

Hebrews 2:16

For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels*; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. (*KJV*)

1. This verse is occasionally used to prove the Trinity, but if so, it is only because a mistranslation is not recognized. Any student of the Bible should know that the words in the *KJV* that are in italics were added by the translators. The translators wanted readers to know what was in the Greek text and what was not, so they kindly placed the words they added in italic script. This is much more honest than some versions that add all kinds of things without giving the reader a hint of it. Without the italics, the verse in English becomes somewhat of an enigma, because it is not clear how Christ did not “take on” angels, but did “take on” Abraham’s seed. The solution is in the translation of the Greek text, and the modern versions (including the *New King James*) get the sense very nicely: “For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants” (*NIV*). “For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned, but with the descendants of Abraham” (*RSV*).

2. Correctly translated and read in its context, this verse beautifully portrays how the man, Jesus Christ, “helps” us. He was human like we are, a lamb from the flock, and without spot or blemish so he could accomplish God’s purpose by being the perfect sacrifice and thus atone for our sins. This allows us to be totally free from fear of death because Christ showed us that death is not permanent for those who believe in him. God can and will raise us from the dead. And, because he was like us in every way, “he is able to help those who are tempted.” Because in the context, it so clearly states that Jesus was “like his brothers in every way” (v. 17), there can be no reference to the Trinity in this verse. If the Trinity is correct and Jesus had both an eternal nature and human nature, he is hardly like us “in every way.”

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