**Chapter Two**

**Because of the Angels**

*Are they*[angels]*not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation*?

*Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard*, *lest we drift away*. (Hebrews 1:14-2:1)

The book of Hebrews opens by presenting *Christ* as the appointed “*Heir of all things*” and *Christians* as those “*who will inherit salvation* [lit., ‘who are about to inherit salvation’]” (Hebrews 1:2, 14). The Father has given “*all that He has*” to the Son (*cf*. Genesis 24:36; 25:5; John 16:15); and Christians, realizing the salvation of their souls (Hebrews 10:36-39), will inherit as *co-heirs with Christ in that coming day*, *exercising with God*’*s Son the rights of the firstborn*.

There are seven Messianic quotations, forming most of chapter one of Hebrews (Hebrews 1:5-13), and *Christ*’*s co-heirs* are mentioned within the scope of these quotations as “*Your companions* [Greek: *metochoi*]” (Hebrews 1:9). Referring to the same group again, *metochoi* is translated “*partakers*” in Hebrews 3:14.

Immediately following the first two Messianic quotations from the Old Testament (Hebrews 1:5), attention is called to God’s Son being the One in possession of the rights of primogeniture (Hebrews 1:6); and these seven Messianic quotations close with a reference to God’s Son being seated at His Father’s right hand, awaiting that day when His enemies will be made His footstool, *allowing Christ and His companions to exercise the rights of primogeniture* (Hebrews 1:13; *cf*. Hebrews 1:9).

All of this then naturally leads into the mention of Christ’s companions in that coming day as “*those who* [Christians during present time] *are about to inherit salvation* [at a future time]” (Hebrews 1:14), and from there the subject matter leads immediately into the first of five major warnings directed to Christians (Hebrews 2:1-4).

And there can be no separating the first warning or any of the subsequent four warnings from the Messianic nature of the opening chapter. The introductory material in the opening chapter points to one thing and one thing only — *Christ and His companions one day taking the scepter and exercising regal power and authority over the earth*, necessitating that the five subsequent warnings, beginning with the first warning in chapter two (Hebrews 2) and concluding with the fifth warning in chapter twelve (Hebrews12), *be understood within this same framework*.

Such would also apply to the repeated reference to *angels* throughout the first two chapters. “Angels” are mentioned eleven times in these opening two chapters, *within a Messianic setting*;and God’s purpose behind providing such a design for the book of Hebrews should be obvious.

This book deals with *a change in the government of the earth, with* “*angels*” *presently holding the scepter and* “*man*” *about to hold the scepter*. Thus, when the Son is presented as the appointed “*Heir of all things*” (pointing to a future inheritance and a rule over that inheritance), one should naturally expect a corresponding reference to “angels” (pointing to a present rule over the earth), for the Son’s future inheritance has to do with these angels’ present domain and the exercise of dominion therein. And because of the Son’s identity — God’s Firstborn (Hebrews 1:6) — the Spirit of God chose to introduce the subject of heirship by showing the Son’s superiority to these angels:

*having become so much better than the angels*, *as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they*. (Hebrews 1:4)

Then the verse that immediately follows, formed from the first two of the seven Messianic quotations, centers on the thought of *Sonship*, *with Sonship portending rulership*. And in this verse, in these two references from the Old Testament pointing to the One with the “*more excellent name*” than angels, God begins by stating: “*You are My Son . . .* ” (Hebrews 1:5).

The appointed Heir is “God’s Son,” the One in possession of *the* *rights of the firstborn* (Hebrews 1:6). And though angels are “sons of God,” relative to this heirship, God will never say to any angel, “*You are My Son*, *today I have begotten You*” (Hebrews 1:5; *cf*. Psalm 2:7); nor has He ever said to any angel, “*Sit at My right hand*, *till I make Your enemies Your footstool*” (Hebrews 1:13; *cf*. Psalm 110:1). *He will say/has said this to His Son*, *Jesus*, *alone*.

Further, these same angels are also spoken of in another sense. They are spoken of as “*ministering spirits*,” ministering both during the present time (Hebrews 1:14) and during the coming Messianic Era (Hebrews 1:7). During the present time they minister on behalf of “*those who will inherit salvation*”; and during the coming Messianic Era they, along with worshipping the Son (Hebrews 1: 6), will minister on behalf of the Son and undoubtedly His companions as well.

Who though are these angels? Can anything be said about them other than that they are just angels within the kingdom of God who have some type of connection with God’s affairs in the government of the earth? They certainly cannot be looked upon as consisting of all the angels of God, for vast numbers of these angels have nothing to do with this earth and its government.

From a Scriptural standpoint, one would have to recognize the existence of what could only be myriads multiplied by myriads of angels in God’s universal kingdom who occupy regal positions as provincial rulers or regal positions under these provincial rulers (separate from Satan, his angels, and their rule over one province in God’s universal kingdom, the earth); and, as well, one would have to recognize the existence of similar numbers of other angels occupying positions in other capacities in relation to these rulers and provinces.

(It is evident from Scripture that there are vast numbers of angels [which, as previously noted, could only be myriads multiplied by myriads in number] occupying positions under God over, or in relation to, provinces in the universe other than the earth. And, because of the size of the physical universe — a size that can only stagger the imagination, consisting of evidently billions of provinces in the one galaxy in which we live alone, with the existence of billions of galaxies elsewhere in the universe — there can only be, not billions, but trillions of these provinces in the universe.

The positions held by angels elsewhere in the universe would be *regal*, *or in other related capacities*. And these angels, in this respect, would hold *regal positions* [*or other type of related positions*] over or in relation to at least many of what could only be trillions of provinces in the billions of galaxies that comprise the physical universe.

God’s revelation to man though concerns itself almost exclusively with *only one of these provinces — the earth* — which, by comparison to that which exists in the whole of the physical universe in this respect, could be viewed as almost comparable to a grain of sand in the sea. God’s revelation has to do with the one province in His kingdom where the appointed provincial ruler stepped outside the divinely fix laws under which he was to rule the province. Doing this, he disqualified himself to continue holding the scepter. His kingdom was reduced to a ruin [Genesis 1:2a], then later restored [Genesis 1:2-25 {2b}]; and, immediately following this restoration, man was created to take the scepter and rule the province in the stead of angels [Genesis 1:26-28].

But, though God’s revelation to man concerns itself almost exclusively with the earth and the government of the one province that he had been created to rule, God, in His word, has seen fit to briefly move outside the bounds of this one province and give man a glimpse into the government of the whole of the universe.

In the opening two chapters of Job, Satan is seen appearing in the presence of God as *a son of God* among other *sons of God* (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7). Satan appearing among them evidently appeared as an equal with them. Satan was the appointed ruler over one province in God’s universal kingdom, and it appears quite evident that these other sons of God could only be appointed rulers over other provinces elsewhere in the universe.

In this respect, these angels would be referred to by “*the stars of God*” in Isaiah 14:13-14 that Satan sought to rule over rather than rule as an equal with. Satan became dissatisfied with simply being one provincial ruler among possibly trillions of provincial rulers, and he sought to place his throne above that of all these other provincial rulers. He sought to “*be like the Most High*,” like God Himself. He sought to “*sit also upon the mount of the congregation* [*lit*., ‘the mount of the assembly’], in the sides of the north [*lit*., ‘the uttermost parts of the north’].”

Satan’s aspirations to sit on “*the mount of the assembly*” [Isaiah 14:13b], textually, would not only be in relation to placing his throne above all other provincial rulers in the universe but would be in relation to placing himself in the position of the one before whom all these other provincial rulers would appear. He would, in this respect, be *as God Himself*, *ruling over the entire universe*.

In the opening two chapters of Job, Satan, during Man’s Day, appeared among these other provincial rulers at this meeting place, as an apparent equal with them. But his prior aspirations, preceding man’s creation, had been to rule over these other provincial rulers from this place rather than meet with them at this place, as an equal with them.

Thus, *activities of the angels* in view in the book of Hebrews and elsewhere in Scripture — aside from the several references to provincial rulers other than Satan — would have to do with *the earth and its government alone*, not with God’s governmental affairs elsewhere in the universe.

For additional or related information on the preceding, refer to the author’s book, [The Most High Ruleth by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/TMHR.pdf).)

With respect to the rulership of the earth, God’s Son occupies an appointed position superior to angels (Hebrews 1:4-7, 13), and angels minister on behalf of those who are about to occupy positions of governmental power with God’s Son (Hebrews 1:14). Then, in Hebrews 2:5, reference is made to “*the world to come* [‘inhabited world to come’]” as not being placed in subjection to angels (an allusion to the position that angels presently occupy).

Angels *will not* hold the scepter in “*the inhabited world to come*,” the Messianic Era (*i.e*., on the one province in view — *the earth* — not on other provinces in the universe). Rather, God’s *firstborn Son* (Hebrews 1:6) and the *many sons* He is in the process of bringing “*to glory*” with Him (Hebrews 2:10) will hold the earth’s scepter in that day.

Everything about the mention of angels from Hebrews 1:4 through Hebrews 2:5 is, after some fashion, associated with *the government of this earth*. And it is evident that the reference to “*man*” and the “*son of man*” being made “*a little* [‘for a short time’] *lower than the angels*” in Hebrews 2:6-9 can only have to do with this same thing.  *The sufferings of Calvary* (Hebrews 2:9), *the glory that would follow* (Hebrews 2:7-9), *and the* “*many sons*” *Christ will bring to glory with Him* (Hebrews 2:10) *are all in view*.

Man was made “*a little* [‘for a short time’] *lower than the angels*” at the time he was created (Hebrews 2:6-7). He was created to possess dominion over the earth but did not hold the scepter at the time of his creation. Nor did man hold the scepter at any time before the fall.

Angels (Satan and his angels) held the scepter at this time, and they still hold it today. Thus, in this respect, man during the present time still finds himself in the same position in which he found himself at the time of his creation — created for a revealed purpose, but still not fulfilling that purpose — *for a short time*, occupying a position “*lower than the angels*.”

Christ, as well, was made “*a little* [‘for a short time’] *lower than the angels*” when He appeared on this earth, apart from His glory, as the God-Man — occupying the same regal position in relation to angels and the government of the earth as fallen man (Hebrews 2:9). He appeared in order that “*He*, *by the grace of God*, *might taste death for everyone*” (Hebrews 2:9), with a view to bringing “*many sons to glory*” (Hebrews 2:10). Christ, in this position, thus provided redemption (Hebrews 2:9) so that man might ultimately be placed back in the position for which he had been created (Hebrews 2:10).

Ministering Spirits

Contextually, the angelic ministry set forth in Hebrews 1:14 can only have one thing in view. These angels are presently ministering on behalf of Christians with a view to these Christians one day realizing an inheritance in a realm that angels presently occupy, an inheritance with the One who has been appointed “*Heir of all things*.” They are ministering with a view to seeing Christians ultimately elevated into positions as “*companions*” with Christ in His kingdom, realizing, as firstborn sons, the rights of primogeniture.

Angelic ministry, in this respect, would have to be intimately connected with the spiritual warfare in which Christians presently find themselves (Ephesians 6:10ff). Christians possess a “*heavenly calling*” (Hebrews 3:1; *cf*.Philippians 3:14) — *a calling to one day move into a heavenly land*, *possess that land*, *and rule over the earth in that land as co-heirs with Christ*.

And the land to which Christians have been called is today *occupied by Satan and his angels*. Accordingly, a present angelic ministry “*for* [on behalf of] *those who will inherit salvation* [which has to do with man moving into this heavenly land and exercising regal power and authority therein],” would, of necessity, have to involve this present spiritual warfare.

1) Two Opposing Sides

On one side of the conflict within this spiritual warfare there are powerful angelic beings (“*world-rulers of this* [present] *darkness*” [Ephesians 6:12, literal rendering]) seeking to hold onto their regal positions and presently possessed territory. And on the other side there are those called into existence (Christians) to one day move into and occupy this territory, bearing rule from this realm in the stead of the incumbent rulers.  *Territorial rights and governmental control of the earth within that territory*, *together*, *form the crux of the entire matter*.

This is what the warfare in Ephesians 6:10ff is all about, which can be easily seen in the type surrounding Israel’s earthly calling. Israel had passed through the experiences of Exodus 12 while in Egypt in view of the nation being removed from Egypt, placed in another land, and allowed to exercise the rights of the firstborn in that land (*cf*. Exodus 4:22-23). That is, Israel had appropriated the blood of the paschal lambs in Egypt (redemption had been provided), with a view to the nation being removed from Egypt and placed in the land of Canaan, “*above all people*” as “*a kingdom of priests*, *and an holy nation*” (Exodus 19:5-6).

Once in the land, Israel was to exercise God-given *kingly rights* over all the Gentile nations. And not only so, but within this rule Israel was to also exercise God-given *priestly rights*, being the channel through which God would pour out His blessings upon the Gentile nations.

However, the land to which Israel had been called during Moses’ day was already occupied. It was occupied by Gentile nations infiltrated by individuals referred to in Scripture as “*giants* [Hebrews, *Nephilim*, the offspring of a cohabitation of angels in the kingdom of Satan with female descendants of Adam]” (Numbers 13:28-33; *cf.* Genesis 6:4). And the Israelites were called upon to move into this land, overcome the inhabitants, and take possession of the land.

They were to accomplish this conquest in view of subsequently fulfilling the kingly and priestly aspects of the birthright; and this was the goal toward which *everything* beyond Exodus 12, after some fashion, moved. *Exercising the rights of the firstborn in the land constituted the purpose for the appropriation of the blood in Egypt and the departure of the Israelites from Egypt*.

Christians, in the antitype, have appropriated the blood of the Passover Lamb while in the world (“Egypt” is always a type of the *world* in Scripture) with a view to their one day being removed from the world and placed in another land — a heavenly land — for a specific purpose; and *that purpose has to do with exercising the rights of the firstborn in that land*, *which has to do with carrying out regal and priestly activities in that land*.

That is to say, Christians have been saved with a view to their occupying positions as “*kings and priests*” (Revelation 5:10), positions as co-heirs with the great King-Priest, in a heavenly land. And not only are the nations to be ruled by those occupying this land but the nations are also to be blessed through those occupying this land as well (Genesis 22:17-18).

As in the type, *everything* from the appropriation of the blood of the Passover Lamb (from the point of one’s salvation) in the Christian’s life moves, after some fashion, *toward the Christian realizing his calling*, *which centers around co-heirship with Christ in a heavenly land presently occupied by Satan and his angels*. Christians, as the Israelites under Moses, are to enter the land and slay “*the giants*,” with a view to dwelling in this land and exercising the rights of the firstborn therein.

The battle today though, unlike the battle during Moses’ day, is completely *spiritual*. It is a battle against spirit being in a heavenly land, which is why Ephesians 6:12 states,

*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood*, *but against principalities*, *against powers*, *against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places*. [*lit*., against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places’].

The battle is against individuals who are far more powerful than man, located in a realm that he cannot see or physically reach out and touch; and this is the reason help has been provided for man from another *spiritual* realm, from both the work of *the Spirit* and the work of *angels* (the latter being *a like-spiritual-realm* to the one being combated [*cf*. Daniel 10:12-13; Revelation 12:7-10]).

2) The Battle Is the Lord’s

As the Israelites within their own strength could not go in and take the land during Moses’ day (Numbers 14:40-45), neither can Christians bring about such a conquest within their own strength today. The means for successful conquest of the enemy and possession of the land during Moses’ day was the same as it is during the present day and time (*cf*. Numbers 13:30; 14:42; Ephesians 6:10).

“. . .*the battle is the LORD*’*s*.” It always has been, and it always will be. He is the One who, through His strength, gives the enemy over into the hands of those placing their trust in Him (1 Samuel 17:47; 2 Chronicles 20:15).

The Lord though is seen time after time in Scripture using angels to carry out His bidding, which would include delivering His people from the hand of the enemy (*cf.* 2 Kings 6:17; Psalm 103:20). Angels appear to be instrumental in every aspect of God’s affairs in His kingdom, with God choosing to act by surrounding Himself with angels to carry out that which He has commanded. And angels carrying out affairs in God’s kingdom could only act under fixed laws, resulting in their actions being looked upon as actions of the Lord Himself.

(A case in point would be the observation of conditions in and the subsequent destruction of the cities of the Jordan plain during Abraham’s day, in Genesis chapters eighteen and nineteen (Genesis 18; 19).

The Lord, accompanied by two angels, had come down to see for Himself the outcry that had come up to Him [apparently by angelic watchers, relating the depravity existing among those dwelling in Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:1-2, 20-21; *cf*. Daniel 4:17, 23)]. But the Lord, after coming down, though on earth in the area where Abraham lived, didn’t go on down into Sodom Himself. Rather, the Lord remained with Abraham out in the high country and sent the two angels down to observe conditions in Sodom; and their observation, acting under fixed laws, became the Lord’s observation. [Genesis 18:22].

Then, the same thing is seen in the destruction of four cities in the Jordan plain at this time [Deuteronomy 29:23]. These two angels carried out the destruction of these cities under the Lord’s command, continuing to act under fixed laws [Genesis 19:13]. And destroying the cities in this manner, their actions became the Lord’s actions. Not only did these two angels destroy the cities in the plain but the Lord is also said to be the One who destroyed these cities [Genesis 19:24-25, 29].)

The same thing is in view in Hebrews 1:14. Angels are seen performing a work that the Lord is elsewhere said to perform. That is, since the ministry of these angels, of necessity, has to center on the spiritual warfare in which Christians find themselves engaged (since this angelic ministry surrounds Christians realizing an inheritance in that heavenly land presently occupied by Satan and his angels), they are seen fighting a battle that the Lord is said to fight. And such would be in perfect keeping with the angelic ministry presented elsewhere in the Word of God. The actions of these angels, acting under fixed laws, are looked upon as actions of the Lord Himself.

The ministry of these angels on behalf of Christians results in what could be viewed as *an angelic conflict* (cf. Daniel 10:13, 20; Revelation 12:7-10). But the entire matter, in its larger scope, must also be looked upon as a conflict involving *Christians*, *angels*, *and the Lord himself* — *Christians warring against angels and angels warring against angels*, *with the latter resulting in the Lord Himself warring against angels*, *with the battle being the Lord*’*s*.

3) The Ultimate Outcome

To get a better grasp of the whole spiritual warfare and to understand where things are headed, it is necessary to look at the larger picture and view Satan’s kingdom both before and after his fall. And viewing Satan’s kingdom after this fashion, several things must be kept in mind.

Because of that which lies at the heart of the conflict — *governmental control over the earth* — angels involved in the present conflict, ministering on behalf of Christians, may very well include those angels who ruled with Satan in the beginning but refused to go along with him in his attempt to be “*like the Most High*.” If so, this would present a rather unique situation existing during the present dispensation. These angels would be (and possibly are) helping Christians to acquire positions in the future government of the earth that they once occupied, along with helping Christians to one day possess and wear crowns that these angels presently still possess and wear.

Only one-third of the angels originally ruling with Satan followed him in his God-dishonoring act (Revelation 12:4). The other two-thirds separated themselves from Satan and, as previously stated, possibly form part of the “*ministering spirits*” in Hebrews 1:14 during the present dispensation.

Satan’s aspirations and sin caused this separation. Satan’s aspirations and sin caused a separation of rulers within his kingdom — two-thirds separating from one-third. And, as will be shown, this separation resulted in *an imperfection in the God-designed order for the government of the earth*, *an imperfection that exists to this day* (*cf*. Ezekiel 28:15).

The present spiritual warfare is inseparably connected to a divine work surrounding *a restoration of perfection in the earth*’*s government where imperfection presently exists*. And the key to understanding the entire matter can be found in that which is revealed in the book of Revelation about the two-thirds contingent of angels who separated themselves from Satan.

These angels are presented in the book of Revelation as “*twenty-four elders*,” which could only be a representative group, referring to individuals “of old” (‘elders,’ Greek: *presbuteros,* referencing older individuals). And this would be in relation to that which is in view, which in this case, as is evident from that which is revealed, would have to be *the government of the earth.* They are seen as “older ones” *in relation to this government*, *which could only refer to angels* (*cf.* Revelation 4:4, 10; 5:5-6, 8, 11, 14; 7:11, 13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4).

(These twenty-four elders are usually identified by expositors as Christians representing “the Church” [by some expositors as both Christians and Jews representing both “the Church and Israel”]. However, neither can possibly be correct, and either would only serve to veil the entire line of teaching in view at this point in the book of Revelation.)

a) Crowns

First, note that the twenty-four elders are not only seated on thrones and crowned (the word “*seats*” [KJV] should be translated, “*thrones*” [Revelation 4:4]) but they, numerically, form *two sets of twelve*. “Twelve” is the number in Scripture of *governmental perfection*; and the fact that they are seated on thrones and crowned, along with forming two sets of twelve, shows that they would have to be somehow connected with a facet of God’s government in the universe; and the only facet of government within the universe that can be in view here is that of *the earth*. Thus, these twenty-four elders can only be looked upon as occupying regal positions of some type within the structure of the earth’s government.

Christians do not presently occupy regal positions of this nature (the earth’s government is still under angelic rule), but they one day will. However, though Christians are destined to occupy such positions, Christians cannot be represented by these twenty-four elders, for Christians *will not* be seated on thrones and crowned at the time events in Revelation 4 occur (which would be following the removal of Christians from the earth [Revelation 1:10; 4:1-2], following events surrounding the judgment seat [Revelation 1:11ff], but preceding the beginning of the Tribulation [Revelation 6:1ff]).

Nor would Christians cast their crowns before God’s throne if they did occupy such positions; for Christians who occupy positions with Christ during the coming age will wear their crowns as they sit on the throne with Him, not cast these crowns before God’s throne prior to this time.

The twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God’s throne, by this act, shows something that could not possibly be true of Christians. Such an act [particularly textually in Revelation 4] shows *the relinquishment of regal positions*,and Christians, at this point in the book of Revelation, will be *about to assume regal positions*.

Crowns that reigning Christians will wear when they ascend the throne with Christ are presently in existence and worn by two segments of angels — the two-thirds who refused to go along with Satan in his attempted coup, and the one-third remaining with him. And *all of these crowns* will not be available for Christians until after Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation and overthrows Gentile world power, along with Satan and his angels.

The fact that the twenty-four elders are connected with the government of this earth, in itself, leaves no room to question their identity. They can only be identified as *angels*, for angels alone (as during the present time) will occupy positions of such a nature at this point in the book of Revelation. Consequently, they would have to be looked upon as representing, at least in part, angels placed by God in positions of power and authority with Satan over the earth in the beginning; and since they, contextually, can only be identified with angels other than those actively ruling at that time in Satan’s kingdom, there is only one other group of angels left — those angels who refused to follow Satan in his attempt to exalt his throne. Thus, ascertaining their identity is really a very simple matter.

(Some Bible students, on the basis of the pronouns used in Revelation 5:9-10 — “*us*” and “*we*” [KJV, NKJV] — have understood the twenty-four elders to represent redeemed men, not angels. However, the majority of the better Greek manuscripts render the pronouns in Revelation 5:10 as “*them*” and “*they*” [*ref*. ASV, NASB, NIV, Wuest, Weymouth], giving rise to the thought that the pronoun “*us*” in Revelation 5:9 is probably a scribal insertion, being spurious [*ref*. Alford, Lenski].

But the matter is really not left to manuscript evidence alone. That the pronouns “*them*” and “*they*” are correct is evident from the context. Note that the song in Revelation 5:9-10 is apparently sung not only by the “*twenty-four elders*” but also by the “*four living creatures* [KJV: ‘*living beasts’*]” as well. Then, other angels join them in Revelation 5:11ff, with all of the angels together voicing additional, related statements.

Aside from the preceding, it would make absolutely no sense whatsoever to understand these twenty-four elders as referring to a segment of redeemed man. Man couldn’t possibly be crowned at the time of events in Revelation 4; 5, else he would be crowned before Christ is crowned [note that Christ is to wear the crown that Satan presently wears, which Satan will still be wearing at this time]. Also, man is to wear the crown he receives, not relinquish it before God’s throne as seen being done by the twenty-four elders.)

Then in view of man assuming the scepter, those angels represented by the twenty-four elders (possibly among those presently ministering on behalf of individuals about to move into these positions of power and authority) will willingly relinquish their crowns, but crowns worn by Satan and his angels will have to be taken by force at the time of Christ’s return.

The twenty-four elders are also seen wearing a type of crown (a *stephanos*) that shows that even though they occupy regal positions they are not presently reigning. This type of crown (in contrast to a *diadem*) shows that the wearer either actively occupied a position of power and authority in the past, but now doesn’t, or that he aspires to occupy such a position in the future, though he presently doesn’t (see the author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Ch. 12](http://bibleone.net/JSC12.htm)).

Then the place that the twenty-four elders occupy in the book of Revelation will further reveal their identity. They appear at a point in the book immediately following events of the judgment seat (referred to in chapter one, with judgment occurring on the basis of that which is revealed in chapters two and three [“works,” resulting in Christians being shown either to have overcome or to have been overcome]). They appear at this point in the book in order to show a relinquishment of crowns in view of others (previously shown qualified at the judgment seat) possessing and wearing these crowns during the coming age (*cf*. Hebrews 2:5).

The crowns relinquished by the twenty-four elders are apparently the “*many crowns*” that Christ will have in his possession at the time of His return (to be worn by Christ’s co-heirs [Revelation 19:12]); and the crown that Satan presently wears (which Christ will wear during the Millennium [*cf*. 2 Samuel 1:10; 5:4-5]), and crowns worn by angels presently ruling with Satan (the remainder of the crowns to be worn by Christians), will be taken *by force* after Christ returns (Revelation 19:17ff). Thus, though all decisions and determinations concerning the placing of Christians in various positions in the kingdom of Christ will be made at the judgment seat, Christians will not actually receive crowns and occupy positions on the throne until after Christ returns and takes the kingdom.

b) Two, Three Sets of Twelve

Why though does Scripture show the two-thirds contingent of angels who refused to follow Satan as represented by the number “twenty-four”? Note that there are “two” sets of twelve, one set short of “three,” the number of *divine perfection*. That is, “three sets of twelve” would show *divine perfection within a governmental structure*, which is the only way God would have designed and established the government of this earth in the beginning; and, beyond that, viewing three sets of “twelve,” He apparently established this government in accord with His own triune being.

Remaining within this framework, there is a missing set of “twelve” in Revelation 4:4, 10. And this is exactly what is shown, for these twenty-four elders represent only *two-thirds* of the original group. Those represented by the other *one-third*, the other set of “twelve,” remained with Satan (Revelation 12:4). “Two” is the number of *division* in Scripture. Those represented by the two sets of twelve separated themselves from Satan. “One” though is the number of *unity*. Those represented by the other set of twelve remained with Satan.

As a consequence of Satan’s attempt to exalt his throne, divine perfection ceased to exist in his kingdom in more ways than one. Not only was the domain over which he ruled reduced to a ruin (Genesis 1:2a), but the governmental administration within his kingdom ceased to exist in its previous perfect triune state.

All of this brings us to a point concerning the coming kingdom of Christ and how it will be structured. Angels represented by the twenty-four elders will relinquish their crowns willingly in view of Christians wearing these crowns during the coming age. But these are not all of the crowns, either presently worn by angels or which Christians will wear in that future day. The full complement must be shown by *three sets of twelve*, not two sets.

The other one-third, presently ruling under Satan, must also relinquish their crowns, along with Satan himself. *Only then* can Christ and His co-heirs assume regal positions on His throne, allowing divine perfection to once again be set forth in the government of this earth, with the government established after God’s own triune being.

*Thus*, *that is the goal of angelic ministry in Hebrews 1:14* — redeemed man inheriting with God’s Son within a restored governmental structure that will be both perfect and established after God’s own triune being. It is clear from Scripture that this is the manner in which the past government of the earth was originally established; and in the “*restoration* [KJV: restitution] *of all things*,” the future government under God’s Son could not, it will not, be established after any other fashion (Acts 3:21).

Thus, it is only fitting that the inheritance with God’s Son spoken of in Hebrews 1:14 — occupying a position of power and authority as co-heir with Christ within a restored, perfect government — is called, in Hebrews 2:3, “*so great a salvation*.”

(For additional information on the twenty-four elders in Revelation chapter four, refer to the Author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's The Time of the End, Ch. 7](http://bibleone.net/TOTE_07.htm), “Crowns Cast before God’s Throne.”)

Therefore…

Because of that which the Spirit of God reveals through the writer of Hebrews in chapter one, especially verse fourteen (Hebrews 1:14), a two-part statement is immediately given. In Hebrews 2:1, Christians are *compelled* on the one hand and *warned* on the other.

*Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard*, *lest we drift away*.

They are *compelled* concerning the necessity of keeping one’s attention fixed on the inheritance that lies out ahead, and they are *warned* concerning the consequences of not so doing.

Hebrews 2:1 could be better translated:

*Because of this it is necessary*, *so much the more*, *to keep our attention fixed upon the things which we have heard*, *lest*, *at any time*, *we might drift away*.

“*Because of this*,” of course, refers back to that which has previously been stated; and the words, “*it is necessary*,” refer to the necessity of action on the Christian’s part, which the text goes on to explain.

Man was created for a purpose that will ultimately be realized. And man, understanding this purpose, along with that which is presently being done on his behalf in order to bring him into a realization of this purpose (revealed in chapter one), should be compelled to do everything necessary in order to reach the desired goal.

And “*so much the more*” continues the thought, referring to the necessity of straining every muscle of one’s being — an all-out effort (*cf.* 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Timothy 5:12; Jude 1:3) — causing that person *to keep his attention fixed on the things that he has heard* (things revealed in chapter one). One’s attention must be focused on the *goal*, as in putting one’s hand to the plow (Luke 9:62), or in running the race (Hebrews 12:1-2). If a person does otherwise, according to the text, there is an ever-present danger of drifting away rather than attaining the goal of his calling.

Christians are being compelled to excel in the race of the faith through God’s revelation concerning that which lies at the end of the race; and God has made the necessary provision (angelic ministry, etc.) for victory.

Christians have been saved with a view to their running the race in a satisfactory manner, not failing to so run. But along with God’s revelation compelling Christians to keep their eyes fixed on the goal is also His warning concerning that which will occur should Christians choose to direct their attention elsewhere.

[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's So Great Salvation, Because of the Angels, Ch. 2](http://bibleone.net/SGS_02.htm)