

HEBREWS – PRESSING ON

“Lord, Please Don’t Let Me Grow Mildew!”

Week 4

The book of Hebrews is NOT about how to come to know the Lord. Hebrews was not written as an evangelistic tract, but as an encouragement and warning to discouraged Christians – those who neglected an abiding walk with Jesus – those who were being persecuted for their faith (Heb. 10:32-34).

Hebrews 2:1 – “THEREFORE (because of the superiority of Jesus to the angels; “therefore” is used to continue what is being said previously) we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.”

APPLICATION of Hebrews 1 – LISTEN and DON’T DRIFT AWAY. **DON’T FORGET THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST.**

If the word spoken through angels (referencing the giving of the law) was to be heeded. . . . And, if it wasn’t, the people would suffer the consequences (Deut. 4:9; Deut. 28 – blessings/curses). . . THEN HOW MUCH MORE that which was spoken by Jesus should be heeded!!

Hebrews 2:2 – the revelation that has come through the Son of God carries far more solemn obligations for the recipients than does revelation mediated through angels.

If the Law, which was mediated through angels, proved firm and disobedience brought physical punishment – “. . . every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty. . . .” -- how can the readers hope to escape (to seek safety in flight) physical punishment/persecution if “we” NEGLECT (are careless of) so great a salvation spoken of by the **Lord** – by Jesus.

Salvation is obviously in their possession, but they are neglecting it and becoming indifferent to it.

This was a salvation first announced by the Messiah Himself, witnessed to by the eyewitness accounts of the Apostles and authenticated through signs, wonders, powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The truth that this is indeed so great a salvation spoken of by the Son was confirmed by His supernatural power – His miracles. And God the Father bore witness of the Son’s demonstration of supernatural power. Throughout Scripture various valid signs, wonders, and miracles were God’s authentication of His messenger with His message.

Signs first occurred in the days of Moses when Moses was sent to Egypt with God’s message of redemption (Ex. 4:1-9).

Elijah and Elisha were sent with a message of God’s judgment that would come unless the people REPENTED. The prophets and their message were authenticated by the miracles they performed.

Jesus authenticated His Messiahship – the truth that He is indeed the Messiah – through the miracles He performed (Isa. 35).

In the book of Acts – a transition in God’s program as the Church was birthed – the Apostles’ message was authenticated by miracles.

Because the revelation given through the Son was authenticated by God in this way (v. 4 – God bearing witness with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit) – the readers of Hebrews (and WE) are accountable for that revelation.

Any neglect of that revelation could certainly bring discipline!

To understand God's discipline of believers, we should NEVER lose sight of the loving discipline of parents toward their children. If God is disciplining you through trials or hardships, remember that He loves you FAR MORE than anyone else can every love you, and He wants the best for you. His discipline is always designed for our profit – that we may be partakers of His holiness (Heb. 12:5-11) and experience His varied blessings – now and in the future.

Hebrews 2:1-4

The danger described in the book of Hebrews – found in the warnings - isn't the danger of rejecting salvation, but NEGLECTING salvation (Heb. 2:3) – to be careless about – to make light of.

The readers hadn't defected.

What of someone who is guilty of apostasy? I John 2:19 – those who went out from us were never of us!

The danger noted in the book of Hebrews is drifting - floating away from the mooring – slipping by, passing by. NOT paying attention; letting things slip by – re: what they'd heard and received.

To give attention – nautical term – mooring a ship/tying a ship tight/mooring a ship tight

Drift away – nautical term – when a ship is released and slips out of its moorings and it begins to drift.

We might think this exhortation is for non-believers. The book of Hebrews is not addressing how to get saved. If this exhortation was to non-believers, the author would most likely have been inspired by the Holy Spirit to write that the readers were in danger of REJECTING so great a salvation – not of NEGLECTING so great a salvation!

Can believers become desensitized to the glory of the Son – to the presence of God?

The salvation that is addressed in the book of Hebrews is – sanctification/maturing in Christ. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12-13) – for it is GOD Who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Hebrews 2:4 – the truth that this is indeed so great a salvation spoken of by the Son was confirmed by His supernatural power – His miracles. And God the Father bore witness of the Son's demonstration of supernatural power. Throughout Scripture various valid signs, wonders, and miracles were God's authentication of His messenger with His message.

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The point of Hebrews – and one we should take seriously – is that each of us who enjoys the privileges and blessings of knowing Jesus should realize that there also are responsibilities. Neglecting to take these responsibilities seriously will NOT cause us to forfeit our salvation but can cause us to forfeit the privileges and blessings we would otherwise enjoy. Properly understanding the two-sided coin of privilege and responsibility can set our feet on the path to spiritual maturity and a fulfilled Christian life.

Hebrews 2:5

God's intended destiny for human beings.

He did not subject to angels the world to come of which we are speaking. . . . God NEVER intended angels to rule His creation – His first creation or the world to come. Angels are servants (Heb. 1:14). Angels were never to be given dominion/rule. That was to be given to human beings.

Hebrews 2:6-8 – the author quotes Psalm 8 – which is about mankind. The author of Hebrews is proving that God gave to man the dominion of the earth. The author does not address Jesus until v. 9.

What is man that. . . little lower than the angels. . . crowned him with glory and honor and has appointed him over the works of His hands. We have been created for something special – and we've forgotten. Mankind - crowed mankind with glory and honor

because God has appointed him over the works of thy hands. “In subjection under his feet” - this is the destiny of mankind. Are you sure? Read Gen. 1:26-27 –

Adam was created a little lower than the angels (angels serve and worship God) and was given dominion over the works of God’s hands. But man, through Adam, lost this dominion through sin – and today the earth is being ruled by angels (fallen angels) the god of this this world (II Cor. 4:4) – Satan, the prince of this world (Eph. 2) and his demons. BUT God’s plan is ALWAYS PLAN A!!! God created man for relationship and to rule over the works of His hands. God will deliver on that promise! AND SO – the incarnation.

Why did God become man? What is the reason for the Incarnation?

God became man so that God’s purpose for mankind might be finally realized by the One Who would take the title “The Son of Man”.

When we became separated from God we lost EVERYTHING: fellowship with God; we no longer lived in “paradise” – we live with thorns and thistles; AND, we lost the meaning to our existence. God never intended to give angels rule over anything. And, God is not going to turn the administration of the world to come to angels.

Gen. 1:26-27 – then God said, “Let us make man in our image. . .let them RULE over the fish of the sea. . .” The very first thing – God intended him to have RULE over the works of God’s hands.

Gen. 2:15 – “Then the Lord God took the man. . . to cultivate and to keep it. . . “

God told man his destiny - to rule over His creation – the works of His hands.

Dominion – *rada* – to rule over

Tend/dress - *abad* – to serve and nurture

Keep - *shamar* – to guard, observe, protect,

Dominion – equates to - responsibility for. You will nurture and serve it and keep it.

BUT, what happened? Man rebelled! Man wasn’t satisfied with ALL that God gave him. He wanted to be like God! Man refused to trust that God had their best in mind.

Then what happened? Who took over? Who became the god of this world?

- II Cor. 4:3-4 – the enemy, Satan.
- John 16:10-11 - the ruler of this world has been struck down/judged.
- Matt. 4 – the temptation of Jesus – Satan offering Jesus the kingdoms of the world – because he has dominion over this earth.

God never intended the angels to have rulership over His creation. We blew it. The fallen angels usurped it.

God’s destiny for mankind is to have dominion over His creation. Thus, in our fallen world/in our flesh – we fight ourselves, our fellowman, and the earth.

Hebrews 2:8

While God's plan is to put all things in subjection to man – it hasn't happened as yet.
BUT GOD'S PLAN IS ALWAYS PLAN A!

Hebrews 2:9

We see Jesus Who is going to restore our destiny! Jesus, by becoming flesh and identifying Himself with the human race -- He alone is able to fulfill the original purpose God decreed for man in Gen. 1:26-28.

Hebrews 2:10

Jesus, Who became lower than the angels for a while – a human being – for the suffering of death – that He might taste for everyone.

“. . . to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings”

“Captain” – pioneer, leader, originator.

Jesus is the source (Heb. 5:9 – He is the Author of eternal salvation)

Jesus has led the way into heaven. He is our Forerunner. He is our

Guarantee.

I Cor. 15:20-23 – He is our Firstfruits

“perfect” – telao - to carry through completely, to accomplish, to finish, to bring to an end

There was NOT a progression from imperfection to perfection in the Son of God. The word “perfect” deals with the accomplishment of a divine purpose.

God became man to bring many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10) – for it was fitting for Him – the Creator – to bring many sons to glory – and He's not ashamed to call them brethren (Heb. 2:11).

He became a Son so that we could become sons.

God's destiny was for man to rule over His creation – Satan and the fallen angels usurped that rule – BUT GOD is going to restore man's destiny through IMMANUEL – God in the flesh – God becoming man and taking/receiving dominion.

The Son then invites us to become sons and daughters of the Most High (Dan. 7:13ff)

Because that purpose of subjecting all things to Himself as the Son of Man was not accomplished during His first coming, His second coming is a necessity!

Jesus restores mankind's destiny – that God gave to man that man gave away.

Jesus will take dominion and will provide a way for mankind to join Him in that dominion/rule. This is why God took on flesh. .

Jesus partook of flesh and blood on man's behalf so that “. . . He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” (Heb. 2:14)

Jesus' death was a divine judgment on Satan (Gen. 3:15 foretold this divine judgment)

“Destroy” doesn’t mean to annihilate but rather to render inoperative.

As man’s representative (“Son of Man”), Jesus went into conflict with Satan at the cross in order that He might break Satan’s rule over the human race.

God became man so that mankind could be delivered from bondage to the fear of death (Heb. 2:15).

Consider – the fear of death that grips mankind comes from the thought of judgment that will follow death.

By delivering from judgment (Rom. 8:1; John 5:24 – believers shall NOT come into judgment but will pass from death into life), Jesus removes the dread of death.

Believers have the assurance that at the moment of our physical death we will go immediately into the presence of the Lord (II Cor. 5:1-8). Thus, our fear of death is removed.

God became man so that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest (Heb. 2:16-17a)

A priest is a mediator between God and man.

Because of the Incarnation, Jesus is able to be a faithful High Priest on man’s behalf before God. A merciful priest must understand the miseries of those whom He represents. He must identify with men in their sufferings.

To manifest God’s perfect faithfulness, our Great High Priest must be God Himself.

God became man to make propitiation for the sins of the people (Heb. 2:17b)

Day of Atonement – the most solemn day in the year for Israel. The high priest stood on behalf of a guilty people and covered the broken law by sprinkling blood on the Mercy Seat. This provided a substitute in death for the guilty people so God could view the penalty of the law as having been carried out.

Not only was blood-covered sin forgiven, it was also removed from the congregation, as typified in the act of confessing the nation’s sin over the scapegoat that was then led away into the wilderness.

This act provided a basis upon which God could deal with the sin of a guilty nation and could dwell in their midst.

Propitiation – satisfaction of God’s wrath.

The incarnation made Christ’s propitiatory sacrifice possible.

God became man to identify Himself with people to faithfully represent those who are tempted and tested (Heb. 2:18).

Only through this identification was He able to suffer and understand the sufferings of mankind.

NOTE: Jesus’ sufferings and testings did NOT come from a fallen sin nature such as men experience. Jesus is NOT capable of sin. He did not succumb to temptation. Therefore, He has endured the full weight of Satan’s testings.

In having experienced that which mankind experiences, He is able to aid those who are tested.

Hebrews 2 addresses God's plan of redemption regarding the restoration of our destiny. God created human beings for the purpose of reigning and having dominion over His creation. Because we wanted to be like God, what we lost was then usurped by those whom God never intended to have dominion.

The world is under the dominion of the enemy and fallen angels. Thus - Eph. 6:12 – we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers!

Our destiny will be restored to us because Jesus emptied Himself and identified with mankind, becoming a man while fully deity.

He became a little lower than the angels and, in so doing, is not ashamed to call us brethren!