

## **ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN LIGHT OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS**

### **I. Catholicism's Exaltation Of Mary Versus Hebrews' Exaltation Of Christ**

**(Hebrews 1:1-14)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. A number of the members of our Church have come from Roman Catholic backgrounds, and they often seek support in Biblical truth to counter the strong, errant indoctrination they experienced in their past.
- B. The epistle to the Hebrews was written to counter the errant traditionalism of first century Judaism that was similar in theological thrust to much of Catholicism, so we study Hebrews for edification in this matter.
- C. We thus view Hebrews 1:1-14 on Catholicism's exaltation of Mary versus the Biblical exaltation of Christ:

#### **II. Catholicism's Exaltation Of Mary Versus Hebrews' Exaltation Of Christ, Hebrews 1:1-14.**

- A. Roman Catholicism calls Mary the "Mother of God" (Loraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 133), but Hebrews 1:1-2 teaches that Christ created the world, what would include His creation of Mary.
- B. Roman Catholicism teaches that all power in heaven and on earth has been given to Mary so that all obey, even God (Ibid., p. 139, citing Bishop Alphonse de Liguori, The Glories of Mary, 1931, p. 180. Note: The Editor's note in this book asserts, "Everything that our saint (Liguori) has written is . . . so to speak, *the church herself that speaks to us . . .*"). However, Hebrews 1:3 ESV teaches that Christ as the exact imprint of the nature of God the Father upholds creation by the word of His power by which He called the universe into being, so God and Jesus are sovereign over Mary!
- C. Roman Catholicism commands a worship peculiar to Mary (Ibid., p. 139, citing Liguori, p. 130), but Hebrews 1:3 ESV presents Christ as being of the exact imprint of the nature of God the Father, and thus it is He Who is to be worshiped as God (Hebrews 1:6, 8)! (Note: Matthew 4:10 teaches that we should worship God alone!)
- D. Roman Catholicism teaches that the Triune Godhead gave Mary a name above every other name, that at her name, every knee in heaven, on earth and under the earth should bow (Ibid., p. 140, citing Liguori, p. 260). However, Jesus obtained a more excellent name than the angels (Hebrews 1:4), and God the Father called Him God in Hebrews 1:8. Mary is not God, so she cannot be sovereign over God and Christ in heaven!
- E. Roman Catholicism calls Mary the "Queen of Heaven" and "Queen of the angels" (Ibid., p. 134), but Hebrews 1:5-14 reveals that it is Jesus Christ Who is the Superior to heaven's angels – not Mary:
  - 1. God did not address any of the angels, but only Jesus Christ as His Son, whom He had begotten in fulfillment of Psalm 2:7 (Hebrews 1:5). Christ "has always been the eternal Son of God" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 781), but the term "begotten" in Psalm 2:7 is an expression that refers to God's adoption of the Davidic King as His "Son" for the purpose of ruling on the Davidic throne, Ibid.
  - 2. God told all the angels to worship Jesus (as God) when He brought Him into the world, Hebrews 1:6, 8.
  - 3. God made His angels winds and His angelic ministers a flame of fire, but of Christ, God declared that He was God, that His throne is forever, and the scepter of uprightness was the scepter of His kingdom, Hebrews 1:7-8. Because He loved righteousness and hated wickedness, God the Father anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His companions, human beings who believed in Him, Hebrews 1:9 (Ibid., p. 782). Since Mary is a human and a believer (Luke 1:46-47), God has also anointed Jesus above Mary!
  - 4. Hebrews 1:10-12 cited Psalm 102:25-27 to teach that Christ is the Creator of all things, and the One Who is unchanging in the midst of change. Jesus thus created Mary, and He remains the unchanging God.
  - 5. God the Father never spoke to any angel in heaven the words of Psalm 110:1 where He told Christ to sit on His right hand until He made His enemies His footstool, for heaven's angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those believers like Mary who are to inherit Christ's salvation, Hebrews 1:13-14.

***Lesson:*** Roman Catholicism exalts Mary as "Mother of God," that all power in heaven and earth has been given to her so that even God obeys her, that she is to be worshiped, and that she is Queen of Heaven and of the angels. However, Hebrews 1:1-14 teaches that Christ created and sustains the world, what includes Mary, that Christ Who bears the exact imprint of God the Father's nature upholds the universe by the word of His power, that Christ as God is to be worshiped and not Mary and that Christ is sovereign over the angels and believers, including Mary.

***Application:*** (1) Though God highly favored Mary to give birth to Jesus and to raise Him to adulthood, she was a mortal sinner who was saved by grace. She is thus not to be exalted to the equality or the sovereignty of God, for that is idolatry. (2) Rather, Hebrews 1:1-14 exalts God Incarnate Jesus Christ as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe Who is above all created beings, including Mary.