

# SEVEN MESSIANIC QUOTATIONS

A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

By Arlen L. Chirwood

“The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified *seven times*” (Ps. 12:6).

Introducing the subject matter in the Book of Hebrews through different quotations from the Old Testament is strictly by Divine design. There are “seven quotations” having to do with *Christ in His coming glory*. “Seven” is a number which refers to *the completion of that which is in view*; and these seven quotations present a complete, composite Messianic portrait of Christ, setting the stage for that which follows.

If a person would properly understand the message in the Book of Hebrews, he *must* understand the opening verses of the book in their correct perspective, for these verses can only be looked upon as forming an introductory *key* to the remainder of this book.

With this in mind, note these seven Messianic quotations:

## Sonship, Heirship, Rulership

The first two quotations in Hebrews chapter one center around Christ’s *Sonship*, with the preceding mention of *heirship* (vv. 2-4) forming the basis for these two introductory statements:

“For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee’? And again, ‘I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?’” (v. 5; cf. Ps. 2:7; II Sam. 7:14).

Christ is the “appointed heir,” the Son Who, *by inheritance*, has “obtained a more excellent name”

than angels (vv. 2, 4). “Sonship” implies *rulership*, and, as God’s Son, Christ is the One destined to exercise *the rights of primogeniture* and rule the earth with “a rod of iron” (cf. Ps. 2:7, 9).

Though angels are “sons of God” (because of their individual creation), God has not spoken after the fashion revealed in Ps. 2:7 and II Sam. 7:14 relative to angels. He has spoken after this fashion relative to His Son, Jesus, alone (vv. 5ff).

The Messianic nature of these two quotations cannot be questioned, for both appear in Messianic settings in the Old Testament.

Verses on either side of Ps. 2:7 have to do with Christ during the Messianic Era. Verse six states:

“Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.”

And verses eight and nine state:

“Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen [Gentiles] for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (cf. Rev. 2:26, 27).

The quotation from II Sam. 7:14 was spoken in a dual sense. It was spoken in a near sense concerning David’s immediate successor, his son, Solomon; and it was spoken in a far sense concerning David’s greater successor, his greater Son, Christ.

And the Father-Son relationship relative to the kingdom and the throne are in view in both instances (vv. 12-14a, 16). The greater Son is the One to Whom God will give “the sure mercies of David [*lit.*, ‘the holy things of David’]” (Acts 13:34b; cf. v. 33).

The seven quotations from the Old Testament in the first chapter of Hebrews are thus:

- 1) *Introduced with Messianic statements (vv. 2-4).*
- 2) *Begin with Messianic verses (v. 5).*
- 3) *Continue with Messianic verses (vv. 6-13).*
- 4) *Lead into that which can only be Messianic in its fulfillment (vv. 14ff).*

## Return of God’s Firstborn Son

The third quotation refers to that future time when “the firstbegotten [‘the firstborn’]” will again be brought into the inhabited world (v. 6a), continuing the thought of Sonship and the rights of primogeniture from the previous verse:

“And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world [*lit.*, ‘And when He shall again bring the firstborn into the inhabited world’] he saith, ‘And let all the angels of God worship him’” (v. 6; cf. Deut. 32:43 [LXX]; Ps. 97:7).

A distinction is made here between Jesus and angels insofar as *Both* being “Sons” but only *One* possessing the “rights of primogeniture” is concerned. The rights of the firstborn (Gk., *prototokia*) are reserved for firstborn (Gk., *prototokos*) sons. The two Greek words are closely related, referring to two inseparable things — *position*, and *rights within that position*. And no angel can come within the scope of either one. That is, no angel is a firstborn son, in line to inherit the rights of the firstborn.

Rather, at this time, the angels of God will worship the Son (v. 6b). Sons of God will worship God’s firstborn Son after He comes into possession of the rights of the firstborn; and since only God is to be worshipped (cf. Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9), the One Whom angels will worship at this time *must Himself be God*. And this is a fact specifically stated in a later Old Testament quotation in Hebrews, chapter one where the Father says to the Son, “Thy throne, O God...” (v. 8).

## “And of the Angels”

The fourth quotation continues the thought of angelic ministry, and contextually this angelic ministry must be looked upon as a ministry surrounding the Son during the Messianic Era:

“And of the angels he saith, ‘Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire’” (v. 7; cf. Ps. 104:4).

The one hundred fourth Psalm, from which this quotation is taken, reveals a number of things about the Creator and His creation (the earth, angels, and

man). Thoughts in this Psalm move all the way from the creation of the earth in the beginning (v. 5) to the coming Messianic Era (vv. 31, 35). Angelic ministry, thus, within this Psalm, could refer to a ministry occurring in the *past*, the *present*, or the *future*.

In passages such as Luke 2:9, 13 (referring to angelic ministry surrounding Christ's birth), such a ministry is *past*; in Heb. 1:14 (referring to angelic ministry surrounding Christians in the world today), such a ministry is *present*; but in Heb. 1:7 (referring to angelic ministry surrounding Christ in His kingdom), such a ministry is *future*.

### "But unto the Son"

The fifth quotation refers to the Lord with His co-heirs seated upon His throne, holding the sceptre, during the coming day of His power:

"But unto the Son he saith, 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows [companions']" (vv. 8, 9; cf. Ps. 45:6, 7).

The duration of time in which the Son rules (the time during which He sits on the throne and holds the sceptre) is said to be "forever and ever [throughout the endless ages, eternal in duration]."

Christ will sit on His Own throne in the new Jerusalem above the earth during the Millennium and, with His "companions [co-heirs]," rule the earth for 1,000 years. But during the eternal ages beyond the Millennium, Christ will sit alongside His Father on "the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1, 3), which will be in the new Jerusalem on the new earth. Universal rule will emanate from this throne, Christ's "companions" will continue to rule with Him, and in this sense Christ's rule with His saints can be said to last "forever and ever" (cf. Rev. 11:15; 22:5).

### The Same, Yesterday, Today, and Forever

The sixth quotation refers to the eternity of Christ

within both a historic and prophetic setting:

"And, 'Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment;

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'" (vv. 10-12; cf. Ps. 102:25-27).

These three verses appear near the end of the one hundred second Psalm and, in this Psalm, are addressed to God (as were the words in the previous quotation from Ps. 45:6, 7). However, the writer of Hebrews, being "moved by the Holy Spirit [the One Who originally moved the Psalmist to pen these words]," applies these verses also to the Son.

There is no stronger language in the New Testament concerning the Deity of Christ than the first chapter of Hebrews. It was *the blood of God* which was shed on Calvary (Acts 20:28), and God ("Thy throne, O God..."), in the person of His Son (or, as in Heb. 1:2, "in Son [literal rendering]"), is the One Who will rule the earth during the coming age. He was present and co-equal with the Father in the beginning. "All things" were brought into existence through Him (John 1:1-3). "All things were created by [through] him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist [*i.e.*, He upholds 'all things by the word of his power' (Heb. 1:3)]" (Col. 1:16, 17).

Hebrews 1:10-12, quoting Psalm 102:25-27 (which appears in a Messianic setting in the Psalms [cf. vv. 16, 21, 22] and is quoted in a Messianic setting in Hebrews), presents Christ as both *The Creator* at the time the heavens and earth were brought into existence and *The Destroyer* at the time the same heavens and earth will pass out of existence (cf. Gen. 1:1; Isa. 65:17; John 1:3; II Peter 3:10-12). And though change occurs in the creation, the Creator remains unchanged, for He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

### "Sit on My Right Hand, Until..."

The seventh quotation, as the first quotation, is preceded by a reference to angels once again:

"But to which of the angels said he at any time, 'Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?'" (v. 13; cf. Ps. 110:1).

The writer of Hebrews terminates his seven quotations from the Old Testament at the same point that the Apostle John terminates his seven overcomer's promises in Revelation chapters two and three. Both the Father's and the Son's thrones are in view in both instances.

In Hebrews, the Son has been invited to sit alongside His Father, on His Father's throne, until His enemies are made His footstool. Then He will sit on His Own throne. In the Book of Revelation, in the last of the overcomer's promises, reference is also made to the Son being seated on the throne with His Father; and the promise is given to overcoming Christians that they will one day be allowed to sit with Him on His Own throne (Rev. 3:21).

Thus, the introductory verses in Hebrews, presenting a complete, composite Messianic portrait of Christ, terminate with a view to Christ ascending the throne and holding the sceptre, fulfilling these verses. And this logically leads into the same subject matter that the Apostle John in Revelation chapters two and three deals with — others (*companions, overcomers*) ascending the throne and occupying positions as co-heirs with Christ in that coming day.

The five major warnings in the Book of Hebrews and the seven overcomer's promises in the Book of Revelation, in this respect, have to do with *the same thing*. They are both Messianic in their outlook and are directed to the saved, not the unsaved.

They both have to do, not with the salvation which we presently possess, but with the salvation of the soul. It is *the overcomer* (Rev. 2, 3) who will realize *so great salvation* (Heb. 2:3) and be allowed to ascend the throne as a *companion* with God's Son during the coming age (cf. Heb. 1:8, 9, 14; 3:14 Rev. 3:21).

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