

Hebrews 1:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Analysis

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. The third Old Testament quotation demonstrates angels' subordination to Christ by showing they are commanded to worship Him. "When he bringeth in the firstbegotten" (hotan de palin eisagagē ton prōtotokon eis tēn oikoumenēn, ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην) may refer to Christ's incarnation, His second coming, or both—the word palin ("again") could modify "bringeth in" (bringing Him again into the world at the second advent) or connect to the previous "again" in verse 5 (introducing another quotation).

The title "firstbegotten" (prōtotokon, πρωτότοκον, "firstborn") doesn't mean Christ was created first but emphasizes His preeminence and supremacy (Colossians 1:15-18). In biblical usage, "firstborn" carried rights of inheritance, authority, and honor—it was a title of rank, not merely chronological order. Christ is the supreme heir, the one possessing all rights and honors.

The quotation "let all the angels of God worship him" comes from Deuteronomy 32:43 (LXX) or possibly Psalm 97:7. The verb "worship" (proskynesatōsan, προσκυνησάτωσαν) indicates the reverence and homage due to deity alone. That all angels are commanded to worship Christ definitively proves His deity and superiority. Created beings worship Him; therefore He is not a created being but God Himself. If angels are to worship Christ, how much more should humans worship and trust Him completely.

Historical Context

The command for angels to worship Christ would have shocked any first-century Jew who viewed worship as belonging exclusively to Yahweh. Jewish monotheism rigorously guarded against worshiping any created being, including angels (Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9). The Dead Sea Scrolls and other Second Temple literature show that while angels were honored and their ministry appreciated, worship was reserved for God alone.

By citing Scripture that commands angels to worship Christ, the author makes an unmistakable claim: Christ is Yahweh, God incarnate. This isn't angel veneration or the worship of a created being; it is the acknowledgment of Christ's full deity. The Old Testament passages quoted were originally about Yahweh; their application to Christ identifies Him as Yahweh manifest in flesh.

Some first-century believers, influenced by Jewish angelology or incipient Gnostic ideas, may have viewed Christ as an exalted angel or intermediary figure—higher than humans but less than God. This verse demolishes such christology. Angels worship Christ; therefore Christ cannot be an angel. He is the object of angelic worship, the Creator they serve, the Lord they obey. This establishes the foundation for Christian orthodoxy's insistence on Christ's full deity as essential to the gospel.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the fact that angels worship Christ affect your own worship and devotion to Him?
2. Why is Christ's full deity essential to the gospel and to Christian assurance of salvation?

3. In what ways might believers today be tempted to seek help from spiritual beings or forces rather than trusting Christ's supreme authority?

Interlinear Text

ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν
when And again he bringeth in the firstbegotten into G3588 G4416 G1519 G3588
G3752 G1161 G3825 G1521 G4416 G1519 G3588

οἰκουμένην λέγει Καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες
the world he saith And let him all G3625 G3004 G2532 G4352 G846 G3956
G3625 G3004 G2532 G4352 G846 G3956

ἄγγελοι θεοῦ
the angels of God
G32 G2316

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:43 (Parallel theme): Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

Colossians 1:18 (Parallel theme): And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:15 (References God): Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Psalms 97:7 (Worship): Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

1 Peter 3:22 (References God): Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

John 1:14 (Parallel theme): And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Romans 8:29 (Parallel theme): For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Revelation 1:5 (Parallel theme): And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

1 John 4:9 (References God): In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

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