

Proem Homiletic Midrash
THE MESSIAH HUMBLD AND EXALTD (1:1-3:6)
(YHWH said to my Adonai, sit at my right hand. Ps. 110:1a)

A. Initial texts: (Heb. 1:5-13)(Ps. 2:7; 2Sam. 7:14; Deut. 32:46/Ps. 97:7; Ps. 104:4; Ps. 45:6, 7; Ps. 102:25-27; Ps. 110:1)

B. Exposition (1:14-2:5)

C. Second Text: (2:6-8a) (Ps. 8:4-6)

D. Exposition: (2:8b-3:6)

Messiah of a Higher Order than Angels
The Fourth Rule of Hillel
In Hebrews 1:5-14

In Hebrews 1:5-14, Paul uses the fourth rule of Hillel: Binyan av mish'bey k'tuvim "Building of the father [that is a rule] from two (or more) texts." Paul uses this rule of Hillel to build a rule that the Messiah is of a higher order than angels:

I will tell of the decree YHWH said unto me:
You are My son: this day have I begotten you.
(Ps. 2:7 HRV)

I will be to him for a father, and he shall be to Me for a son.
If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men,
and with the stripes of the children of men:
(2Sam. 7:14 HRV)

Rejoice, you heavens, with him,
and let all the angels of Elohim worship him;
rejoice you Gentiles, with his people,
and let all of the sons of Elohim strengthen themselves in him;
for he will avenge the blood of his sons,
and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies,
and will reward them that hate him;
and YHWH shall purge the Land of his people.
(Deut. 32:43 LXX (see also Ps. 97:7/Neh 9:6)

Who makes spirits Your angels;
the flaming fire Your ministers.
(Ps. 104:4 HRV)

7 (45:6) Your throne O Elohim is forever and ever:
a scepter of equity is the scepter of your kingdom.
8 (45:7) You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness:
therefore Elohim, your Elohim, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows.
(Ps. 45:6-7 HRV)

26 (102:25) Of old You did lay the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of Your hands.
27 (102:26) They shall perish, but You shall endure:
yes, all of them shall wax old like a garment;
as a vesture shall You change them, and they shall pass away.
28 (102:27) But You are the selfsame, and Your years shall have no end.
(Ps. 102:25-27 HRV)

YHWH says unto my Adon:
Sit you at My right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool.
(Ps. 110:1 HRV)

You are My son: this day have I begotten you (Ps. 2:7)

*I will tell of the decree YHWH said unto me:
You are My son: this day have I begotten you.
(Ps. 2:7 HRV)*

- 1 Why are the nations in an uproar: and why do the peoples mutter in vain?
 - 2 The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against YHWH, and against **His anointed**:
 - 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.
 - 4 He that sits in heaven laughs; YHWH has them in derision.
 - 5 Then will He speak unto them in His wrath, and affright them in His sore displeasure:
 - 6 Truly it is I, that have established My king upon Tziyon, My Set-Apart mountain.
 - 7 I will tell of the decree YHWH said unto me: **You are My son: this day have I begotten you.**
 - 8 Ask of Me, **and I will give the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession.**
 - 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; you shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.
 - 10 Now therefore, O you kings, be wise; be admonished, you judges of the earth.
 - 11 Serve YHWH with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
 - 12 **Kiss the Son**, lest He be angry, and you perish, in the way, when suddenly His wrath is kindled. Happy are all they that take refuge in Him.
- (Psalm 2 HRV)

The Talmud acknowledges that this is a Messianic prophecy saying:

The Holy One, blessed be He, will say to the Messiah, the son of David: Ask of Me anything, and I will give it to you, as it is stated: I will surely tell of the decree of YHWH, this day have I begotten you. Ask of Me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance.
(b.Sukkah 52a)

According to Epiphanius (Panarion 30:13:7f), The Gospel according to the Ebionites had the voice from heaven at Yeshua's immersion citing this passage:

When the people were baptized, Jesus also came and was baptized by John. And as he came up from the water, the heavens was opened and he saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove that descended and entered into him. And a voice sounded from Heaven that said:
"You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased. "
And again: **" I have this day begotten you"**.
And immediately a great light shone round about the place.
When John saw this, it is said, he said unto him :
"Who are you, Lord?"
And again a voice from Heaven rang out to him:
"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."
And then, it is said, John fell down before him and said:
"I beseech you, Lord, baptize me."
But he prevented him and said:
"Suffer it; for thus it is fitting that everything should be fulfilled."
(Epiphanius, Panarion 30.13.7-8)

I will be to him for a father

I will be to him for a father, and he shall be to Me for a son.
If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men,
and with the stripes of the children of men:
(2Sam. 7:14 HRV)

The context of this passage is a message given to King David by the prophet Nathan. The message is that of the Davidic Covenant which is paralleled in 2Sam. 7:5-19; 1Chron. 17:4-15 & Ps. 89:19-37. Paul's usage implies that the entire Davidic Covenant has a Messianic dimension. This is important to Paul's main idea of Yeshua and heirship and Yeshua as the firstborn as Ps. 89:26-27 states:

*He shall cry to me, "You are my Father, My Elohim,
and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him
a firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.
(Ps. 89:26-27)*

In the past it was believed that Paul's Messianic usage of this passage was a chiddush (innovation), however we now know that the Qumran community used this same passage as a Messianic text in the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Moreover YHWH decl[ares] to you that He will make you a house," and that "I will raise up your offspring after you, and establish the throne of his kingdom [fore]ver. I will be a father to him, and he will be My son". (2Sam. 7:11c, 12b,13:b-14a) This passage refers to the Shoot of David,...
(4Q174 Col. 3 lines 10-11)

Let all the Angels of Elohim Worship Him

This passage appears twice in the LXX Tanak but does not appear in the Masoretic Text. Deut. 32:43 in the LXX reads:

Rejoice, you heavens, with him, and let all the angels of Elohim worship him; rejoice you Gentiles, with his people, and let all of the sons of Elohim strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and YHWH shall purge the Land of his people.

Paul is not here quoting the LXX itself but more likely a Hebrew text which here agrees here with the LXX. That the text the LXX may be more original here is evidenced by two factors. First, the poetic parallelism supports the LXX reading and second, a Qumran copy of the text closely agrees. This Qumran text is part of a Hebrew version of Deut. 32 which agrees closely with the LXX. This Qumran text reads here:

Rejoice, O you heavens, with him and all you ELOHIM worship him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons and will render vengeance to his enemies.

The LXX and the Qumran text differ by only one word in this material quoted by Paul. The Qumran text merely omits the word "angels." Another place where this phrase appears in the LXX is Ps. 97:7. Here the LXX reads:

Let all that worship graven images be ashamed, who boast of their idols; worship him all you his angels.

The Aramaic of the Peshitta text of Ps. 97:7 agrees here with the LXX, however the MT reads:

Let all that worship graven images be ashamed, who boast of idols, Worship him, all [you] ELOHIM.

However, in light of the reading "angels" in the LXX and Peshitta, it appears that Paul's text may have read "Angels of ELOHIM" as shown above regarding Deut. 32:43. The evidence from the Peshitta OT and from Qumran strongly support that Paul was using a Hebrew text here which agreed in this case with the LXX. It is also important to look here at Neh. 9:6 which parallels this phrase closely:

You alone are YHWH; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.

Your throne O Elohim is forever and ever (Ps. 45:6)

7 (45:6) Your throne O Elohim is forever and ever:

a scepter of equity is the scepter of your kingdom.

8 (45:7) You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness:

therefore Elohim, your Elohim, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows.

(Ps. 45:6-7 HRV)

The Targum on this passage justifies Paul's Messianic application of the text. It reads:

Your throne O Elohim in Heaven, is the throne of King Messiah.

A rule of righteousness is the rule of your Kingdom, O King Messiah.

YHWH says unto my Adon: (Ps. 110:1)

YHWH says unto my Adon:
Sit you at My right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool.
(Ps. 110:1 HRV)

*1 A Psalm of David. (110:1) YHWH says unto my Adon: Sit you at My right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool.*
*2 The rod of Your strength, YHWH will send out of Tziyon. Rule you in the midst of
your enemies.*
*3 Your people offer themselves willingly in the day of your warfare; in adornments of Set-
Apartness: from the womb of the dawn, yours is the dew of your youth.*
*4 YHWH has sworn, and will not repent: You are a cohen forever after the manner of
MalkiTzadek.*
5 YHWH, at your right hand, does crush kings in the day of His wrath.
*6 He will judge among the nations: He fills it with the dead bodies. He crushes the head
over a wide land.*
7 He will drink of the brook in the way: therefore will he lift up the head.
(Ps. 110:1-7 HRV)

*The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit you at My right hand.
To the Messiah it will also be said,
and in mercy the throne be established; ...
(Midrash Tehillim on Ps. 110:1)*

*Rabbi Simeon further gave an exposition of the verse:
The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit at my right hand
Until I make your enemies your footstool (Ps. 110:1)
“The Lord says unto my Lord”:
to wit, the upper grade [of the Godhead],
said to the lower [grade of the Godhead],
“sit at My right hand”, ...
(Zohar 1:50b)*

THE TORAH DELIVERED BY ANGELS (Heb. 2:2)

And you have received the Torah by way of the commandment of angels,
and have not kept it.

(Acts 7:53 HRV)

Why then the Torah? Because of apostasy it was added, until That Seed should come
to whom the Promise was. And the Torah was given through angels and through a
mediator.

(Gal. 3:19 HRV)

Another explanation: LET HIM KISS ME WITH THE KISSES OF HIS MOUTH (Song
1:1). R. Johanan said: An angel carried the utterances [at Mount Sinai] from before the
Holy One, blessed be He, each one in turn, and brought it to each of the Israelites and
said to him, 'Do you take upon yourself this commandment? So-and-so many rules are
attached to it, so-and-so many penalties are attached to it, so-and-so many precautionary
measures are attached to it, so many precepts and so many lenient and strict applications
are attached to it; such-and-such a reward is attached to it.' The Israelite would answer
him, ' Yes. ' He then said, 'Do you accept the divinity of the Holy One, blessed be He? '
and he answered, ' Yes, yes. ' Thereupon he kissed him on the mouth; hence it says, Unto
thee it was shown that thou mightest know (Deut. IV, 35), namely, by an [angelic]
messenger.

(Song of Songs Rabbah 1:13)

What is Man that You Should Remember Him? (Ps. 8:5(4))

5 (8:4) What is man, that You are mindful of him: and the son of man, that You think of him?

6 (8:5) Yet You have made him but little lower than the elohim, and have crowned him with glory and honor.

7 (8:6) You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under His feet:

(Psalm 8:5-7 (4-6))

It is worthy of note that where the Hebrew of the Masoretic Text has “little lower than elohim” in verse 6, both the Aramaic Peshitta and Greek versions have “little lower than angels” in this verse, and it is interpreted to mean “angels” in Hebrews 2:6-9.

According to the Talmud, Midrash Rabba and Zohar, the phrase “What is man, that You are mindful of him” (Ps. 8:5) was actually spoken by a group of angels who were challenging Elohim:

The Talmud:

Rab Judah said in Rab's name: When the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to create man, He [first] created a company of ministering angels and said to them: Is it your desire that we make a man in our image? They answered: Sovereign of the Universe, what will be his deeds? Such and such will be his deeds, He replied. Thereupon they exclaimed: Sovereign of the Universe, ***What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou thinkest of him? (Ps. 8:5)*** Thereupon He stretched out His little finger among them and consumed them with fire. The same thing happened with a second company. The third company said to Him: Sovereign of the Universe, what did it avail the former [angels] that they spoke to Thee [as they did]? the whole world is Thine, and whatsoever that Thou wishest to do therein, do it. When He came to the men of the Age of the flood and of the division [of tongues] whose deeds were corrupt, they said to Him: Lord of the Universe, did not the first [company of angels] speak aright? Even to old age I am the same, and even to hoar hairs will I carry, (Is. 46:4) He retorted. (b.San. 38b)

The Midrahs Rabbah:

Why is it stated 'for your pride'? It alludes to the idols on which they pride themselves, saying, Where are their gods, the rock in whom they trusted (Deut. 32:37). Another interpretation of 'for your pride': on account of the Ministering Angels who are proud of themselves and say, ***'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, etc.?' (Ps. 8:5)*** (Lam. Rabbah Prologue XXV)

What, then, was Adam's wisdom? You find that when the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to create Adam, He took counsel with the ministering angels and said to them, 'Let us make man' (Gen. 1:26). They spoke before Him, 'Lord of the universe, ***what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? (Ps. 8:5).***' He replied to them, 'The man whom I desire to create will have wisdom exceeding yours.' (Eccl. Rabbah VII:33)

The Zohar:

“Of the Nefilim it is said: “and the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair” (Gen. 6:1f). These form a second category of the Nefilim, already mentioned above, in this way: When God thought of making man, He said: “Let us make man in our image, etc.” i.e. He intended to make him head over the celestial beings, who were to be his deputies, like Joseph over the governors of Egypt (Gen. 41:41). The angels thereupon began to malign him and say, **“What is man that You should remember him (Ps. 8:5(4))**, seeing that he will assuredly sin before You.” Said God to them, “If you were on earth like him, you would sin worse.” And so it was. For “when the sons of God saw the daughters of man”, they fell in love with them, and God cast them down from heaven. These were Uzza and Azael; from them the “mixed multitude” derive their souls, and therefore they also are called nefilim, because they fell into fornication with fair women.”
(Zohar 1:25b)

...Uzza and Azael actually opposed it [the creation of man]. For when the Shekinah said to God “Let us make man”, they said, **“What is man that thou shouldst know him?** Why desirest thou to create man, who, as thou knowest, will sin before thee through his wife, who is the darkness to his light, light being male and darkness female?” The Shekinah answered them: “You yourselves shall commit the very crime of which you accuse him”; and so it is written, “and the sons of God saw the daughters of man that they were comely”, and they went astray after them and were degraded by the Shekinah from their holy estate.’ Said the colleagues: ‘Rabbi, after all, Uzza and Azael were not wrong, because man was really destined to sin through woman.’ He replied, ‘What the Shekinah said was this: “You have spoken worse of man than all the rest of the heavenly host. If you were more virtuous than man, you would have a right to accuse him. But whereas he will sin with one woman, you will sin with many women, as it is written, ‘and the sons of God saw the daughters of man’- not a daughter, but daughters; and further, if man sinned, he was ready to repent and to return to his Master and repair his wrong.” ‘
(Zohar 1:23a)

They therefore went to R. Simeon and laid the matter before him. In reply he cited to them the verse: **“What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?” (Ps. 8:5)**. ‘The exposition of this verse’, he said, ‘is that it was uttered by those in charge of the world at the time when God expressed His intention of creating man. He called together various companies of heavenly angels and stationed them before Him. He said to them: I desire to create man. They exclaimed, “Man abideth not in honour”, etc. (Ps. 44: 13). God thereupon put forth His finger and burnt them. He then set other groups before Him, and said: I desire to create man. They exclaimed, “What is man that thou shouldst remember him?” What is the character of this man, they asked. He replied: Man will be in our image, and his wisdom will be superior to yours. When He had created man and he sinned and obtained a pardon, Uzza and Azael approached Him and said: We can plead justification against Thee, since the man whom Thou hast made has sinned against Thee. He said to them: Had you been with them you would have sinned equally, and He cast them down from their high estate in heaven.
(Zohar 3:207b-208a)

I Will Declare Your Name to My Brothers Hebrews 2:12 Quotes Ps. 22:23 (22)

During the seven-year period preceding the coming of the son of David, iron beams will be brought low and loaded upon his neck until the Messiah's body is bent low. Then he will cry and weep, and his voice will rise to the very height of heaven, and he will say to God: Master of the universe, how much can my strength endure? How much can my spirit endure? How much my breath before it ceases? How much can my limbs suffer? Am I not flesh and blood?

*It was because of the ordeal of the son of David that David wept, saying **My strength is dried up like a potsherd (Ps. 22:16)**. During the ordeal of the son of David, the Holy One, blessed be He, will say to him: Ephraim, My true Messiah, long ago, ever since the six days of creation, thou didst take this ordeal upon thyself. At this moment, thy pain is like my pain . . .*

At these words, the Messiah will reply: Now I am reconciled. The servant is content to be like his Master.

(Pesikta Rabbati, Piska 36.2, translated by William G. Braude, Yale University Press, pg. 680-681)

*It is taught, moreover, that in the month of Nisan the Patriarchs will arise and say to the Messiah: Ephraim, our true Messiah, even though we are thy forbears, thou art greater than we because thou didst suffer for the iniquities of our children, and terrible ordeals befell thee . . . for the sake of Israel thou didst become a laughingstock and a derision among the nations of the earth; and didst sit in darkness, in thick darkness, and thine eyes saw no light, and thy skin cleaved to thy bones, and thy body was as dry as a piece of wood; and thine eyes grew dim from fasting, and **thy strength was dried up like a potsherd** – all these afflictions on account of the iniquities of our children . . .*

(Pesikta Rabbati 37.1, translated by William G. Braude, Yale University Press, pg. 685-686)

*Ephraim is a darling son to Me . . . My heart yearneth for him, in mercy I will have mercy upon him, saith the Lord (Jer. 31:20). Why does the verse speak twice of mercy: In mercy I will have mercy upon him? One mercy refers to the time when he will be shut up in prison, a time when the nations of the world will gnash their teeth at him every day, wink their eyes at one another in derision of him, nod their heads at him in contempt, open wide their lips to guffaw, as is said **All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head (Ps. 22:8)**; **My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my throat; and thou layest me in the dust of death (Ps. 22:16)**. Moreover, they will roar over him like lions, as is said **They open wide their mouth against me, as a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is become like wax; it is melted in mine inmost parts (Ps. 22:14-15)**.*

(Pesikta Rabbati 37.1, translated by William G. Braude, Yale University Press, pg. 686-687)

I Will Declare Your Name to My Brothers (Heb. 2:12)

I have made known Your Name, to the men whom You gave Me from the world: they were yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.
(Jn. 17:6 HRV)

And I have made known to them Your Name, and will make known: so that the love with which You loved Me, might be in them and I might be in them.
(Jn. 17:26 HRV)

59 Now the Chief Cohenim and the whole council, sought false witness against Yeshua, to deliver Him up to death.

60 But they found none, though there came forward many false witnesses. But at the last there came two false witnesses, and said,

61 He said, I can pull down the Temple of El, and before three days I can build it.

62 Then the Chief Cohen arose, and said to Him, Answer you nothing at all, concerning these things which they witness against You?

63 But Yeshua answered nothing, but was silent. Then the Chief Cohen said to Him, I adjure you, by the Living Elohim, that you tell us whether You are Messiah, the Son of Elohim.

64 And Yeshua answered and said to him: You have said. Therefore I say to you, hereafter you will see, the Son of Man, that sits here on the right hand of the Power of Elohim (Ps. 110:1), coming in the clouds of heaven (Dan. 7:13).

65 Then the Chief Cohen tore his garments, saying, He has blasphemed. What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, you have heard now that He has blasphemed.
(Matthew 26:59-65 HRV)

Note the phrase "Temple of El" in verse 61. This phrase never appears in the Tanak which generally has "Temple of YHWH". Also in verse 64 "The Power" is a common euphemism for YHWH which should appear based on the fact that this verse combines Ps. 110:1 with Dan. 7:13 where YHWH does appear in Ps. 110:1. Could Yeshua have been being accused of blasphemy for having used the phrase "Temple of YHWH" could he have aggravated and confirmed the charge by citing the Ps. 110:1/Dan. 7:13 phrase with the name YHWH pronounced? The Mishnah sheds a great deal of light on the events of this trial. The Mishnah states:

He who *blasphemes* is liable *only* when he will have *fully pronounced the Divine Name*.

Said R. Joshua ben Qorha, "on every day of the trial they examine the witnesses with a substitute name... once the trial is over, they would not put him to death with the euphemism, but they put everyone out and ask the most important of the witnesses, saying to him, "Say, what exactly did you hear?" And he says what he heard. *And the judges stand on their feet and tear their clothing...*

(m.San. 7:5)

I And the Children Whom YHWH has Given Me (Heb. 2:13)

13 YHWH Tzva'ot, Him shall you sanctify, and let Him be your fear: and let Him be your dread.

14 And He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Yisra'el: for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Yerushalayim.

15 And many among them shall stumble and fall: and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

16 Bind up the testimony; seal the Torah among My disciples.

17 And I will wait for YHWH, that hides His face from the house of Ya'akov, and I will look for Him.

18 Behold, I and the children whom YHWH has given me, shall be for signs and for wonders in Yisra'el; from YHWH Tzva'ot, who dwells in mount Tziyon.

(Isaiah 8:13-18 HRV)

*Judah and Hezekiah, the sons of R. Hiyya, once sat at table with Rabbi and uttered not a word. Whereupon he said: Give the young men plenty of strong wine, so that they may say something. When the wine took effect, they began by saying: The son of David cannot appear ere the two ruling houses in Israel shall have come to an end, viz., the Exilarchate, in Babylon and the Patriarchate in Palestine, for it is written, **And he shall be for a Sanctuary, for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both houses of Israel (Is. 8:14)**. Thereupon he [Rabbi] exclaimed: You throw thorns in my eyes, my children! At this, R. Hiyya [his disciple] remarked: Master, be not angered, for the numerical value of the letters of yayin is seventy, and likewise the letters of sod: When yayin [wine] goes in, sod [secrets] comes out.
(b.San. 38a)*