

Hebrews 1-2: The Son and the Angels

1:5-2:18, The Son and the Angels

Having introduced the notion of the Son and the Angels in 1:1-4, the author now explores their relation in more detail.

Angels come into focus in the latter chapters of Daniel, and were the subject of much attention in first century Judaism. In Colossae, people were being urged to view them as exemplars of how to worship God, neglecting the direct access available to them through the Messiah. Even today, many nominal Christians are far more interested in angels than they are in their Savior. We, no less than the recipients of this letter, need to keep our focus on the Lord Jesus.

In the rest of ch. 1, he reinforces the notion from v. 4 that the Son is *higher* than the angels, while in 2:5-18 he presents the paradoxical notion that he became for a while *lower* than the angels. In between the two, he warns his readers not to neglect the salvation that the Son has procured for them (Figure 1, chart).

1:5-14, The Son in Heaven

In 1:4, the author claims that the Son is superior to angels, both because of his position as God's Son (from Psalm 2) and because of his elevation to the Father's right hand (Psalm 110) as a result of his redemptive work. Now he backs up this argument with a much larger set of quotations, beginning and ending with parallel questions in vv. 5 and 13, "to which of the angels did he ever say ...?" The question in v. 5 is based on Psalm 2, like 1:2b "whom he hath appointed heir of all things," and that in v. 13 is based on Psalm 110, like 1:4.

The writer does not try to explain his citations (as he does citations in later chapters), but simply presents them in four groups, each introduced by a verb of speaking (Table 1, chart).

Epistle to the Hebrews
1:1-10:25, The Person and Work of the Son
1:1-4, Introduction
1:5-2:18, His Person: the Son & the Angels
1:1-14, Higher than the Angels
2:1-4, Warning : Neglect
2:5-18, Lower than the Angels
3:1-4:13, Exhortation & Warning : Unbelief
4:14-10:25, His Work: the Son & the Priests
4:14-16, Opening: Hold Fast & Draw Near
5:1-7:28, Earthly Priesthood
5:11-6:12, Warning : Stagnation
8:1-10:18, Heavenly Priesthood
10:19-25, Closing: Draw Near & Hold Fast
10:26-13:19, The Life of the Sons
10:26-31, Warning : Willful Sin
10:32-12:24, The Believer's Attitude
10:32-39, Exhortation: Patience
11:1-40, Exposition: Faith
12:1-24, Exhortation: Patience
12:25-29, Warning : Refusing God
13:1-19, Exhortation: Life in Community
13:20-25, Epistolary Close

Figure 1: Initial Structure for Hebrews

Verses	Introductory Verb	Citations	Summary	Rhetoric
5	said he (aorist)	Ps 2:7; 2 Sam 7:14	the Son, not the angels, is the Messianic heir	Unique feature of the Son
6	he saith (present)	Ps 97:7; Deut 32:43 (LXX)	the angels are commanded to worship the Son when he comes again	Subjection of angels to the Son
7-12	he saith (present)	Ps 104:4; 45:6, 7; 102:25-27	the angels are servants; the Son is the King	
13	said he (perfect)	Ps 110:1	the Son, not the angels, is enthroned at the Father's right hand	Unique feature of the Son

Table 1: OT Citations in 1:5-13

Declaration as God's Messianic Son. The first two verses, from Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14, are familiar to us from our studies in Psalms. They both recall God's covenant with David to set up David's offspring as God's Son, the Messianic king.

5 For unto which of the angels said [aorist] he at any time, [Ps 2:7] Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?

And again, [2 Sam 7:14] I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?--The point is not that angels are never called sons of God. They are (Gen 6:2, 4; Job. 2:1; 38:7). The focus is much narrower: they are not the recipients of the Messianic promise.

Angels to worship the Son. Another verb of speaking introduces a new citation.

6 And again, when he again bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world,--The title "firstbegotten" applied to the Messiah is another link with Colossians 1.

The Greek word order favors associating "again" with "bringeth into the world," rather than understanding it (as in v. 5) as simply introducing another quotation. This is also consistent with the term for "world" that he uses (οικουμένη, Strong 3625, "inhabited earth"), which appears again in the next chapter to describe the coming kingdom:

Heb 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection **the world** to come, whereof we speak.

The consistent promise of the OT and NT is that the Lord will one day come to earth to subdue his enemies and establish his kingdom. Nowhere is that stronger than in the royal Psalms, 92-100 (Figure 2, chart), where our author turns for his next citation.

he saith [present], [Ps 97:7 LXX] And let all the angels of God worship him.--The original setting of Heb 1:6 is in Psalm 97:

Psa 97:1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. ... 5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. ... 7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods [LXX: his angels]¹

	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
The LORD is King over All Gods									
The LORD comes in Judgment									
The LORD shows Lovingkindness									
Worship in the LORD's Temple									
The LORD rules the Nations									

Figure 2: The Royal Psalms, 92-100

When the Lord comes to set up his reign (Ps 97:1), his angels are called upon to worship him. In the original context, the one who is coming, and whom they are to worship, is the LORD, Jehovah. Our writer applies the verse to the Son, fully expecting his hearers to accept what he says. He has already claimed that the Son is the brightness emerging from God's glory, and expects that his readers will share his view of the Son's deity. Passages like this, where a NT

1 The last clause of Ps 97:7 was incorporated into the LXX of Moses' song in Deut 32:43, which closes Moses' history of Israel with the anticipation of the Lord's coming earthly rule, and also into other Jewish literature (e.g., Odes 2:43b, from the Odes appended to the LXX Psalter), and a slight verbal difference between Heb 1:6 and Ps 97:7 suggests that this is the version that the author remembers in writing his citation. But the parallel reference in the expansion of Deut 32:43 to "the sons of God" would challenge the distinction that the author is making between angels and the Son of God, and makes it unlikely that the author intends to draw his reader's attention to that text. See Ellingworth and Delitzsch for discussion.

writer applies an OT text about Jehovah to the Lord Jesus, are among the strongest evidence for the deity of our Lord. Compare the Lord's superiority to spiritual powers in Col 1:16.

Servants vs. Reigning King. The third group of quotations, like Ps 97:7, contrasts angels and the Son. The angels are God's servants; the Son is the one whom they serve.

7 And of [προς + acc] the angels he saith [present], [Ps 104:4] Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.--This verse comes from the first Hallelujah Psalm, which praises God for his blessings in creation, working through the seven days of Genesis 1-2 (see notes on Psalm 103). In our version, the context, describing Day 1, reads (chart),

Psa 104:2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: 3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: 4 Who maketh his angels spirits [winds]; his ministers a flaming fire:²

Winds and lightening are not random acts of nature, but the actions of his angels. The key word for his definition of "angels" is its poetic parallel "ministers" (λειτουργους, G3011), the regular counterpart of the Hebrew root שרת (H8334), as δουλος (G1401) and παις (G3816) are of עבד (H5650). As one writer observes,

The minister differed from the servant or slave, in that the latter performed what we call menial duties, or at any rate was expected to toil for his master, whereas the former was a person in attendance on a king, prince, or great personage, to render such honourable service as would be acceptable.³

For the most part throughout the OT, God's "ministers" are the priests and Levites (e.g., Jer 33:21). This is probably the sense in the previous Psalm, which calls the Lord's hosts (plural, elsewhere always of Israel) his ministers.

103:20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. 21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; **ye ministers of his**, that do his pleasure. 22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

So in the OT, the angels are subservient to the Lord, his ministers, like the Levites.

8 But unto of [προς + acc] the Son he saith,--In contrast, he exhibits two texts that address Jehovah and applies them to the Lord Jesus.

[Ps 45:6-7] Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.--The Targum recognizes that the Psalm is addressed to Messiah.⁴ So our writer would not encounter great opposition in applying this Psalm to the Son. He is no servant, but the one who reigns on the throne preeminent over all things (Col 1:18).

2 Translations are divided over which noun is the material and which is the product in the quoted verse, going back to Geneva (which makes "wind" and "fire" the material) and the Bishop's Bible (followed by the KJV). See notes on Psalm 104 and the article by Swinson quoted there for more discussion, and support of the KJV rendering. We really need a careful study of word order in verbs that take double accusatives.

3 Girdlestone, under "Ministry, Minister" (pp. 246-247).

4 They translate v. 2, "Thou art fairer than the children of men," as "Your beauty, O King Messiah, is greater than the sons of men."

10 And, [Ps 102:25-27] Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.--Having already said that the Son was involved in creation (1:2, cf. Colossians 1 and John 1), he applies this Psalm to the Son, particularly since the Lord's role in it is the deliverer who comes to Zion:

Psa 102:13 Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. ... 16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

"In the beginning" also takes us back to John 1:1. The contrast in this third section is thus between the Son, who is called "God" and "Lord" and who reigns on his throne and is creator of the universe, and angels, who (like the Levites) minister to the Lord.

At the Lord's Right Hand. The fourth and final section of his list of citations brings us back to Psalm 110. He leaves the direct contrasts of the center two citations for one more promise to the Son that angels never received

13 But to which of the angels said [perfect] he at any time, [Ps 110:1] Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?--Note the perfect tense of the verb, in contrast with the aorist in v. 5. God's statement has ongoing relevance for us. In this case, the promise that he will subdue his enemies, another evidence of the preeminence from Col 1:18, leads to the exhortation in 2:1-4.

The writer's citations are almost all from the Psalms (Table 2 chart). He quotes 2 Sam 7:14 only as background to Ps 2:7, and though v. 6 appears in the LXX of Deut 32:43, its likely origin is in Ps 97:7, as shown by the writer's association of it with the second coming.

Verses	Citations	Location in Psalter
5	Ps 2:7 ← 2 Sm 7:14	Opening Messianic promise
6	Ps 97:7 → Dt 32:43 (LXX)	Book 4 (Mature Faith): The Lord Reigns
7-12	Ps 104:4 Ps 45:6, 7 Ps 102:25-27	Book 4 (Mature Faith): Closing Hallelujahs Book 2 (Communication): Messianic Wedding Book 4 (Mature Faith): Promise of David's Reign
13	Ps 110:1	Book 5 (Consummation): Awaiting Final Victory

Table 2: The Citations in the Psalter

This series recalls vv. 1-4, which also begins with a reference to Psalm 2, and ends with an allusion to Psalm 110. In addition, Table 2 shows where these Psalms appear in the overall structure of the Psalter. Four out of six are from Books 4 and 5. All of them promise the coming Messianic kingdom. Even Deut 32:43, in its context, envisions the conquest of the nations by Israel, a foreshadowing of the day when God's kingdom comes "on earth, as it is in heaven." The use of these verses shows the author's interest in this coming time, leading to a recurring emphasis on last things throughout the epistle:

Heb 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection **the world to come**,

Heb 6:5 have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of **the world to come**,

Now the citations are complete. The focus has been on the Son and the Angels. Vv. 1-4 began and ended emphasizing that the Son is God's heir over the entire world:

Heb 1:2 his Son, whom he hath appointed **heir** of all things

Heb 1:4 he hath by **inheritance** obtained a more excellent name than they.

And his superiority to the angels is proven by recognizing that they, like the Levites, are simply the **ministers** of God, while the Son is himself God. Only when we have these two ideas firmly in mind are we prepared for the amazing statement that closes this chapter:

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?--“Ministering” (λειτουργικός G3010) and “spirits” take us back to his quotation of Psalm 104 in v. 7. Yes, they are ministering spirits, and (as we saw in Psalm 104), they minister to the Son, the one who (we’ve been told twice) is the Father’s heir. This verse would be a lovely summary if it said, “They are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister *to the Son*, who is the heir of all things.”

Instead, the author brings us into the picture. Up to this point, we have been on the sidelines, the recipients of God’s revelation in the Son (v. 2) and the objects of the Son’s purging work (v. 3). With such blessings, it would be enough for us to continue as God’s ministers, or even his servants. But now we are heirs, the Son’s title. And now the angels, who are *his* ministers, are sent to minister to *us*. Yet this is the position to which the Lord has brought us. Before we finish the next chapter we will learn that the Father’s purpose (2:10) is to “bring[] many sons to glory.”

Paul already anticipated our honor of becoming joint-heirs with Christ (chart):

Rom 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:
17 And if children, then **heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ**; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

As for angelic ministers, throughout Scripture, we find angels in attendance on God’s people.

- Angels accompanied the Lord to visit Abraham at Mamre (Gen 18:2, cf. 19:1)
- It is under the title of “angel of the Lord” that the pre-incarnate Son of God came to Hagar (Gen 16:7-11; 21:17), Moses (Ex 3:2), Gideon (Judg 6:11-12), Manoah and his wife (Judg 13:3, 13), and Elijah (1 King 19:7), and protected Hezekiah from the Assyrians (2 Ki 19:35)
- An angel shut the mouth of the lions to protect Daniel (Dan 6:22)
- The angel of the Lord defended Joshua the high priest from Satan’s accusations (Zechariah 3).

David confesses,

Psa 34:7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

So in Chapter 1, having established the exalted status of the Son of God as heir, the one to whom the angels minister, the writer tells us that we also are heirs and they also minister to us.

2:1-4, Warning against Neglect

The next four verses are the first of the five famous “warning passages” in Hebrews. As we observed in our introduction to the book, it’s a mistake to lump all of these warnings together under a single theme. Each seems to have a distinct focus.

- This first one warns about “slipping away” (v. 1) and “neglecting” (v. 3) what they have heard.
- 3:12 warns against “an evil heart of unbelief.”
- 5:12 expresses concern about spiritual stagnation in those who “for the time ... ought to be teachers.”
- 10:26 warns those who “sin wilfully after [they] have received the knowledge of the truth.
- 12:25 urges us, “refuse not him that speaketh.”

2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard,--“Therefore” means “in light of what we have just said.” The writer has prepared for this warning with a carrot and a stick:

1. The stick is the perfect tense of “he saith” in v. 13. This tense indicates that this particular citation, with its reference to coming judgment on the Lord’s enemies, has continuing implications. The day will come when Messiah’s enemies will be placed under his feet.
2. The carrot is v. 14, the exalted status of those whom the Lord has purged from their sin (1:3), declared joint heirs with Christ, and enjoying the attendance of the angelic host.

“The things which we have heard” refers to the teaching that they have received. We’ll say more about the verb in a moment.

lest at any time we should let *them* slip.--The verb “slip” παραρρεω (G3901) refers to something drifting away, in its original sense, on the water. There is no object here, so the verb probably refers to the hearers, rather than the truth, drifting away.⁵

The image of drifting reminds us of the nautical language of 6:19,

Heb 6:19 Which hope we have as an **anchor of the soul**, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

In addition, the verb “give the more earnest heed” in v. 1 (παρεχω, G4337) is very common in secular Greek (Liddell-Scott) for bringing a ship to port. While the word generally does not have this sense in the Bible (where it occurs 145 times, mostly meaning “pay attention to”), “slip/drift” in v. 1 and the “anchor” in 6:19 might lead a Greek reader to recall this sense of the word. We can then paraphrase the passage:

You are in danger of drifting away from the only safe harbor, which is the teaching you have heard. Set your sails for that destination and don’t let anything distract you. And when you get there (6:19), fasten your anchor firmly within the veil.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast,--That is, the law. The Jews of the first century understood the angels to be involved in giving the law, a concept that the NT endorses (chart):

Acts 7:53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

Gal 3:19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

The doctrine probably goes back to the Blessing of Moses,

⁵ The usage is inspired by the use of the same very rare word in Pro 3:21, where the Hebrew 3rd person has wisdom and discretion drifting away, but the Greek translator uses 2nd person with no object for the person’s drifting.

Deut 33:2 The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them [LXX on his right hand were his angels with him].

and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;--“Transgression” is a positive violation of God’s command. “Disobedience” is more a refusal to hear what he has to say, and thus focuses on sins of omission. The fundamental principle of God’s justice is that sin must be punished, and the righteous protected:

Deu 25:1 If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

With human judges, this standard was often missed, and the Psalms of lament call on God to make right this deficit in the administration of the world. But if judgment was not always carried out, it certainly was prescribed: it “received” its appropriate punishment in the books of the law.

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;--The contrast between the Son and the angels in ch. 1 motivates our careful attention. God spoke in the past “in divers manners,” including angelic delivery; now he has spoken by one who is a Son, whom the Scriptures show to be far greater than any angel. If the OT law provided a judgment for every violation, how much more must God care about our attention to his new revelation?

“So great salvation” is a relative, inviting us to ask, “so great as what?” Like “therefore” in v. 1, it looks back to ch. 1, and in particular to the carrot in 1:14. Just consider the high status to which we have been called. “Neglect” ἀμελεω (G272) is an uncommon word, but may be drawn here from our Lord’s parable of the royal wedding, which fits perfectly the entire context:

Mat 22:1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, 2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. 4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. 5 But they **made light of it**, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. 7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

We sinners are invited not just as guests, but to be joined with the king’s son, to become joint-heirs with Christ and enjoy the royal support of the angels. If we reject such an invitation, how can the king not bring judgment upon us?

Now he details three lines of evidence for “the things which we have heard,” to assure them of the certainty of the teaching they have received (Error: Reference source not found, chart):

<p>God also bearing witness, by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs • Wonders • Divers miracles • Gifts of the Holy Ghost
--

<p>Confirmed unto us by them that heard him</p> <p>At the first began to be spoken by the Lord</p>
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Figure 3: Lines of Evidence

which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord,--The first step is the earthly teaching of the Lord Jesus. After all, we are focused on what God “hath ... spoken by one who is a Son.” This emphasis is a necessary corrective to some, who would see the epistles as overruling the earthly teaching of our Savior.⁶ The admonition from God on the

⁶ In fact, for Paul as for Hebrews, the words of Christ are the ultimate authority: 1 Tim 6:3

mount of Transfiguration is as critical for us as it was for Peter, James, and John: “This is my beloved Son. Hear him.” (Matt 17:5; Mk 9:7; Lk 9:35).

and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;--The second step was the transmission of the teachings of the Lord by eye- and ear-witnesses (e.g., 2 Pet 1:16; Lk 1:1; 1 John 1:1).

So far we have a divine source for the teaching, abundantly attested by eye-witnesses. To avoid any chance of misunderstanding, God provides a third line of evidence, the miracles that accompanied the early preaching of the message.

4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders,--“Signs and wonders” were the constant accompaniment of the delivery of Israel from Egypt (LXX Exod. 7:3, 9; 11:9, 10; Deut. 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 11:3; 26:8; 28:46; 29:2; 34:11; Ps. 77:43; 104:27; 134:9). The comparison with the older revelation from vv. 2-3 continues.

and with divers miracles,--Interestingly, the canonical OT never associates “powers” with “signs and wonders.”⁷ But NT writers regularly describe the NT miracles this way (Acts 2:22; 6:8; Rom. 15:19; 2 Cor. 12:12), marking the superiority of the new revelation to the old.

and gifts of the Holy Ghost,--Not only the miracles, but the endowments of the Spirit at Pentecost, were further tangible confirmation of the message.

according to his own will?--It is interesting that the writer feels the need to remind them that these miraculous dispositions were rationed by God. Some people today feel that if we do not experience signs, wonders, and powers, and demonstrate showy gifts of the Spirit, our salvation has fallen short. Perhaps the same tendency was seen among the readers of this epistle. This phrase reminds us that these gifts are contingent, not universal. God provided them to attest the revolutionary message of the gospel. As Paul had to exhort the Corinthians,

1Co 12:28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.
29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? 31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

So the theme of the first warning is to confront people who have heard the gospel and urge them not to drift away from it. They have all heard the message, and it has captured their attention, but that does not mean that they have submitted to it, and now may drift away. Our Lord warned of such hearers in his parable of the soils:

Luk 8:13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

We must heed Peter’s injunction:

2Pe 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:

7 Baruch 2:11, written between the testaments, does use all three terms of the Exodus: “And now, O Lord God of Israel, that hast brought thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and high arm, and with signs, and with wonders, and with great power”

2:5-18, The Son on Earth

As the author returns from exhortation to exposition, a number of parallels divide the remainder of ch. 2 into two parts (Figure 4, chart).

1. At its start (v. 5) and near the end (v. 16), the section contrasts the Lord Jesus with the angels, in the style of ch. 1.
 - (a) He, not they, subdues the world to come (v. 5).
 - (b) He, not they, becomes one with man (v. 16).
2. There are two sections of quotations from Scripture: Psalm 8 in 2:6-8a, and Psalm 22 and Isaiah 8 in 2:11-13.
3. Each quotation is followed by an application to Jesus, repeating key words from the quotation.

Both parts argue from the OT that the Messiah came to die, a shocking contrast with the claim in ch. 1, again based on the OT, that he is highly exalted. 2:10 explains this apparent contradiction.

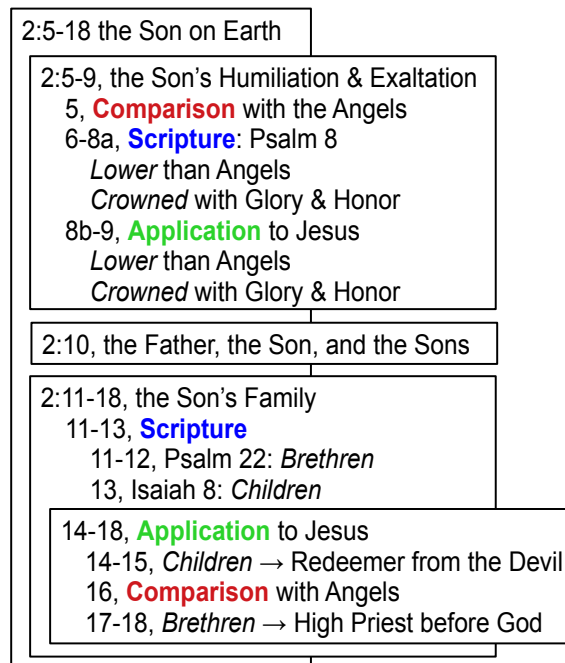


Figure 4: Structure of 2:5-18

5-9, The Son's Humiliation and Exaltation

5 For unto the **angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.--** The author continues to focus our attention on the world to come, as in 1:6 (“bringeth again the firstbegotten into the world,” at the second coming). He chose Psalms focused on the future kingdom of God. In the face of suffering, they are to keep their eyes on the future glory.

6 But one in a certain place [Psalm 8] testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? 7 Thou **madest him a little lower than the angels; thou **crownedst him with glory and honour**, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.--**He cites Psalm 8, the central Psalm of the first grouping of Psalms, recalling David’s victory over Goliath.

David is “a weak man” **שׁוֹנֵן** (G0582) and “the son of man” (v. 6), “lower than the angels,” emphasizing his humanity. Yet God gave him “glory and honor” over a powerful foe. This striking contrast is only what one expects from the promise in Gen 1:26-28 that man would “have dominion” over all creation, a text that David echoes in 8:6-8.

For David, fresh from his victory over Goliath, the promise of Genesis 1 has been realized. From the perspective of the Hebrews, suffering persecution, things do not look so sanguine.

For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is not* put under him. But now we see **οὐκ not yet all things put under him.--**With brutal honesty, the writer observes that the human condition does not reflect the creation promise.

9 But we see **βλεπω Jesus,--**The verb “see” in v. 9 (**βλεπω**, G0991) is different from that in v. 8 (**ὁράω**, G03708). V. 8 is a generic verb for seeing, but v. 9 has the nuance of “notice.” On every side we see defeat and discouragement, but then suddenly, something—someone—captures our

attention. It is Jesus. The Psalm is not just describing David and Goliath. It is describing Jesus, in two contrasting expressions, “made lower than the angels” and “crowned with glory and honor.”

In linear order, the rest of v. 9 is confusing. The reference to “tast[ing] death” at the end somehow doesn’t fit after “crowned with glory and honor.” But the verse comes into focus if we read it as a chiasm. The end of the verse goes with the beginning (a move we see again in 17-18).

who was made a little lower than the angels ... that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.--Why was he made lower than the angels? It was so that he could taste death for every man. We will learn much about this transaction as we continue, but for it to take place, the exalted Son had to become flesh.

His death is no accident. It is “by the grace of God,” divinely purposed for beneficent ends. But how could such a tragedy be “by the grace of God”? We understand how Paul could say (chart),

1Co 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But **by the grace of God** I am what I am.

Something good happens to him: he is honored with the role of apostle, and he attributes that to God’s unmerited favor. But when God takes the Son whom he has exalted as his heir, humbles him below the angels, and then brings him to the agony of death, how is that the grace of God?

The answer to that dilemma occupies the center of the verse, and indeed v. 10 as well.

for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour;--

He is crowned as a reward for his suffering of death. The logic is the same as in Philippians 2 (Table 3), and fills in the missing pieces in Psalm 8. The Psalm simply states that the son of man is made lower than the angels and then exalted.

Hebrews and Philippians provide

the missing piece of the puzzle, his death in obedience to God.

In the overall flow of the passage, it seems best to understand the adverb “little” in the sense of “for a little while.” 1:3-4 describes two exaltations of the Son above the angels: his position as heir, and his position at the Father’s right hand. To take that seat, he had to do the work the Father gave him, for which he had to become lower than the angels “for a little while.”

10, The Father’s Purpose

2:5-9 presents the startling idea that the one who is so superior to the angels becomes lower than the angels in order to die. 2:11-18 will make a similar point, describing what he has done

Psalm 8:5	Heb 2:9	Phil 2:7-9
5a For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,	= 9a	7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
	9d that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man	8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
	9b for the suffering of death	
5b and hast crowned him with glory and honour.	= 9c	9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Table 3: Psalm 8, Hebrews 2, and Philippians 2

“through death” (v. 14). The clash of this idea with the exaltation of the Son in 1:1-4 is at the heart of “the offence of the cross” (Gal 5:11; cf. 1 Cor 1:18, 23). Many in modern churches deride the idea of a “bloody religion,” attributing the death of Jesus to human hatred and leaving God helpless on the sidelines. This central verse insists not only that God is intimately involved in the process, but that this is entirely appropriate for him.

10 For it became him,--The pronoun refers to the Father, because “captain of their salvation” who “suffers” must be the Lord Jesus.

“Became” is used in the sense of something that is fitting or attractive, as we might say, “That hat is very becoming on you.” In this sense it’s related to the word “comely.” The action described in this verse was fitting for the Father, appropriate for him. The statement expands “by the grace of God” in v. 9. As incongruous as it seems for the Father who exalted the Son to bring him to suffering and death, in fact, it is entirely appropriate and fitting.

for whom $\delta\iota'$ $\text{ὁ}\nu$ are all things, and by whom $\delta\iota'$ οὗ are all things,--The Father is the ultimate cause of all creation, and of everything that happens. So we must understand the son’s suffering as part of his sovereign plan.⁸

in bringing many sons unto

glory,--We have heard five times of the Son, but this is the first time that the word appears in the plural (Figure 5, chart). This clause is building on 1:14, which applied the title “heir” by which the Son was distinguished in 1:2 to us. The sequence of thought is:

1. God has spoken by one who is a Son (1:1).
2. That Son is heir of all things (1:2), better than the angels (1:4).
3. But we are also heirs (1:14).
4. So we must also be sons (2:10).

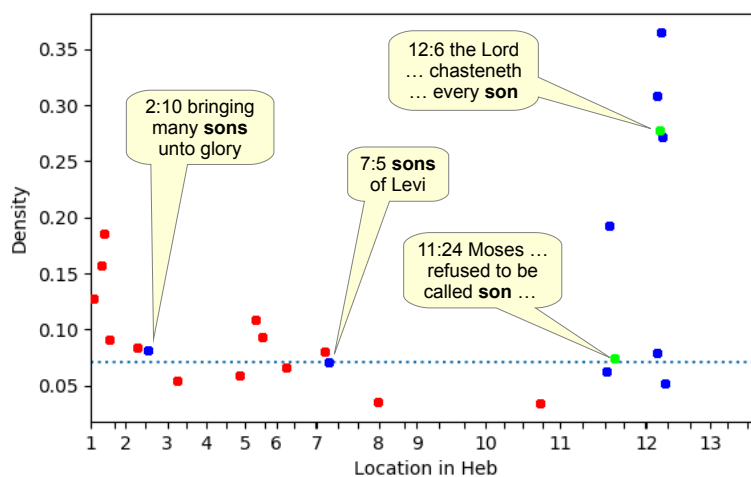


Figure 5: Son ($\nu\iota\omicron\varsigma$, G5207), singular (red, green) and plural (blue) in Hebrews

The “glory” to which the Father is bringing us is the inheritance promised in 1:14.⁹

We do not find this glory on our own. The Father “brings” or “leads” us there. The Greek verb $\alpha\gamma\omega$ (G0071) anticipates the next clause:

... the captain of their salvation--So this clause parallels “bringing many sons to glory.”

“Captain” ($\alpha\rho\chi\eta\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ G0747) is a common term throughout the Pentateuch for the heads of the tribes as the nation came out of Egypt, but probably chosen from its relation to “leading” ($\alpha\gamma\omega$ G0071) in the previous clause.¹⁰ It means “chief leader.”

“Salvation” strengthens the link with 1:14. We, as sons, are “heirs of salvation.” The glory is our

⁸ See note on application of the $\delta\iota'$ οὗ language to both the Father and the Son.

⁹ Cf. Rom 8:9-25; Rev 21:7.

¹⁰ So Westcott. Lane’s endorsement of the suggestion of Knox (HTR 41 [1948] 239, 242) that the reference is an allusion to Greek divine heroes such as Hercules is erudite, but inaccessible from the text.

future salvation.

The one who leads us to our salvation must come among us, “made a little lower than the angels.” But he needs something more, described in the next phrase:

to make ... perfect through sufferings.--“Make perfect” τελειοω (G5048) is commonly used in Exodus and Leviticus to describe the consecration of the priest.¹¹ And in fact our version translates the verb “consecrate” in Heb 7:28.

Our “chief leader” is leading us to glory, to salvation—to God. This is the function of a priest, and under the OT law, a priest must be consecrated. He must have his hands filled with something to offer. That consecration, for our Lord, took the form of his sufferings.

11-18, The Son’s Family

Having justified the Father’s purposes in bringing the Son to die, the writer now turns to another aspect of the incarnation: it makes the Son of God our kinsman. Again, we start with quotations that introduce the key terms, followed by exposition. There are two key names for us.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, [Ps 22:22, 25] I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.--The thought of a suffering Messiah naturally leads him to Psalm 22, in which the sufferer describes the congregation of God’s people as “my brethren.”

Then he turns to Isa 8:17-18. In the LXX, these verses begin with “He said,” so that Isaiah is pictured as describing the words of someone else, whom the writer understands as the Messiah.¹²

Interestingly, he divides the citation into two parts.

13 And again, [Isa 8:17]¹³ I will put my trust in him.--Why highlight this reference? How does it contribute to the argument? Calvin seems to grasp the point:

But what has this to do with the present subject? For it seems not to follow that we and Christ are of one, in order that he might especially put his trust in God. To this I answer, that the argument is valid, because he would have no need of such trust, had he not been a man exposed to human necessities and wants. As then he depended on God’s aid, his lot is the same with ours.

And again, [Isa 8:18] Behold I and the children which God hath given me.--The second part of the citation from Isaiah gives him another term emphasizing the kinship between the Son of God and his people. They are God’s children, whom God has committed to Messiah’s care.

So in the OT, Messiah describes his people as his brethren, and as God’s children under his care. Now our writer will apply these terms to Jesus, discussing two functions that require that he be our kinsman. These reflect two characteristics of our sin. It is promoted by Satan, who as

11The Hebrew idiom is “fill the hands” מלא ד מלא. The most common LXX translation for מלא D is πληρωω or συμπλημι or their prepositional extensions, but in priestly contexts it is τελειοω. Lev 21:10 uses the verb alone, without reference to the hands, in the sense of “consecrate.”

12 On the messianic reference in Isa 8:16-18, see my notes on Isaiah.

13 This is the likely origin of the quote. The expression in Hebrews, εγω εσομαι πεποιθως επ’ αυτω, appears (without εγω and with inversion of εσομαι and πεποιθως) in three places in the LXX: 2 Sam 22:3 (not the parallel in Ps 18:2, which uses ελπίζω instead of πειθω), Isa 8:17; 12:2. But the Hebrew differs in the three cases (the LXX in both Isaiah texts probably drawing on 2 Sam 22:3).

heaven's prosecuting attorney seeks our death. But it also separates us from God. These two functions deal with these two problems. As our *redeemer*, Messiah deals with *the devil*. As our *high priest*, he represents us before *God*.

The writer devotes a paragraph to each role (Figure 4), separated by another comparison to the angels (which corresponds to the opening statement in v. 5).

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.--The first part of the interpretation picks up the word "children" and describes our Lord's work with reference to "the devil." He is said to do two things: destroy one who threatened us with death, and deliver us from bondage. These point to a particular OT institution, the work of the גֹּאֵל (H1350) or "redeemer." This institution is documented most clearly in Leviticus 25, Numbers 35, and the book of Ruth (chart). A constant theme is that the redeemer must be a kinsman.

Leviticus 25 provides for the restoration of property to someone who has had to sell it because of impoverishment. The process is called "redemption."

Lev. 25:23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. 24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a **redemption** for the land. 25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to **redeem** it, then shall he **redeem** that which his brother sold.

Note the qualification: the redeemer must be "of his kin."

The ultimate consequence of poverty is that a person might have to sell himself into slavery. To another Israelite he could only become an indentured servant, set free after six years, but a foreigner might buy him permanently. The principle of redemption applied here as well:

Lev. 25:47 And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family: 48 After that he is sold he may be **redeemed** again; one of his brethren may **redeem** him: 49 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may **redeem** him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may **redeem** him; or if he be able, he may **redeem** himself.

Here the requirement of kinship is made even clearer.

The principle extended to other disasters as well. Numbers 35 describes Israel's judicial system for dealing with manslaughter. It centered around the levitical cities of refuge, and once again, the "redeemer," translated in this chapter "the avenger [revenger] of blood."

Num. 35:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan; 11 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. 12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the **avenger**; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.

The responsibility for slaying the murderer rested not on the state, but on the "redeemer," who according to Leviticus 25 would be a family member. We see an example of this in the story told to David by the wise woman of Tekoa, as part of Joab's effort to rehabilitate Absalom:

2Sa 14:6 And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him. 7 And, behold, **the whole family** is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew;

It is the family who seeks to avenge the life of the murdered person by destroying the slayer.

So the redeemer preserves the property of a poor person (which protects them from falling into bondage), and avenges a murder. The custom of levirate marriage, in which the brother of a married man who dies childless is responsible to marry his widow to raise up children, is also described using לָאָה, in the book of Ruth,¹⁴ probably by extension, because the brother-in-law is providing an heir for his brother's property and saving his brother's line from death. In all cases, the duty of redemption falls on a close family member. In fact, "redeemer" is used several times in Ruth to emphasize the kinship between Boaz and Ruth.

If we read Heb 2:14-15 against this background, the reference is obvious. We were morally impoverished, subject to Satan's "bondage" while awaiting God's inevitable judgment in death. In fact, Satan was seeking our death, and so was our murderer. We needed a לָאָה, a kinsman-redeemer. The Messiah came to be that redeemer, and so he had to become our kinsman.¹⁵

16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.--Between the two explanations, he inserts one more comparison with the angels, corresponding to the one in v. 5 that initiates this section.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God,--The second institution that shows the need for our Lord's humiliation is the priesthood. He was our redeemer from the bondage and death imposed by Satan, but he is our priest to reconcile us to God. It is essential for a priest to be one with the people he represents, a point that our writer will emphasize later:

Heb 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: 2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.--It has been observed¹⁶ that these correspond chiastically to "merciful and faithful" in 17a, just as in v. 9 we have a chiastic summary (chart). He is faithful in doing the sacrificial work required of a priest correctly, so that it will have the required effect, and he is merciful, able to have compassion on them.

The writer will develop these two characteristics of our high priest, "merciful and faithful," throughout the next eight chapters. "Faithful" reflects his relation "to God," doing the work his Father gave him to do, in 3:1-6. After a warning, the bulk of the discussion (4:14-10:25) focuses on how he is "merciful"¹⁷ to "his brethren," executing God's covenant toward them.

14 On the use of the term for levirate marriage in Ruth, see notes. לָאָה is not used in Deut 25:5-10, where the law governing levirate marriage is given.

15 In light of the emphasis on the kinship of the redeemer, it is striking that the first three instances of the term, in Gen 48:16, Exo 6:6; 15:13 all refer to the Lord!

16 By the editor of the English translation of Calvin, probably John Owen, the translator

17 ἔλεος G1656, overwhelmingly translating חַסֵּד H2617 and cognates in LXX

Notes

Structure of 1:5-13

Lane¹⁸ sees this section as a point-by-point amplification of vv. 1-4 (Table 4).

But Ellingworth demurs:¹⁹

It may, however, be noted (a) that the first half of the parallelism extends only to vv. 2-3; (b) that in vv. 5-13, the “heir” theme becomes explicit only in v. 13, where it is applied to believers; (c) that the parallel between vv. 3ab and 11-12

is less close than Lane’s summary might suggest; and (d) that the echo of v. 3c in v. 13 may perhaps better be understood as an inclusion

1:1-4	1:5-13
Appointment as royal heir (v 2b)	Appointment as royal Son and heir (vv 5-9)
Mediator of the creation (v 2c)	Mediator of the creation (v 10)
Eternal nature and pre-existent glory (v 3a, b)	Unchanging, eternal nature (vv 11-12)
Exaltation to God’s right hand (v 3c)	Exaltation to God’s right hand (v 13)

Table 4: Lane’s Analysis of Hebrews 1

Tenses of λεγω in Hebrews

The shift from aorist (1:5) to present (1:6, 7) and then to perfect (1:13) of λεγω with God as subject, in OT citations, is puzzling. How does Hebrews use these tenses in other citations?

I omit here instance of λεγω that are part of the citations themselves.

Aorist: 3x

Heb. 1:5 Τίτι γάρ **εἶπέν** ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων, Υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε; Καὶ πάλιν, Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν; *followed by more quotations*

Heb. 10:30 Οἶδαμεν γάρ τὸν **εἰπόντα**, Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω, λέγει κύριος· καὶ πάλιν, κύριος κρινεῖ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ. *We might have expected a perfect here, if perfect sets us up for personal application: v. 31 “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” But the exhortation is based on God’s person, not his utterance.*

Heb. 12:21 καί, οὕτως φοβερὸν ἦν τὸ φανταζόμενον, Μωϋσῆς **εἶπεν**, Ἐκφοβός εἰμι καὶ ἔντρομος. *simply part of narrative sequence*

Present: 17x

Heb. 1:6 Ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην **λέγει**, Καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ.

Heb. 1:7 Καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀγγέλους **λέγει**, Ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα, καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα·

¹⁸ Lane, W. L. (1991). Hebrews 1-8 (Vol. 47A, p. 22). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

¹⁹ Ellingworth, P. (1993). The Epistle to the Hebrews: a commentary on the Greek text (p. 108). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

Heb. 2:6 Διεμαρτύρατο δέ πού τις **λέγων**, Τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι μιμήσκη αὐτοῦ; Ἡ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, ὅτι ἐπισκέπτῃ αὐτόν;

Heb. 2:12 **λέγων**, Ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε.

Heb. 3:7 Διό, καθὼς **λέγει** τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε,

Heb. 3:15 ἐν τῷ **λέγεσθαι**, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνῃτε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, ὥς ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ.

Heb. 4:7 πάλιν τινὰ ὀρίζει ἡμέραν, Σήμερον, ἐν Δαυὶδ **λέγων**, μετὰ τοσοῦτον χρόνον, καθὼς εἴρηται, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνῃτε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν.

Heb. 5:6 Καθὼς καὶ ἐν ἐτέρῳ **λέγει**, Σὺ ἱερεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδέκ.

Heb. 6:14 **λέγων**, Ἡ μὴν εὐλογῶν εὐλογήσω σε, καὶ πληθύνων πληθυνῶ σε. [following aorist ὤμοσεν in 6:13]

Heb. 7:21 ὁ δὲ μετὰ ὀρκωμοσίας, διὰ τοῦ **λέγοντος** πρὸς αὐτόν, Ὡμοσεν κύριος καὶ οὐ μεταμεληθήσεται, Σὺ ἱερεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδέκ-

Heb. 8:8 Μεμφόμενος γὰρ αὐτοῖς **λέγει**, Ἰδοὺ, ἡμέραι ἔρχονται, λέγει κύριος, καὶ συντελέσω ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰούδα διαθήκην καινὴν· 9 οὐ κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην ἣν ἐποίησα τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιλαβομένου μου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἐξαγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου· ὅτι αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἐνέμειναν ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ μου, καὶ γὰρ ἡμέλησα αὐτῶν, λέγει κύριος. 10 Ὅτι αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη ἣν διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκεῖνας, λέγει κύριος, διδοὺς νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς· καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς εἰς θεόν, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μοι εἰς λαόν. 11 Καὶ οὐ μὴ διδάξωσιν ἕκαστος τὸν πολίτην αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, λέγων, Γινῶθι τὸν κύριον· ὅτι πάντες εἰδήσουσιν με, ἀπὸ μικροῦ αὐτῶν ἕως μεγάλου αὐτῶν.

Heb. 8:13 Ἐν τῷ **λέγειν**, Καινὴν, πεπαλαίωκεν τὴν πρώτην. Τὸ δὲ παλαιούμενον καὶ γηράσκον, ἐγγὺς ἀφανισμοῦ.

Heb. 9:20 **λέγων**, Τοῦτο τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης ἧς ἐνετείλατο πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὁ θεός.

Heb. 10:5 Διὸ εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον **λέγει**, Θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι· [cf. aorist in v. 7]

Heb. 10:8 Ἀνώτερον **λέγων** ὅτι Θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν καὶ ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἠθέλησας, οὐδὲ εὐδόκησας- αἵτινες κατὰ τὸν νόμον προσφέρονται- [cf. perfect in v. 9]

Heb. 12:26 οὗ ἡ φωνὴ τὴν γῆν ἐσάλευσεν τότε, νῦν δὲ ἐπήγγελλται, **λέγων**, Ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείω οὐ μόνον τὴν γῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν οὐρανόν.

Heb. 13:6 Ὡστε θαρροῦντας ἡμᾶς **λέγειν**, Κύριος ἐμοὶ βοηθός, καὶ οὐ φοβηθήσομαι τί ποιήσει μοι ἄνθρωπος. [perfect in v. 5]

Perfect: 6x

(BYM derives these from ερεω)

Heb. 1:13 Πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων **εἴρηκέν** ποτε, Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου; *Leads to exhortation of 2:1-4*

Heb. 4:3 Εἰσερχόμεθα γὰρ εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν οἱ πιστεύσαντες, καθὼς **εἶρηκεν**, Ὡς ὥμοσα ἐν τῇ ὁργῇ μου, Εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου· καίτοι τῶν ἔργων ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου γενηθέντων.

Heb. 4:4 **Εἶρηκεν** γάρ που περὶ τῆς ἐβδόμης οὕτως, Καὶ κατέπαυσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ·

Heb. 4:7 πάλιν τινὰ ὀρίζει ἡμέραν, Σήμερον, ἐν Δαυὶδ λέγων, μετὰ τοσοῦτον χρόνον, καθὼς **εἶρηται**, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν. *Cluster of citations in ch. 4 lead to exhortation in 4:11.*

Heb. 10:9 τότε **εἶρηκεν**, Ἰδοὺ, ἤκω τοῦ ποιῆσαι, ὁ θεός, τὸ θέλημά σου. Ἀναιρεῖ τὸ πρῶτον, ἵνα τὸ δεύτερον στήσῃ. [cf. present in v. 8] *Basis for our confidence in v. 10 that we are sanctified*

Heb. 13:5 Ἀφιλάργυρος ὁ τρόπος, ἀρκοῦμενοι τοῖς παροῦσιν· αὐτὸς γὰρ **εἶρηκεν**, [Deut 31:6 etc] Οὐ μὴ σε ἀνῶ, οὐδ' οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλείπω. [present in v. 6] *Basis for exhortation in first part of the verse.*

Discussion

The present, as the most common, appears to be the unmarked tense.

The aorist fits well in narratives, recounting the past fact of the statement.

The perfect presents the quotation as special grounds for action or commitment by the hearers. Their response is the “continuing effect” associated with the utterance once made.

Instances of multiple attestation

The accumulation of multiple lines of evidence for the message in 2:3-4 recalls our Lord’s claims in John:

Joh 5:31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. 32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. 33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. 34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. 35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. 36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. 37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. 38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. 39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Joh 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

οραω vs. βλέπω in 2:8-9

Table 5 shows the usage in LXX. Note:

1. οραω is the unmarked, common term; βλεπω would seem to require some special justification.
2. βλεπω and its prepositional extensions are associated with פנה and נבט , indicating direction of attention.

This shift would justify translating 2:9, “but we notice Jesus.” He stands out as the exception.

	ראה	חזה	פנה	נבט	שיח
οραω	1005	56	1		
βλεπω	55	2	22		
επιβλεπω	8		35	33	
αποβλεπω			2		
παραβλεπω					3

Table 5: LXX Mappings for οραω and βλεπω

2:10, Father and Son in Creation

The expression δι' οὗ in 2:10 has led some to try to make the Son the subject of the verse. But the initial phrase, δι' ὧν , is never used of the Son. Here is a survey of how δι' οὗ is used in the NT:

for whom δι' ὧν are all things, and by whom δι' οὗ are all things,--The Father is presented as the ultimate cause of all creation. The second phrase recalls what is said of the Son in 1:2,

Heb 1:2 **by whom δι' οὗ** also he made the worlds;

The same prepositional phrase, δια with the genitive, is also used of our Lord in Colossians 1,

Col 1:16 For by him ἐν αὐτῷ were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created **by him δι' αὐτοῦ** , and for him εἰς αὐτὸν :

Also in 1 Corinthians:

1Co 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom ἐξ οὗ are all things, and we in him εἰς αὐτόν ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, **by whom δι' οὗ** are all things, and we by him δι' αὐτοῦ .

But the same construction, δια plus genitive, is used of the Father in Romans:

Rom 11:36 For of him ἐξ αὐτοῦ , and **through him δι' αὐτοῦ** , and to him εἰς αὐτόν , are all things: to whom be glory for ever.

The parallels are not a conflict, but rather a testimony to the close unity of the Father and the Son, as our Lord said to the Jews in John 5,

Joh 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Alford:

whatever is thus said of Him [the Son] as the End, and the Worker, in creation, may à fortiori be said of the Father who sent Him and of whose will He is the expression.

Source of 2:13a

The Greek wording can come from three passages, each from a different Hebrew verb: Is. 8:17 קנה, Isa 12:2 בטח; or 2 Sam. 22:3 חסה. So it is not likely that Isaiah is quoting 2 Samuel, or that

either Isaiah passage is linked to the other. But the LXX translator may well be borrowing wording across these.

Redemption in the Book of Ruth

The notion of the redeemer גֹּאֵל is central to the book of Ruth, where the word “redeemer” is translated “kinsman.” The law provided that if a man died without leaving offspring, his brother was responsible to take his wife and have children to inherit the dead man’s name and property (Deut 25:5-10; cf. Gen 38:8, the story of Onan the brother of Er and Er’s wife Tamar). The book of Ruth turns on the fact that Boaz has this relation to Naomi and Ruth, and is thus responsible to raise up an heir for Elimelech’s field. This short book uses the root גֹּאֵל twenty-two times, more than 1% of its words, far above any other book (Malachi, with three references, is only 0.25%).

The use of redemption to describe Levirate marriage is a natural extension of the use of the term for preservation of property and life. The deceased person’s name is at risk of being lost, a form of death, and his property is a risk of being dissipated in Israel, lost to his family.

The book of Ruth illustrates the close relation between redemption and loyal love (דָּוָק).²⁰ But the word itself is never used directly of Boaz, the most obvious exhibiter of דָּוָק (taking the most straightforward reading of 2:20). Instead, it is ascribed to God (2:20) by Naomi, and to Ruth herself (3:10) by Boaz.

²⁰ For extensive discussion, see Leggett’s dissertation,
https://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/OTeSources/08-Ruth/Texts/Books/Leggett-GoelRuth/Leggett-GoelRuth.htm