

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF HEBREWS

NEGLIGENCE (HEBREWS 2:1-4) THEY HAD HEARD, BUT WERE MOVING ON

Some of the recipients of Hebrews were leaving the faith because of persecution or the allure of other religions, and this horrified the author

- Hebrews was reminding the readers that spiritual life and death were at stake, and that they need to "pay attention to what we've heard"

REMEMBER THAT THE LAW IS ABSOLUTE

The author reminded them that angels had delivered the law to the authors of the OT (Galatians 3:19). In those days, breaking the law was punishable by death (Numbers 15:30). In the NT covenant, we face spiritual death if we neglect the Word of God. After the revelation of Christ, negligence to God carries a heavier price

HOW COULD THEY REJECT SUCH A SALVATION?

Not only did He fulfill over 44 blatant prophecies of the OT, but Jesus displayed signs and miracles to verify the message

- We often claim miracles and signs no longer happen, but the problem may be our antennas, not His frequencies. We have so many distractions, lackluster prayer lives, and very fragile faith

HE ALSO GAVE THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Acts 2 shows the pouring out of the Spirit of God about 50 days after Christ died and ascended (prophesied in Joel 2:28). The miracles and empowerment of the people of God further showed the superiority of the Christian Gospel.

- Unfortunately, many Christians have abused or completely neglected these powerful weapons (1 Corinthians 12-14)

THE CENTER (HEBREWS 2:5-9) GREATER THAN HUMANS AND ANGELS?

Chapter 1 proves that Christ is greater than the prophets and angels, but many in this undefined area knew Jesus was a man that died a criminal's death. So, how is he better than humans and angels?

- Jesus is in control over the "world to come" which may refer to time after the cross, the afterlife, or both.

JESUS STARTED THE END, BUT HAS NOT COMPLETED IT YET

The crucifixion of Jesus began the last phase of human history, but will not come to completion until He returns for His church

- This last phase was ushered in by Jesus becoming "lower than the angels for a short time." God is coming to earth to set things straight.

AN EXAMPLE FROM PSALM 8:4-6

The author was trying to make 2 points. First, Jesus was the fulfillment of scripture, which is extremely important. Second, the psalmist talked about the insignificance of humans, while Hebrews elevates the majesty of the "Son of Man," Jesus.

THE "SON OF MAN?"

This is a reference Jesus made about Himself (John 1:51). The Son of Man is the perfect human, but also God, making perfection in human form possible.

- Jesus came down to take the sin, shame, and humiliation of mankind, but to do this He had to suffer for a short time

WHAT WE LOST, HE REGAINED

Humanity brought sin into the world, and what we lost because of that, Jesus has regained by His obedience to God the Father through His ministry and the cross.

- The completion of this is still in the future, but everything being "subjected to Him" is inevitable

V9 GIVES US 3 PROFOUND STATEMENTS

First, Jesus was made lower than His own creations, the angels. Second, as a man He experienced suffering and death. God permitted this, and the Son offered. He tasted death for everyone's benefit. Third, the outcome of the suffering was that He was crowned with "glory and honor" forever.

FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH (HEBREWS 2:10-18) IT WAS, AND IS, HARD TO UNDERSTAND

The death of Christ was a horrible concept for the recipients of Hebrews, but like them, we need to trust that this was God's perfect design.

- This death brought "many sons to glory." In other words, it allowed our adoption into God's family

RECONCILIATION WITH THE CREATOR

Because of Christ, we not only have the opportunity to be adopted into His family, but we can have a relationship with God and experience His glory (2 Corinthians 4:17)

- The glory of God is His beauty, not aesthetically, but what emanates from His character. God is a consuming fire, His glory is the smoke.

THROUGH DEATH, JESUS THE "SOURCE OF SALVATION" (V10) BECAME PERFECT.

Jesus has always been perfect, but through the cross He became the perfect Savior and Atonement for humanity.

- He became perfect in that He learned sympathy through His experience and obedience. Jesus never asks us to do things He hasn't done.

SANCTIFICATION (V11)

Jesus sets us apart for God's purposes and refines us (Psalm 66:1-12 and 1 Peter 1:7) into being holy.

When we genuinely give our lives to Jesus, we are filled with His Spirit, making us one with Him

WE GET TO BE BROTHERS WITH JESUS? (V12)

From Psalm 22:22 that prophesies the triumph of the cross, but begins with the agony when Jesus said, "My God why have you forsaken Me?" This shows that Jesus suffered for us so we can be "brothers" of Christ.

- We must be careful. We are always subordinates to Jesus, but that's what makes this even more amazing!

NOT JUST BROTHERS, BUT CHILDREN OF GOD

V13 quotes Isaiah 8:17-18. The first quote shows the attitude of Jesus as He trusted the Father. The second quote was the author comparing Isaiah's recognition that children are a miracle to Jesus' love for us, His children

JESUS TOOK ON FLESH AND BLOOD, THEREFORE SHARING A COMMONALITY WITH HUMANITY (V14)

Early Christians argued about the nature of Jesus. Was He human, divine, or both? Jesus is what we call the "God-Man," 100% divine and human. Only someone who could be both could meet our needs

NOT ONLY DID HE DIE FOR FALLEN HUMANITY, BUT HE DIED TO "DESTROY THE ONE HOLDING THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS THE DEVIL"

Sin caused death (Romans 5:12), and our sin, not His, caused Jesus to die.

JESUS TRIUMPHED OVER SATAN ON THE CROSS

Christ has already won (Colossians 2:15), but we live in an interim period where we don't see the full effects of Jesus' death and resurrection.

- Satan is still walking around "like a roaring lion" (1 Peter 5:8) and still has limited power in this age (Ephesians 6:11, 1 Timothy 3:7), but his fate is certain (Revelation 20:10)

HOW DID SATAN HAVE THE "POWER OF DEATH"?

God controls life, death, and eternity (Luke 12:5), but since Satan introduced death through his temptation of Adam and Eve, he has the "power of death" the fruit of sin

- Though death is not destroyed yet, we have been delivered from the fear of death through the cross. (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)

HE WAS NOT AN ANGEL, HE WAS A HUMAN

"He does not reach out to help angels, but Abraham's offspring" references Jesus becoming human to deliver all who want to be "Abraham's offspring" (Galatians 3:29)

- Jesus came down to our level, and still does today through His Spirit. Christ goes to extreme lengths for humanity.

TWO REASONS JESUS BECAME HUMAN (V17)

First, He had to become "like His brothers" and as a "faithful Priest" to serve God and to sympathize with mankind. Second, He had to become the atonement for humanity's sins. Jesus did in totality what the OT rituals could only do in part. Jesus was the payment because of His great love for us (Romans 5:8)

HE IS ABLE TO HELP US

Jesus understands our temptations and struggles because He had them too, but He never caved into them. He was perfect. Jesus suffered physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Suffering became a temptation, but He endured so we can be saved and helped in times of temptation

TO COMMUNE WITH GOD

- Jesus has willingly made Himself humanity's servant in order to forgive, restore, protect, and help anyone who will follow. We must pay attention to what we've heard. If offered the salvation and intimacy with God mentioned in the Bible, we must, at the very least, look into it