

- In the first passage of chapter one; (verses 1-3), we saw seven attributes of Jesus:

- 1- V2 He speaks God's words to mankind
- 2- V2 He is heir of all things
- 3- V2 He made the worlds
- 4- V3 He is the exact representation of the Father
- 5- V3 He holds all things together by His word
- 6- V3 He purged our sins by Himself
- 7- V3 He is now sitting on God's throne in heaven



- In the next section; (verses 4-14 of chapter one), we see seven reasons why He's better than the angels:

- 1- V4 He has inherited a better name than angels
- 2- V5 He is called God's Son; unlike any of the angels
- 3- V6 He is called the firstborn; referring to His resurrection; which angels don't experience
- 4- V6 He is worshiped by the angels; which is obviously greater than the angels
- 5- V8 He is acknowledged by the Father as being God; which is greater than the angels
- 6- V8 He has an eternal throne & kingdom; which no angel has
- 7- V10 He is the creator of the universe; unlike angels who are themselves created beings

- The two groups of seven don't point to any particular man as the author of Hebrews, they do show the divine fingerprint of the Holy Spirit who inspired this letter to be written.

- Chapter 2 continues with the comparison between Jesus & angels, but in a little different way.

- Chapter 1 described the lofty nature of Jesus as God's own Son; heir of all things; creator of the world; eternal king; & the one redeemer of mankind.
- Chapter 2 describes who Jesus is from a different perspective; the son of man, not God.
- But, before he does that, he pauses his thoughts for the first four verses to warn his readers of the seriousness of drifting away from faith in Jesus.
- Because of this awesome position & power Jesus holds, Paul wants these believers to consider carefully their actions, & "earnestly heed" those things they've heard.

*Heb 2:1-4 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. <sup>2</sup>For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup>how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, <sup>4</sup>God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*



- This is the first of five warnings in

Hebrews: Heb 2:1-4, 4:12-14, 6:4-8, 10:26-31, 12:25-29.

- These five warnings are the focal point of the message to the Hebrews.
- The rest of the letter, which these warnings are built around, gives both the reason for avoiding the error of neglecting salvation & the way to avoid that error in our lives.

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

- The *Therefore* assumes the beginning arguments of chapter 1 were made persuasively, & he has the attention of his readers, & can go on.

- Because Jesus is greater than the angels, & He brought us the message of salvation, & He's seated in heaven; *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed ...*
- o *the more earnest*, is one Greek word; *perissoteros; especially; even more; to a greater degree*
  - They aren't paying enough attention to the belief that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah & the only Savior of the world.
  - These believers know the truth about who Jesus is, but they aren't really considering the consequences of falling back to the old Jewish ways of serving God before the cross.
  - After all, the temple & all of it's sacrifices & regulations were given by God, so what could it hurt to return to that again.
  - *the things we have heard*, is the gospel message that they both heard & believed.
  - These Hebrew believers are drifting away from the message of Jesus dying for their sins.
  - The message that if we'll give Him first place in our lives, He will come live with us.
- o *lest we drift away; (KJV; lest at any time we should let them slip)*
  - The Greek word for *we drift away or slip; pararreo*, It's the idea of leaving a boat left untied at the dock, & so it slowly drifts away.
  - Believers who fail to *earnestly heed; (give serious & heartfelt attention to)* Jesus & the salvation He bought for us, are in danger of *drifting away* from Him.
  - These Hebrew believers lost sight of who Jesus is, & that He is the only way of salvation.
- o The problem with returning to the OC traditions is that God has moved on to the NC.
  - He's sent His Son Jesus, & He died on the cross for us, fulfilling that old Law.
  - To submit to the Law after knowing the truth, is a rejection of all that Jesus accomplished.
    - Many believers today should ask; Is my faith in Jesus, or the good life I live?
  - Unfortunately, many believers today have fallen back into that OC way of thinking, by trying to earn God's favor by their good behavior.

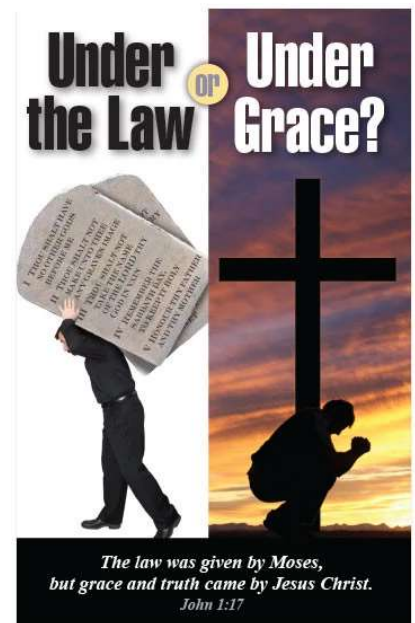


**Rom 10:4** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- If you ask a believer; Is your life pleasing to God?
  - Their response all too often is: Well I'm a pretty good person; or, I try to obey God.

**Gal 5:4-5** You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. <sup>5</sup>For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

- Their response should be: I love & trust Jesus with my whole heart; My faith is in Him alone.
- It's a matter of the heart; are we serving God because we love Him, or the Law says to?
- Hebrews says we're in danger of "*drifting away*" from Jesus if it's the Law we're following.



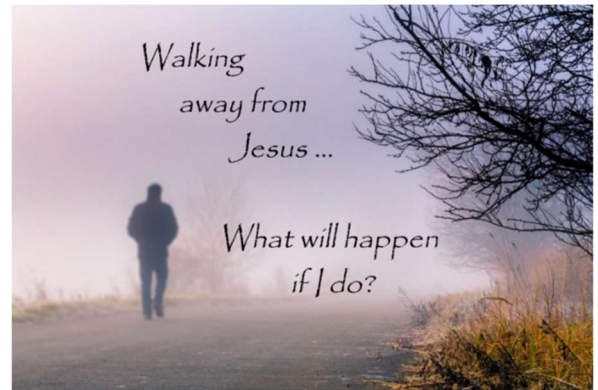


<sup>2</sup>*For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward;*

- This statement is not a question, it's rhetorical; God's word spoken thru angels **is** steadfast.
  - A better translation would be; *since the word spoken through angels proved steadfast...*
- *and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward;*
  - *KJV: every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;*
  - I kind of like the *KJV* here because it states that under the OC, those who disobey God's word received a tangible payment from God; good for obedience, & punishment for disobedience.
  - The OT is full of examples of those who disobeyed the Law & died; *Lev 10; Num 16; Josh 7...*
  - So the question is; Can we expect the same treatment from God in the NC?

*Heb 2:3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him; <sup>4</sup>God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*

- *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation;*
  - Paul wants them to see the seriousness of their decision to turn from their faith in Christ, & go back to living by good works & the Law; This is a major mistake they're making.
  - If believers in Jesus *neglect their salvation*; If believers in Jesus don't *pay attention to their salvation & drift away from Jesus*; How will they escape judgment.
  - This letter is dealing with a very serious issue; Do we continue to remain faithful to the NC & walk by faith; or do we return to the familiar OC ways of walking by sight.
- The OC Hebrews walked by sight; they could see the priests, the temple, the sacrifices, the rituals & daily Jewish life didn't require faith.



- The NC believer is now required to walk by faith; He has to trust a High Priest he can't see, & believe in a sacrifice he can't see, & worship God in the spirit instead of a temple he can see, & follow the Spirit instead of the written Law.



- This new way of faith, & life in the spirit, would be hard to do after living a life by sight.
- The OC said love your neighbor as yourself, *Lev 19:18*; But in the NC the Spirit might say: "go pay for that woman's groceries"; That's the difference between the Law & the Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit has shown us in the book of Hebrews how believers now have in Christ the very substance of which all these written Laws are only a shadow.

*Jer 31:33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

- Both Hebrews & Galatians are dealing with a similar problem; believers who returned to the traditions of the Law, instead of relying solely on the finished work of Jesus by faith.
  - In Galatians, Paul uses His Apostolic authority when he says to those Gentile believers:

*Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*

- In Hebrews his approach is different because he's not coming to them as their Apostle, but as their brother, so he says: *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation.*
- Paul includes himself as one of the Hebrew believers who believed after the resurrection, & this is why he said; *we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard...*

° *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation;*

- If breaking the OC brought punishment, how will we escape if we break God's NC?
- It sounds like breaking this NC has much worse consequences than breaking the OC, but I believe the writer's intent here is to emphasize the seriousness of these issues.
- After chapter one's description of the resurrected Jesus, I believe the author is so awed with Jesus' majesty that the thought of drifting away from that salvation is too terrible to imagine.
  - What could possibly be the fate of someone who would neglect such a great salvation?
- These believers are missing God, & he wants them to realize there will be consequences.
- That being said, the writer doesn't give us those NC consequences at this time, but leaves us to ponder that question for awhile.
- However in chapter 6, he clearly tells us he doesn't think these believers lost their salvation.

*Heb 6:7-9 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; <sup>8</sup>but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. <sup>9</sup>But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.*

- So even though Paul is very stern with them, he doesn't believe they've lost their salvation.

° Thruout most of Paul's letters, he's preoccupied with the steadfastness of believers in his care.

*1 Cor 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. <sup>25</sup>Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable prize, but we an imperishable. <sup>26</sup>Therefore I run, not as uncertainly; So I box, not as beating the air; <sup>27</sup>But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

- Just as Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers to run the race, & fight the good fight; he's also warning the Hebrew believers to remain steadfast to faith in Jesus only.
- Paul tells the Corinthians that he's diligent with his own faith so he won't be disqualified.
  - But, disqualified from what? His salvation? No, the prize; eternal rewards from Jesus.
  - He just told us; *but only one receives the prize; run in such a way that you may win.*
- Runners who don't win the race aren't executed, they simply don't receive the prize.
  - Believers who don't diligently run the race are not damned to hell for eternity, but they won't be receiving any rewards in heaven for faithfulness.
- In Paul's last letter, shortly before he was martyred, he wasn't sad about dying, but instead he was glad he stayed the course.

*2 Tim 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will reward me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

- He isn't talking about being saved by his good deeds, but about being rewarded by Jesus for his faithful service.

° *Rom 8:38-39 & Jn 10:27-30* clearly tell us our salvation can't be taken away from us.

*Jn 10:28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.*

- That being said, if a person neglected their faith & “*drifted away*” from Jesus, there is a very real danger of coming to the point where they could renounce their faith in Jesus.
  - Our salvation is freely given to us when we believe in Jesus from the heart, & openly confess Him as Lord with our mouth; *Rom 10:9-10*.
  - Our salvation can then only be surrendered if we deny Him from our heart & confess with our mouth that we no longer believe in His saving grace.
  - These Hebrew believers haven’t *drifted away* to that point yet; *Heb 6:7-9*.
  - If they die in this state, they will go to heaven, but they won’t have any rewards; *1Cor 3:10-15*.
- ° We all are at different places with our path of sanctification; some are further along than others.
- We are not the judge, but we should encourage & help each other to be faithful to Jesus.
  - This letter to the Hebrews is so important to us today because it’s a wake up call for those who may be *drifting away*; & we never know if it’s the last chance we’ll have to respond.

*Heb 3:7-8 ... Today, if you will hear His voice, <sup>8</sup>Do not harden your hearts ...*

---

These first four verses of chapter 2 were off the topic of Jesus’ superiority to the angels, but they are part of the larger point of warning the Hebrew believers to return to Jesus, from the Law.

We also need to secure ourselves to Jesus alone so there is no chance of drifting away from Him.

**Hebrews 12:1-2** Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

-

*Galatians 5:7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?*

*I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:14*

*Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*Philippians 2:16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

*Galatians 2:2 It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.*

---

Verse 5 now returns to the subject of angels, but with a different twist than chapter 1.

*Heb 2:5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.*

- ° What is, “*the world to come*” that he’s speaking of?
  - Gk; *world*: *oikoumene*; *the inhabited world*; *governments & peoples*.
  - He’s referring to the millennial kingdom of Jesus, already mentioned in v8 of chapter 1.

*Heb 1:8 But to the Son He says: “**Your throne**, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of **Your Kingdom**.”*

- The *world to come* is not talking about heaven, but the Kingdom Age of the Messiah.
  - The Jews are looking for that kingdom where they will be free from oppression.
- Jesus will be ruling that “*world to come*” as a **man** who has overcome this world.
- He goes on to tell us about God giving man dominion over the earth, & we now know that dominion is to be reclaimed by the man, Jesus Christ.

---

*Heb 2:6-8a But one testified in a certain place saying: “What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? <sup>7</sup>You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. <sup>8a</sup>You have put all things in subjection under his feet.”*

- ° This quote is from *Psalms 8:4-6*; but if we don’t read verse 3 to get the context right, it can be difficult to understand who’s being described.
  - This Psalm is comparing the excellence of God & His creation, with lowly mankind.
  - Many people mistakenly believe the “*man*” being described is Jesus, but that doesn’t agree with the context of *Psalms 8:3*;

*Psalm 8:3-4* <sup>3</sup>When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars which You have ordained, <sup>4</sup>What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?

- In view of the overwhelming majesty of creation, why does God think so highly of mankind?
  - Clearly the Psalmist is referring to mankind in general, & not Jesus, the son of man.
  - *What is **man** that You are mindful of him, or the **son of man** that You take care of him*
    - The first “man” was Adam, & He was made in God’s own image.
    - The “son of man” refers to all of Adam’s children, mankind in general.
  - *You have made him (mankind), a little lower than the angels*
    - Angels are obviously more powerful than man, & in many ways are superior, but that’s only one of the distinctions Paul is making between the two.
    - Angels have one unique attribute men don’t possess; They are eternal beings who live forever, but men die; (we’ll come back to this point in a few minutes at verse 9).
  - *You have crowned him with glory and honor, You have set him over the works of Your hands, You have put all things in subjection under his feet.*
    - This is talking about when God gave mankind authority over all His creation in *Gen 1:28-30*
- Gen 1:28* Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth, subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
  - Adam was given all authority over God’s creation in *Gen 1*, but he relinquished that authority in *Gen 3* when he believed Satan’s word instead of God’s word.
  - This quote from *Psalm 8* is essentially making the argument that even though angels are greater in power, God chose mankind to be in authority over His creation.
- I want to mention that if you’re reading one of the newer translations the; NIV, ESV, NLT, NET, RSV; you probably only have the first half of verse 7 in your bible.
  - We’ve talked about this before; the newer translations used the Alexandrian manuscripts instead of the Textus Receptus manuscripts.
  - In second century Alexandria Egypt, those who copied the original manuscripts were not faithful to the text, & changed things they didn’t like.
  - In the late 1800’s two men; Westcott & Hort, reintroduced those manuscripts, & argued they were the more faithful copies.
  - Much of Christian theology today has taken a very liberal point of view of the scriptures, & have embraced those, what I believe to be, erroneous Alexandrian copies.
- While I struggle to understand the *KJV*, it’s translators were faithful to the original Greek.
  - I personally use the *NKJV* because I don’t speak 400 year old English.

---

<sup>8b</sup> *For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.*

- Before the fall, all of these things were under Adam’s authority; *“He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him”*.
    - Because of the fall, mankind; Adam & all his offspring, lost that authority that God had originally given to them in *Gen 1*.
    - But now, *we do not yet see all things put under him*; wild animals don’t obey us, weeds grow in our gardens, sickness & disease is widespread, people grow old & die ...
    - So this earth is not in subjection to mankind at this time.
-



<sup>9</sup>*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.*

- ° Here is where Jesus comes into the picture; but He arrives in an unexpected way.
  - He comes into the world, not as a powerful angel; not as the king the Jews were expecting, but as one of these lowly men.
- ° *who was made a little lower than the angels...*
  - This Greek word for *little*; *brachys*, is a reference to a short duration of time.
    - Jesus was made lower than the angels, *for a little while*.
    - But why was He made lower? It goes on to say: *for the suffering of death*.
  - Remember earlier we mentioned one of the aspects of being lower than angels is that angels don't die & men do.
  - Jesus was speaking of resurrected believers in Luke, & made this very point:

**Luke 20:36** *nor can they (resurrected believers), die anymore, for they are equal to the angels ...*

- A major requirement of being mankind's Savior is being able to die.
  - That's part of the reason Jesus came to earth as a man.

**Phil 2:6-8** *who, (Jesus), being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

- With all the superiority Jesus has over angels, amazingly enough, one of the reasons He became a man is that *He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.*
- ° Today on this planet we don't see all things in subjection to the authority of mankind; But This is what Hebrews is talking about in verse 9;

<sup>9</sup>*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.*

- Chapter 2 looks at the superiority of Jesus over the angels differently than chapter 1.
- Here we're told that it's His ability to die as a man that makes Him superior to angels.

**Isaiah 55:9** *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.*

- While we would probably never choose a redemption plan that required the death of God's Son, He knew this was the only way we could be released from the bondage of sin.
-



- <sup>10</sup> For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
- <sup>11</sup> For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,
- <sup>12</sup> saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."
- <sup>13</sup> And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."
- <sup>14</sup> Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,
- <sup>15</sup> and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
- <sup>16</sup> For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.
- <sup>17</sup> Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
- <sup>18</sup> For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

