

## Hebrews 2:1-4 The exhortation to heed the message of the Son

First, there is an affirmation (Heb. 1:4–14) of the superiority of Christ to the angels. The proof presented consists of seven quotations from the Old Testament. Second, there is an exhortation (Heb. 2:1–4) that the readers (and this includes us) pay earnest heed to the Word God has given through His Son. Finally, there is an explanation (Heb. 2:5–18) as to how Christ, with a human body, could still be superior to angels, who are spirits.

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

- Why is the “therefore” there for?
- This ties the statements in Chapter 2 back to the closing arguments of Chapter 1
- If Jesus is better than the angels, how much more should we heed the words concerning Christ?
- *Slip*, Greek for *lazily drift past*
- “Drift”—a gradual shift in position; an aimless course; to become carried along subject to no guidance or control
- The progressive warnings of Hebrews start with *drifting* and progress to *defying*

*An ungodly farmer died, and they discovered in his will that he had left his farm to the Devil. In the court, they didn't quite know what to do with it -- how do you give a farm to the Devil? Finally, the judge decided: “The best way to carry out the wishes of the deceased is to allow the farm to grow weeds, the soil to erode, and the house and barn to rot. In our opinion, the best way to leave something to the Devil is to do nothing.” We can leave our lives to the Devil the same way - doing nothing, drifting with whatever currents will drive us.*

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

- In the Old Testament, those disregarding the messages delivered by angels were sometimes punished by the Lord, how will those be treated that reject the message of His Son?
- A greater word, brought by a greater Person, having greater promises, will bring a greater condemnation if neglected.
- The word neglect is *amelesantes*, which is used in Matthew 22:5 (they made light of it) of those who disregarded the invitation to the marriage supper. It means to have the opportunity, but to ignore or disregard it.

### Matthew 21:33-44

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

*43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

*44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

- God verified His message in the Apostles by signs and wonders in the early church
- How can we neglect a salvation revealed in the Son of God, preached by the Apostles, and verified by the Holy Spirit by miracles?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

- The writer returns once more to his argument of the Son being better than the angels
- No angels have been given authority in this present world or the world to come

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

- Man was given dominion over the created order before his fall in the garden
- Christ would come made in the likeness of sinful flesh, but without sin to regain what man lost in the garden
- Christ would reclaim the rights to this dominion and would also purchase mankind out of the bondage of sin
- The first false teaching about Jesus arising in the church was not that He wasn't God, but that He wasn't really human and He only seemed to be human. The heresy was called Docetism, coming from the Greek word to seem, and was taught by Cerinthus, who opposed the apostle John in the city of Ephesus

8 Thou hast 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 see not yet all things put under him.

- Mankind does not currently possess dominion because of the pre-existing condition of sin
- We often ask the questions why and how, but the question should be asked who? The Who is Jesus

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

*Romans 5:14-15*

*14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*

*15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

- *Perfect*, Greek for *complete*

*Isaiah 53:10-11*

*10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

*11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

- What angel ever claimed us as brethren?
- Satan, a fallen angel, would have us be his subjects, but Christ, who is above all angels, would have us His brothers and sisters

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

*Writing in Moody Monthly, Carl Armerding recounted his experience of watching a wildcat in a zoo. "As I stood there," he said, "an attendant entered the cage through a door on the opposite side. He had nothing in his hands but a broom. Carefully closing the door, he proceeded to sweep the floor of the cage." He observed that the worker had no weapon to ward off an attack by the beast. In fact, when he got to the corner of the cage where the wildcat was lying, he poked the animal with the broom. The wildcat hissed at him and then lay down in another corner of the enclosure. Armerding remarked to the attendant, "You certainly are a brave man." "No, I ain't brave," he replied as he continued to sweep. "Well, then that cat must be tame." "No," came the reply, "he ain't tame." "If you aren't brave and the wildcat isn't tame, then I can't understand why he doesn't attack you." Armerding said the man chuckled, then replied with an air of confidence, "Mister, he's old--and he ain't got no teeth."*

*Theologians tell a story to illustrate how Christ's triumph presently benefits our lives: Imagine a city under siege. The enemy that surrounds the city will not let anyone or anything leave. Supplies are running low, and the citizens are fearful. But in the dark of the night, a spy sneaks through the enemy lines. He has rushed to the city to tell the people that in another place the main enemy force has been defeated; the leaders have already surrendered. The people do not need to be afraid. It is only a matter of time until the besieging troops receive the news and lay down their weapons. Similarly, we may seem now to be surrounded by the forces of evil -- disease, injustice, oppression, death. But the enemy has actually been defeated at Calvary. Things are not the way they seem to be. It is only a matter of time until it becomes clear to all that the battle is really over.*

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

- The seed of Abraham, or the seed of the faithful, was chosen over that of the nature of an angelic being

*Philippians 2:5-11*

*5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

*6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

*7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

*8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

*9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

*10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

*11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

- *Reconciliation* is also translated *propitiation* in some versions
- The same word is used in the Greek to describe the mercyseat or lid of the Ark of the Covenant
- This lid was the covering of the entire Ark as its dimensions fully matched the size of the Ark's outer measurements
- The inner contents of the Ark were also covered
- The tablets of the law, the golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded
- Jesus fulfilled the law (better than the laws of diet and washings), was the Bread of Life come down from Heaven (better than the bread that fell in the wilderness), and is a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (better than Aaronic or Levitical priesthood)

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

- Christ could only serve as high priest as a human
- In His humanity He experienced loss, temptation, and all afflictions of humanity, yet without sin