

Candlelight Christian Fellowship

Hebrews (Chapter 2) (Lesson 1)

Hebrews 2 (NKJV)

“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 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, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? 5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 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? 7 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. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.’ 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. 9 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. 10 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. 11 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, 12 saying: ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.’ 13 And again: ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again: ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.’ 14 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, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17 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. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”

In chapter 1, we learned that God taught the forefathers about the coming of Jesus the Messiah. Although His name was not revealed until the time of His birth, all pertaining to His coming was laid out in advance in order to give the people clear guidance and insight into His coming. God declared that His only begotten Son would be born of a virgin and, as the incarnate Son of God, would be both Firstborn and Heir of all things. We learned that Jesus is the Creator, that all things are sustained (held together) by Him—and for Him. We learned that Jesus is the Redeemer of Israel—and of the whole world. As Redeemer, Jesus finished the work of redemption, and having *“purged our sins sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high”* (1:3). We learned that Jesus is better than the angels, and that He as the incarnate God will come again to reign as King of Israel—and of the whole world.

The Hebrews, as a chosen and special people, were given the premier blessings of God. He chose them, made Himself known to them, and therefore through them. He selected them as the national people through whom the Messiah would come (see Romans 9:4–5). The Messiah is Jesus! Through Him the whole world may be saved, *“for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

Don't Reject the Truth

In chapter 2, the author goes on to tell the Hebrews that as recipients of these blessings, they are to *"give the more earnest heed to the things [they had] heard, lest [they] drift away"* (vs. 1). For should they hear and turn away from the truth, there is no hope of salvation.

Judas is an example of forfeited opportunity and its consequences. To him Jesus said, *"The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born"* (Matthew 26:24). Likewise, the Hebrews, and all of us, would be equally guilty. It would be better for us to have *"never been born"* than to reject the provisions found only in Jesus.

Peter spoke in similar fashion of first-century false teachers when he wrote, *"it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to his own vomit,' and, 'a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire'"* (2 Peter 2:21–22). These were men for whom Christ died (see 2 Peter 2:1).

If the Hebrews (or any of us) turn from the true Gospel, there is no other hope, no other salvation. It would be better to have never heard the truth than to hear and turn away. *"For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 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?"* (vss. 2–3). Without Jesus there is no escape. Jesus is the only way!

The author reminds the Hebrews that in addition to all that God made known to the forefathers of Israel—and to the prophets—He made know to them. Jesus was known to all who saw Him in and around Israel. For *"God [bore witness of Him] both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will"* (vs. 4). This Jesus is the incarnate God. He is Lord and Messiah.

Escaping the Wrath to Come

Man is guilty before God and deserving of death. This fact is documented throughout the whole of Scripture. In summary, Paul wrote about this when addressing the Hebrews in Rome. He said, *"What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written: 'There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one.' 'Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit'; 'the poison of asps is under their lips'; 'Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.' 'Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known.' 'There is no fear of God before their eyes.'*

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood,

through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:9–26).

Therefore, as guilty sinners, for “*all the world [is] guilty before God,*” the only way we will escape the righteous wrath of God against sin, and therefore all sinners, is in and through Jesus the Messiah. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

Not a Temporal Messiah

When reflecting on the temporal nature in this creation and the eternal nature of Jesus the Messiah, the author reminds his readers that the world to come will be under the reign of Jesus. He said, “*For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 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? 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. You have put all things in subjection under his feet.’”* (vss. 5–8a).

Of Jesus’ reign, the Hebrew Scriptures declare, “*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting”* (Micah 5:2). Even in the predictions about His birth, we read, “*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this”* (Isaiah 9:6–7). And in relationship to His Second Coming, we read, “*And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be ‘The LORD is one,’ and His name one”* (Zechariah 14:9).

Jesus as the predicted Redeemer is not to be confused with anyone other than the one who is also the soon coming King, and therefore must be embraced (and trusted) for salvation from wrath, but also as the One who will deliver Israel and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

As the Eternal Messiah and Conquering King, Jesus has “*all things [put] in subjection under His feet”* (vs. 8a). The last thing to be put under His feet is death. This is referred to by Paul when documenting the final act of Jesus’ Millennial Reign. (See Dispensational Graphic) He wrote, “*The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For ‘He [God the Father] has put all things under His [Jesus] feet.’ But when He says “all things are put under Him,” it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted”* (1 Corinthians 15:27). Therefore, all is put under Jesus’ feet with the exception of the Father. “*For in that He [the Father] put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him [with the exception of the Father]”* (vs. 8b). At the present time (the Church Age), we are awaiting the fruition of this future promise. “*But now we do not yet see all things put under him”* (vs. 8c).

(For the economic methodology within the Godhead, refer to “As Heir of All Things” and “Incarnate and Firstborn” in Chapter 1 Lesson 3.)

Better than the Angels (Revisited)

The author reminded the Hebrews that man was created “*a little lower than the angels*” and that Jesus as incarnate God was made man in order to redeem man. He is not an angel—He is the God incarnate—the God/Man. Angels, as the creation of God, are not redeemers. They are servants to those who will inherit salvation. As stated in chapter 1, we read, “*Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*” (Hebrews 1:14).

Son of Man

The title Son of Man refers to Jesus’ incarnation. The first reference is in Numbers. It reads, “*God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*” (Numbers 23:19). The passage by default points to Jesus as this Son of Man—for He is the only man who is exempted from repentance. And why? Because he has never lied—He has no sin.

Secondly, when the author quoted the Psalm, he referred to Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy it contained. We read, “*O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen—even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!*” (Psalm 8).

The Psalm carries a double reference. It describes mankind in general but also points to the Messiah. This is developed by examining the passage in Numbers with reference to those of the “*Son of Man*” in Daniel. Daniel wrote, “*I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed*” (Daniel 7:13–14). In this case the “*Son of Man*” is pictured “*coming with the clouds of heaven*” and to whom “*dominion and glory*” are given. His Kingdom is described as the one with “*everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away.*” This can refer to none other than the Messiah!

Thirdly, many times Jesus referred to Himself as the incarnate Son of Man—thus assigning to Himself the prophecies. John required that believers knew this, and furthermore sought to have the believer prove and know that Jesus is this “*Son of Man.*” He wrote, “*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world*” (1 John 4:1–3). Any denial of Jesus, as Son of God and Son of Man, is a denial of who Jesus is and is a manifestation of the spirit of the Antichrist.

Questions:

- 1) **True or False:** The Hebrews are a chosen and special people. God chose them, made Himself known to them, and makes Himself known through them.
- 2) **True or False:** If the Hebrews (or any of us) turn from the true Gospel, there is still hope by believing in God.
- 3) **True or False:** Jesus as the predicted Redeemer is not to be confused with anyone other than the one who is the soon coming king of Israel—and therefore as such, the King of the whole world.
- 4) **True or False:** Jesus as incarnate God was made man in order to redeem man. He is not an angel—He is God incarnate.
- 5) **True or False:** Any denial of Jesus, as the Son of God and Son of Man, is a denial of who Jesus is and is a manifestation of the spirit of the Antichrist.

Notes