

## "The Superiority of Jesus Christ over the Angels"

### Hebrews 2:1-4

#### Part 6

**Introduction:** Tonight as we return to our study of the Hebrews we are returning to the second chapter and we will look again at the verses which we started into last week.

#### **Notice Hebrews 2:1-4**

In these verses we find the first warning given to the Hebrew Christians. These people were not growing in their faith because they were refusing to apply the teaching of the New Covenant. They were under great pressure because of their faith and they were now treated as the outcasts of society because they were followers of Jesus Christ. They believed that if they went back to Judaism, back to the ceremonies and the rituals of the Old Covenant that they would find peace and contentment there. They were reluctant to deal with the pressures of living for Jesus Christ.

This reminds me of the response of the people of Israel in Numbers when the 12 spies returned from searching the land and 10 of the spies gave the negative report and the people believed the report.

#### **Numbers 14:1-4**

*And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.*

<sup>2</sup> *And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we*

*had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!*

*<sup>3</sup> And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?*

*<sup>4</sup> And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.*

They did not like the challenge of walking by faith. They desired to walk a path that was flat and smooth so they voiced their desire to go back to what God had rescued them from. They missed the promised that God had something far better for them if they would just walk by faith.

That is exactly what the Hebrew Christians we dealing with in their minds. They were refusing to live by faith and they were not trusting in the promises of God. God had a life of great joy for them if they would just trust Him and walk by faith.

Application:

This is also the picture of the lives of many believers today. They sign up to serve God and the pressures come and they sound the trumpet to retreat. They refuse to walk by faith but instead they walk by their feelings and for that reason they pull back. They believe that if they just go back into the old life they once had that there will be less pressure and more peace and contentment. They believe they can have the best of both worlds. They are saved but they can still enjoy the "stuff" of this world. They are not required to make any sacrifices and so they just sort of drift through life.

Those who choose to do this are missing 2 important points:

1. **True joy is not found in this world but it is found in Jesus Christ.**

### **John 15:7-11**

<sup>7</sup> *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

<sup>8</sup> *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

<sup>9</sup> *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.*

<sup>10</sup> *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

<sup>11</sup> *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

2. **Not pursuing a deep walk with the Lord is an offence to God.**

This is the point we are looking at in Hebrews 2:1-4.

### **Notice Hebrews 2:1-2**

The Hebrews believers were looking to go back under the Mosaic Law which was given to Moses. The Bible tells us the angels were the mediators of the Mosaic Law and these Hebrews knew how serious the Law was to be taken. They knew that if the Law was broken there were consequences for those who were guilty. The writer reminds them of the consequences in verse 2. But now there was a New Covenant and Jesus Christ the Son of God was the Mediator. The writer tells them in verse 1 that they need to give more earnest heed so that the teachings of the New Covenant did not just slip away from them. In other words they were to cling to the New Testament teachings about the New Life in Christ and they were to apply them to their lives. They

were brushing aside the New Testament and they desired to go back to the Old Testament under the Old Covenant.

**Application:**

This is exactly what many believers are doing today. They are brushing aside the teachings of the New Covenant that teaches us how to live by faith and how to gain victory over sin. We live in a country where we have Bibles and Bible teachers and we have such great opportunities to grow in the Lord. But let me remind you of 3 things here:

1. With all we have comes great accountability.
2. The freedoms we have are rapidly going away and there will be a day when some of the people who attend this church will desire to have these opportunities back again.
3. There will be consequences for allowing all of the blessings of God to slip through your hands.

**Notice Hebrews 2:3a**

Let me remind you that the word "salvation" here speaks of the entire LIFE of salvation. It is not just the decision to accept Christ but it is the New Life in Christ from the moment we are saved and onward.

Let me remind you that the recipients of this letter were believers so they had not REJECTED salvation but this verse tells us they were NEGLECTING salvation. There is a big difference. They possessed eternal life but they were not cultivating the New Life in Christ.

**Illustration:**

Last December someone gave us a beautiful potted flower. It was a poinsettia. We accepted the gift of the flower and now the flower must be tended to on a constant basis otherwise it would die. It cannot be NEGLECTED if it is going to bring forth its beauty again next winter.

This was the problem in the lives of the Hebrew Christians. They were NEGLECTING that which would bring growth and fruit in their lives. So the writer reminds them this was an offense against God. No one could escape the consequences if they NEGLECTED to follow the Mosaic Law and no believer can escape the consequences if they NEGLECT the teaching of the New Testament.

#### I. **The Confirmation**

##### **Notice Hebrews 2:3b-4**

Here the writer tells them how God worked through many individuals to show people that the message of the Gospel was authentic. But within these verses there is something here that I want to point out to you because it will help you as you pass through this world where the Devil does all he can to confuse the believers.

The writer tells us that the Gospel was "confirmed" unto the Hebrew Christians and to himself by those who walked with Jesus while He was here on this earth. That would be a reference to the Apostles. That tells us that the writer of this letter was not an Apostle but he was someone who had heard the teachings of the Apostles.

I just need to say that this seems to eliminate Paul as the writer. Let me show you something which Paul had said.

## 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15a

<sup>13</sup> *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

<sup>14</sup> *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

<sup>15</sup> **For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord...**

Paul received his message from the Lord.

Now let us notice Hebrews again.

## Notice Hebrews 2:4

Here we see that God gave certain things to the Apostles that would confirm that the message they were preaching was authentic. Let me show you a list from this verse:

### 1. **Signs and wonders.**

The words "signs and wonders" almost always appear in this order in the Bible with just a few exceptions. Now listen to this, signs appeal to man's understanding the wonders appeal to man's imagination. Now when I thought about this I wanted to know what the difference was between the signs and wonders and the miracles. Let me show you what the signs and wonders refer to.

## John 20:30

<sup>30</sup> *And many other **signs** truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

Now this verse comes right after the 3 appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. Right before this verse Jesus entered a room without

opening the door to show Thomas His hands and feet. That was one of the signs and the wonders which the writer of Hebrews speaks of. It appealed to their understanding because they could understand that He entered without using the door. It appealed to their imagination because they could not imagine how that was possible. There was no human explanation for how Jesus was able to enter the room with using the door. This was a confirmation that He was alive and that He was Who He claimed to be.

## 2. **Divers miracles.**

Here the writer points to the variety of different miracles which Jesus and the Apostles performed. Now let me show you the purpose of the miracles.

### **Matthew 9:1-7**

*And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.*

<sup>2</sup> *And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*

<sup>3</sup> *And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.*

<sup>4</sup> *And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?*

<sup>5</sup> *For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?*

<sup>6</sup> *But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.*

<sup>7</sup> *And he arose, and departed to his house.*

Now we need to grasp this: when Jesus told the man who was sick that his sins were forgiven the religious leaders were highly offended. They knew that God was the only One who had the authority to forgive sins. So Jesus ask them a question, "What is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven or rise up and walk?" The answer would be it is easier to say, "Thy sins be forgiven", because no one would know if it actually happened. But for Jesus to say, "Rise and walk", would either expose Jesus as a false teacher or it would show that He had the authority to forgive sin. So when He healed the man He was confirming that He was God and that He had power on earth to forgive sin.

Now listen, His miracles confirmed His message. On the Day of Pentecost Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to the Apostles and they also were able to perform miracles. That brings us to the next point on the list.

### 3. **Gifts of the Holy Spirit.**

The "gifts" that are spoken of here were "gifts" given to the Apostles to confirm the message which they preached. That is the context of Hebrews 2:3-4. This would have been the gift of miracles, healing, and tongues. These were only temporary gifts that were used to confirm the message which they preached or we could say the gifts were used to show the authenticity of their message. It was the same as with the miracles of Jesus.

There were temporary gifts that were given to the Apostles because we must understand that these men were ministering to the New Testament church and there was no New Testament Bible as of then. There was the gift of miracles, healing, and tongues for the purpose of

showing the authenticity of their message. Then there were those who had the gift of knowledge and prophecy. None of these exist anymore because we now have the completed Scriptures.

### **1 Corinthians 13:8-12**

<sup>8</sup> *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

<sup>9</sup> *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*

<sup>10</sup> *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

<sup>11</sup> *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*

<sup>12</sup> *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

"That which is perfect" refers to the completed Scriptures. Ryrie says that it must refer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus because if it would refer to the Scriptures it would mean that we know more than Paul. I disagree with that. Paul makes this statement based upon the Scriptures which they had at that time. When Paul wrote these of 1 Corinthians 13 the words of 2 Corinthians, Romans, first and second and third John, Jude and Revelation were not yet written. The Scriptures were not completed so when He refers to "that which is perfect is come" there is no problem with the "perfect" being the Bible. It was still under construction when 1 Corinthians 13 was written.

Today we have the complete Bible and we do not need the Apostolic gifts.

**Notice Hebrews 2:4**

God gave the gifts according to His will. That means that people in the early church could not just decide they were going to perform a miracle, or just decide they were going to speak in tongues, or speak some prophecy. They had to be moved by God.

**Conclusion:**

This was all done so that we would have the message of the New Testament. To let this slip through our lives and not study and apply is an offense to God and there are consequences. We need to cultivate this New Life in Christ and live it to the fullest. We need to be willing to forsake this world because it is not our home. Heaven is our home.