, but he will in goodness and in grace fulfil his promise.

And then the third promise, or the third quote here is in verse 6. And again, when he brings his firstborn into the world, he says, let all the angels worship him.

He's wanting to get across how important and how more significant Jesus is than the angels. Now we can remember the great story, and we'll be coming to that towards Christmas time, the great story of Luke 2 of the birth of Jesus Christ and the birth of Jesus Christ.

[14:53] We all know the story of the birth of Jesus Christ. We remember one year in the Nativity, the carol service here, the angels popped out of the pulpit, and they worshiped God and the little

kids. Do you remember that? It all popped up, the angels worshiped.

We remember that, but we remember that it was an innumerable host of angels when Jesus was born and who worshiped him because he was superior to them. And Luke 2 reminds us of that, and this quotation reminds us that God says, let all the angels worship him from Deuteronomy 32, 43. They descended to worship Jesus Christ. There's no comp... if the angels who are divine beings, spirit beings, perfect beings, if they created, certainly, but nonetheless perfect, if they worship Jesus Christ, how much more should we worship Jesus Christ?

Do we worship Jesus Christ? We come to church, we sing hymns and psalms, we pray, we say we're Christians, but do we worship Him? And we only worship Him truly when we submit to His Lordship, and then we recognize who He is.

So there's worship. So he's got these first three that speak about the superiority of Jesus, and then we have a quote about the angels themselves. Speaking of the angels in verse 7, he says, he makes them angels, winds, and his servants, flames of fire, some Psalm 104.

[16:25] And it's really just in the middle of this magnificent seven, you get three that take about how Jesus is superior. One about the angels, talks about their role. Another three about how superior Jesus is in his being.

And here's just a short quote, poetic quote, about the angels who are servants who do God's will, like wind and flames of fire.

And a statement of their servanthood, that's what they have come to do, angels serve God. We might not see that, we'll see that very briefly at the end, angels serve God.

But it's interesting, isn't it? It's like wind and fire, they make great servants. Wind and fire are great servants, but they're terrible masters.

And when fire gets out of control, it's a terrible thing, a great thing in a fireplace. But when fire is lord and in control, it can be devastating and powerful.

[17:28] And I wonder sometimes here if there's even a kind of mention or a thought about Satan, who's a fallen angel, and how, as a servant was a great servant of God, but when he seeks his own mastery, when he seeks to be in control himself, when he searches God's authority, he's thrown out, but he becomes a terrible master.

And out of Christ, it's a terrible thing because Satan's a terrible master. And he blinds and he corrupts and he abuses and he divides and he separates people from one another and from God. So there's that picture. Then we go back briefly to the last three which speak again about Jesus and his supremacy in verses 8 and 9 we have that great supremacy speaking of his throne which lasts forever and ever and righteousness is the sceptre of his throne.

And tremendous picture we sung about in the Psalms as well of God the Father here calling God the Son God.

But about the Son, we're told God says, your throne, oh God, will last forever and ever. So God the Son is on the throne. It's an everlasting rule.

[18:47] It's a rule of righteousness, not wickedness. So there's this great reality isn't there? In the big picture of things, in the massive picture of things, there's righteousness and there's wickedness.

And God's is a rule of righteousness in Jesus Christ. And we've got the wonderful truth from 1 Peter 3 which says, for Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous to bring us to God.

So we come to God through Jesus Christ and we are made righteous through his Son. And his rule is our righteous rule.

And we will be in his kingdom only when we are covered in his righteousness. We can't really stroll up on the last days, hey, except me.

Because I've tried my hardest, I've been my best, but I've ignored your righteousness. And I haven't needed you as my Savior. I've taken good things, but I've made them divine things.

[19:50] I've worshiped them instead of worshiping you. But they're good things. And I'm a good person. And many people will go on that day, I believe, and say they're good people. And they will be good people as they judge themselves by everyone else's standards.

But God says, I know at a human level you're good, but I also know your heart. And I also know that there is a sin and a selfishness and a separation from me.

And that you've ignored my love and that you've ignored my sacrifice in the cross. And it's a throne and a rule of righteousness.

He is taken on the cross, a unique forsakenness. You do not want to have to bear that forsakenness at any point. And He has done that joyfully.

I don't understand why, well I do, I understand why so much of our lives is joyless. Because it's a battle, I know that.

[ 20 : 55 ] But sometimes we make Jesus and the gospel and the truth so joyless. And we make God so joyless as if He's kind of got a whip there. And He's driving us to follow Him.

But we're told here that God has set you above your companions, above any other king or lordship. By anointing you with the oil of joy. There was great joy in Jesus doing what He did.

There was great joy in God seeing the solution and being involved in the solution and being forsaken. And having to forsake in order that His children could belong and be part of the kingdom again.

You know I've got four children. And anyone here who's got children knows that they will do anything. They will do anything to bring joy into their life as long as we think it's good for them.

And we would love, we'd love, we'd love to be able to make everyone who we are responsible for believe and know and have a deeper faith than we have and be joyful in Christ.

[ 21 : 57 ] We would love all that. Because we have joy to make our children, give our children gifts, good things. But here's, God takes glory in what He's doing in this everlasting year.

It's great joy to Him to offer us His love and His grace and His forgiveness. And it's an important picture. It's a picture of His incomparable grace.

And yet sometimes we choose to live in the prison of mundane living, of pursuit of pleasure or wealth or ease or comfort. And we reject the palace of divine company and the joy that He brings.

Because sometimes it's just too bright and we rather the darkness. But we must stop and consider our last breath and consider eternity and consider what then?

Well what then? What then? Neverlast in kingdom of righteousness. Sixthly, very briefly, it's a permanent kingdom.

[ 23 : 06 ] In the beginning He says, Lord, you lay the foundations, they will perish but you remain. They will wait out like a garment, you will row them like a robe. Like a garment they will be changed. You remain the same, your years will never end.

Again, a quote from Psalm 102. Telling us that Christ's kingdom will never end. God is eternal, God is always there. This building will go in a hundred years from now, there will be nobody here who's here today.

It will all be changed. A couple of generations, people look at the grave that we're at and they'll not know who we were. Things will be changed, everything will be new.

Everything will be moved on. Apart from this permanent God, He will always be the same. And He uses this lovely picture of our lives being like clothes. We get new clothes and we love them.

And they're great and we wear them. And then they get washed a few times and then they get ripped a little bit. And they get worn and used up and eventually we throw them out.

[ 24 : 08 ] Because they're impermanent. We do always wear clothes. They go out of fashion. They wear out. And things that we loved at the beginning, well, they're kind of old hat at the end. And it's impermanent.

And He says, it's like the impermanent wardrobe of life in which we live. We're passing on. We're moving through. But God is eternal. Christ is always there. So when someone is eternal, when someone is always there, when he was there at the beginning in creation, when he's now here at the end and his years will never end, then he's worthy of our worship.

And he loves us to hear our worship. And he is this amazing, permanent Redeemer. May we grasp the significance of that? And one last, very important point.

Last quote from this magnificent seven quotes. And it's also from Sam 110, a Sam that is quoted 25 times in the New Testament. So it has a lot to say to the New Testament church.

But he says, to which of the angels did they ever sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a foots dough for your feet? So the last of these great magnificent seven quotes is saying something very important to us.

[ 25 : 21 ] It's reminding us that while God is enthroned, and we've looked at all of that and we've seen He's enthroned, it's also saying He still has enemies.

He still has enemies. Still has enemies. He has not yet, Hebrews 2-8, put everything under his feet.

Now that is really important, because that means we still live spiritually speaking. For the few short years we're here, we still live in enemy territory. Hence why I said what I said at the beginning. Because it's a battle. Because people want to destroy Christianity, because it's a struggle to keep going. Because people don't believe, we're saying that still, though He's defeated, He is not destroyed, and He thrashes out like an animal in His last throes of life.

But still can be hurtful, and still can make it difficult. But this is a great promise, He says, that God is sovereign and in control, and that one day these enemies will all be the footstools to Him for His feet.

[ 26 : 35 ] That they will be destroyed. That this isn't how it will always be. That there's going to be a heaven where all our enemies spiritually are destroyed. For unbelief, for doubt, for fear, for temptation, for opposition inside, outside, all around us will be destroyed and defeated.

And we'll live in His righteous kingdom forever. Now you might think, well, that's pie in the sky.

That's the truth of God's word. That is all fitted in from the Old Testament to the New Testament, with the prism of the cross right there, with Jesus' finished work, which we know about, and He's enthroned, resurrected, enthroned, and He is returning, and He is this everlasting kingdom.

And so, in conclusion, the battle, the struggle, the enemy-territory we live in is difficult, but He says, I give you angels as ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation.

I really hope that one day we will be able to see, probably not in this life, but maybe as we look back from heaven, I really hope we'll be able to see a kind of replay, rewind of our lives with 3D angel vision that will show us how many times the angels ministered to us in ways we didn't know.

I think that will be a hugely exciting and beautiful thing to see. I have no idea how many times angels have touched your life or mine, or protected us from things that we are unaware of, but I believe that they are ministering spirits sent to serve those who inherit salvation, of which we are apart.

[ 28 : 32 ] And it's a great encouragement that there are spiritual forces governed by the Lord Jesus Christ, who protect and look after us as His believers.

2 Kings chapter 6, verses 15 and 16, where Elijah thought he was on his own and was struggling. The servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city.

Oh my Lord, what shall we do? the servant asked. Don't be afraid, the prophet answered. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.

Elijah prayed, oh Lord, open his eyes so that he may see. Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes and looked, and saw the hill full of horses and chariots of fire all around Alisha.

[ 29 : 42 ] That's a great picture. And again, I think I mentioned last week about digital stuff, and I'd love to see some cinematographic ability being used to digitalize that picture and see this great army chariots of fire, angels, servants of fire sent to protect and serve God's people.

And that's a beautiful Old Testament picture, but I hope that one day we will see and understand a little bit more of that spiritual dimension of life and the way God gives his armies of angels to protect his people.

That's a great hope and it's a great promise, and we have the Holy Spirit in our hearts as well to enable us to persevere, to keep going and to worship the King of Kings.

I continue to hope and pray, and I hope that you will pray over the course of these next number of months that by the end of this, even as we begin, that we will see more clearly the supremacy of Jesus, be able to worship him better, serve him more joyfully, and believe in him in our battles and struggles, and have greater faith because of who he reveals himself to be as the one enthroned in heaven.

Let's bow our heads and pray together. May God help us to see you and know you and understand you and believe in you and believe in the word that you have given to us, which helps not only to visualize Jesus in the gospels and know Jesus in our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit, but also to have him verbalized in his character through what he says and also his promises and through all of scripture given to us.

[ 31 : 32 ] We thank you for the amazing unity of Old and New Testament, as it all looks to and points to Jesus Christ and prepares for him. And may we be those who are servants of the Most High God, and may we not ever allow the good things of life to be given the wrong place and to dethrone Jesus Christ from his place as the sustainer of this universe and also the giver of the gift of life to each of us today.

So help us as we conclude by singing a Psalm of praise and may it be that we are able to sing that from our hearts and recognize it as a word to sing of the coming Messiah, which we with our New Testament perspective can understand and appreciate more and more.  
Do forgive our sins, Lord, forgive our blindness, forgive our inability to often see and to believe and to persevere and continue with us as we pray and worship for Jesus' sake. Amen.