

3. Understanding the Danger of Neglecting the Gospel

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain why Christ is greater than angels. In fact, angels are ministering spirits that are sent to minister to all those who will inherit salvation. In our topic today, we are going to see that the writer warns of the danger of neglecting the salvation that God has provided through Christ.

Hebrews 2:1-4 says, “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift 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*, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” Just as Christ deserved the worship and service of angels, the Hebrews (Jews) also needed to worship Christ. That is why the writer said that the Jews needed to especially pay attention to the things that they had heard. Otherwise, the things that the Jews had heard might slip away from their minds.

The ministry of the angels is to serve those who will inherit salvation. Part of that service had been to deliver messages from God to the Jews at various times. Those messages spoken by angels for God had proved to be trustworthy because God had carried out those messages. Psalm 68:17 says, “The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of thousands; the Lord is among them *as in* Sinai, in the Holy *Place*.” Here, we see that the angels were with Christ when He gave the Ten Commandments to Moses. The word translated “transgression” means *the violating of the Mosaic Law*. The word translated “disobedience” speaks here of *disobeying anything that God has said*. The word translated “just reward” speaks of the *payment of wages*. Here, God is saying that those who disobeyed the commandments of the Lord received the wages that are due for sin. Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Christ paid those wages so that those who accept the gift of God receive eternal life. As a result, this is a warning to those who neglect this great salvation that Christ has provided.

This message of salvation was first spoken by the Lord while He was on this earth. After Christ returned to heaven, this message continued to be spoken by the apostles of Christ who had heard Him give that message. God confirmed the message of those eyewitnesses with signs, with wonders, with various miracles and with gifts of the Holy Spirit. The word translated “signs” means *an unusual event that is not normal*. 1 Corinthians 1:22-23 says, “For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.” On the Day of Pentecost, the apostles and other eyewitnesses of the resurrection were able to share the Gospel in the languages of many different nations even though they had not learned those languages. That was a sign to the Jews.

The word translated “wonders” means *a miracle done by any person*. In 2 Corinthians 12:12, Paul said, “Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.” In 2 Thessalonians 2:9, we read, “The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.” Here, we see

that the antichrist will deceive the world by doing various signs and lying wonders. Mark 13:22 adds, “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” These verses show that wonders will be done by the antichrist, false christs and false prophets in the time of the end. As a result, we see that Satan will try to imitate the miracles of Christ and the apostles who saw Christ. This will deceive the world in the tribulation. This was a real warning to the Jews at the time that Hebrews was written.

Hebrews 2:5-8 goes on to say, “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.’ 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.” Here, we see that the writer quoted from Psalm 8:4-6. The thousand-year rule of the world to come (earth) promised in Revelation 20:4-6 is not promised to angels. The earth at that time will not be placed under the angels. Instead, the quotation from Psalm 8 shows that promise was made to Christ by the Father.

Christ is the One who was made for a little while lower than the angels. As Philippians 2:8 says, “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.” However, it was only for a little while that Christ was made lower than the angels. Once Christ had paid the penalty for sin, the Father crowned Him with glory and honor. In fact, Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” The day will come when even all the people who reject Christ now will be forced to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. There is nothing that has not been placed under Christ.

That is something that causes Christians to rejoice and those who reject Christ to fear. As Christians, we know that Romans 8:38-39 promises us, “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” As a result, all Christians can rejoice.

The time when all things will be placed under the feet of Christ has not yet come. However, Revelation 20:11-15 says, “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” The final judgment is what

causes those who reject that great salvation to fear.

We also see when Christ chose to become lower for a little while than the angels. Hebrews 2:9 says, “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.” We see that there was a specific time when Christ was made a little lower than the angels. John 1:14 says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” It was at that moment when Christ took on human flesh that He was made a little lower than the angels for a little while.

As Christians, we understand that the purpose for that little time was so that He could suffer and die for our sins. It was due to that choice to be made a little lower than the angels that the Father has crowned Christ with glory and honor. 1 Corinthians 15:45-47 says, “And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven.” The first man Adam brought sin and death on all people. The second Man is the Lord from heaven who brought spiritual life to all people who repent of their sin and place their faith in Him.

This choice of Christ showed the greatness of the grace of God. Romans 5:15 says, “But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.” Then, Titus 2:11 adds, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” In these verses, we see that the grace of God abounded to many through Christ. We also see that Christ is the grace of God because He is the One that brought salvation.

Christ brought this salvation by tasting death for every person. 1 John 2:1-2 says, “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” The word translated “propitiation” means *that which satisfies*. The Father was satisfied and said that the death of Christ was sufficient to pay the penalty for every person. However, each individual must choose to accept that gift by repentance of their sin of unbelief and the placing of their faith in the payment that Christ made for their sin. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand how to use Scripture to warn unbelievers of the danger of neglecting that Gospel. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand how to help people understand their choice to accept or reject.