

CONTEXT—HEBREWS 2:1-13

Hebrews 2:1-4. *Pay attention, or drift away.*¹ In the midst of all this chaos of change, it is easy to drift away from the faith. We have given up a lot in some people's eyes, but we must pay attention or we will indeed drift away.

Think about it this way—if the message given by *angels* was binding then, now what with God Himself being the message? And, if every one of our violations and all our disobedience received a just punishment then, now what that God Himself is among (Christ) and within (Holy Spirit) us?

How shall we escape today if we ignore the great salvation now offered by the intervention of God Himself—Jesus the Christ? This salvation was first announced by the Lord Jesus Christ, and confirmed to us by those who heard Him, saw Him, touched Him, smelled Him, experienced Him! Oh, to see and experience Jesus face to face!

Father God provides evidence to all this greatness. Signs—the cleansing of the temple, the exquisite faith of unclean Gentiles, and mission work by problematic Samaritans (women no less). Wonders—a storm stilled, the earth shaken, and the tomb emptied. Various miracles—people raised from the dead, the blind see, the hurting healed, and my heart—pricked to the core!

And to top it all off—Holy Spirit Himself has taken up residence in me, in us, in Christ's church, in all who are immersed *ev* Jesus the Christ! His gifts have been distributed to believers according to His purposes and plans. Glory be to the Lord God—He is indeed no longer *among us* as Jesus the Christ, but *within* us as Holy Spirit!

HEBREWS 2:1-13

We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. ²For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, ³how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ⁴God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. ⁵It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. ⁶But there is a place where someone has testified:

"What is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

⁷You made him a little while lower than the angels;
you crowned him with glory and honor

⁸ and put everything under his feet." [Psalm 8:4-6]

In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. ⁹But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. ¹²He says,

"I will declare your name to my brothers;
in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises." [Psalm 22:22]

¹³And again, "I will put my trust in him." [Isaiah 8:17]

And again he says,

"Here am I, and the children God has given me. [Isaiah 8:18]"

¹"Pay attention or drift away" is the first of five warnings given for readers of "Hebrews." See also Hebrews 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; and 12:14-29.

- C According to the Hebrews writer, God Himself as Jesus the Christ provided this salvation, and we shall not escape if we ignore this salvation. Yet, believers and unbelievers alike “ignore salvation.” How tragic.
- C Since we know this salvation is indeed real, and the redemption paid, understanding how deliverance is delivered is paramount.
- C Holy Spirit gives gifts according to Father God’s purposes. The purposes of the gifts of Holy Spirit according to the writer of Hebrews are to glorify the Lord God. John’s record provides further clarification...

Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit [or spirit] gives birth to spirit. ⁷You should not be surprised at My saying, ‘You [plural] must be born again [from above].’ ⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” –John 3:5-8

Hebrews 2:5-13. *Christ, as Jesus of Nazareth, took on a form lower than angels. Angels have been not been given the right to rule the world, but someone has—Jesus the Christ. The Psalmist put it this way...*

What is it that matters about humanity that You the Lord God would be concerned? You made Jesus a little lower, for a little while, “lower than angels.” Now you have crowned Him with glory and put the whole world at His feet! [Psalm 8:4-6]

By doing so, Father God has not left anything out which is not under Christ’s domain. Yet, right now, of course, we do not see everything which is subject to Him.

But we do see Jesus the Christ who while on earth as a human was indeed “lower than angels.” He suffered death, as a human. For this, He was crowned with honor. His suffering facilitated God’s grace because He tasted death for everyone.

For all children of God, it is fitting for the Lord God to perfect our salvation through His suffering. Now, those who are made holy—you and I—and the One who makes us holy are members of the same family. Jesus is not ashamed to call us His younger brothers and sisters. In Psalms 22:22, Holy Spirit says this about Jesus...

I give You My name in the presence of a great cloud of witnesses in the congregation—I will affirm your connection to Me with encouragement and praise.

Isaiah also was inspired to write, *I will put my trust in Him, and Here I AM, and the children of I AM has given me.* We are no longer meet the Lord God in the **courtroom**, but in the **parlor** of His presence.

- C Jesus the Christ, God Himself, was “made” a “little lower than angels.” Understanding the incarnation and its humbling yet paradoxically exalting nature is key; see Philippians 2 for clarification.
- C The significance of being made Christ’s siblings, becoming the children of Father God, is enormous!

BUT WHY DID CHRIST BECOME ONE OF “US?” HEBREWS 2:14-18

Hebrews 2:14-16. *Christ destroyed Satan’s power by becoming human.* Since we are the brothers and sisters of Christ, and since He is not ashamed to call us His siblings, we are children of Father God.

Nonetheless, we are flesh and blood—we are biologically human. So, when He came as Jesus of Nazareth, He too shared in our

humanity. Through His death He destroyed the one who holds the power of death—Satan.

By His death all of us who have been held in the slavery caused by the fear of death are now free. And, for the record, it was not for angels He did all this, but for Abraham’s descendants (i.e., *If you belong to Christ, then [all of] you are Abraham’s descendants, and heirs according to the promise.* –Galatians 3:29).

- Q Why is it spiritually pragmatic to remember we are “flesh and blood;” i.e., we are humans who will die, just as the worms die?
- Q Why did the Lord God create a fear of death within us? Or, was such fear derived from Satan’s influence? When does the fear of death become a spiritual hazard?
- Q What is enslaving about the fear of death? What is particularly liberating when the fear of death is extinguished?
- Q **Why** is Christ focused on us rather than the angels; i.e., why focus on the descendants of Abraham rather than helping angels? Is the distance from God (sin) redeemed for angels?

Hebrews 2:17-18. *Christ atoned for our sins by becoming human.* Because He destroyed the power of the fear of death by dying Himself, He had to be established like us in every way. He became human.

He became human so He could become a mercifully faithful high priest in service to Father God. By becoming human, He took on the role of high priest and inter-mediator between us and Father God.

He not only became our high priest, He also made atonement for sin, turning aside Father God’s wrath and thus taking away the sins of people. He suffered when He was tempted, and He is able to help all of us who are being tempted.

HEBREWS 2:14-16

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants.

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For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for [some mss. read *and that he might turn aside God’s wrath, taking away*] the sins of the people. ¹⁸Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

**MINDBYTE NO. 3:
WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHRIST
COMING TO EARTH SOLELY AS CHRIST, AND
NOT INCARNATED AS JESUS OF NAZARETH?**

- Q How was Christ “made?” Was He not not made, neither created, nor born, but before the beginning of the beginning?
- Q Why is the Christ such an excellent high priest? And, why is Jesus of Nazareth such an excellent high priest?
- Q How did the Christ as Jesus of Nazareth demonstrate the faithfulness and mercy about which the Hebrew writer spoke?
- Q How did the Christ suffer when tempted? So? How does this help us when we suffer when being tempted?
- Q What was Christ’s suffering when being tempted on the cross? Why did He suffer?
- Q When Christ shared in our humanity, what did the Christ as incarnated as Jesus of Nazareth learn which He did not know before? [Hint: compare and contrast explicit knowledge versus experiential knowledge; cf., Genesis 22:12]