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By Dan Maines

## Hebrews 2

### Hebrews 2:1

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.

† The writer warns against neglect. If Christ is greater than angels, then His word demands even greater attention. To drift from it is to risk judgment.

† Philo (On the Migration of Abraham 89) spoke of the danger of a soul "drifting away" from divine truth, showing how this

imagery was familiar to Jewish audiences.

### **Hebrews 2:2-3**

For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every violation and act of disobedience received a just punishment, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard.

† The law delivered through angels was binding and disobedience brought punishment. If that was true, how much more serious is neglecting salvation proclaimed by Christ Himself?

† Josephus (Antiquities 15.136) records the Jewish belief that angels mediated the Law at Sinai. The writer of Hebrews builds on this, showing the greater weight of the gospel.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls (Jubilees 1.27-29) also describe angels as intermediaries at Sinai, confirming this Jewish expectation.

### **Hebrews 2:4**

God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders, and by various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

† God confirmed the message of Christ through miracles and spiritual gifts. These were visible proofs of the gospel in that generation.

† Eusebius (Church History 2.3) testifies that the early church was marked by miracles and gifts of the Spirit, affirming the truth of the apostolic witness.

† Justin Martyr (Dialogue with Trypho 82) affirmed that spiritual gifts and miracles were signs God had confirmed Christ's gospel with power.

### **Hebrews 2:5**

For He did not subject to angels the world to come, about which

we are speaking.

† The coming world, the New Covenant order, was not placed under angels but under Christ. Angels ruled as servants in the old order, but Christ rules the new.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls (War Scroll 1QM) describe angels as rulers in God's battles, but Hebrews shows Christ as the true ruler of the age to come.

† Philo (On Dreams 1.142) described angels as cosmic governors, but Hebrews points to Christ as the one who rules the renewed age.

### **Hebrews 2:6-8**

But someone has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that You think of him? Or a son of man, that You are concerned about him? You have made him for a little while lower than angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor; You have put everything in subjection under his feet."

† Quoting Psalm 8, the writer shows how humanity was destined for glory, but Christ fulfilled this role as the Son of Man. For a little while He was made lower than angels, but now crowned with glory.

† Chrysostom (Homilies on Hebrews 4) explained that Christ fulfilled Psalm 8 by restoring the dominion that Adam lost, being exalted over all creation.

### **Hebrews 2:9**

But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of His suffering death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

† Jesus humbled Himself, taking a position below angels, in order to suffer death. Through that death He was crowned with glory, bringing salvation to all.

† Ignatius (Letter to the Trallians 9) affirmed that Christ truly

suffered and died in the flesh so that by His death He might destroy death for all.

### **Hebrews 2:10**

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the originator of their salvation through sufferings.

† Salvation was accomplished through suffering. Christ, the author of salvation, was made perfect in the sense of fully accomplishing God's purpose through His suffering.

† Irenaeus (Against Heresies 5.1.1) taught that Christ's sufferings were necessary to bring humanity into glory, fulfilling the plan of God.

### **Hebrews 2:11**

For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for this reason He is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

† Christ identifies with His people, calling them His brothers and sisters. His sanctifying work brings believers into God's family.

† Clement of Alexandria (Stromata 5.10) emphasized that Christ, though Lord, became our brother, uniting Himself to humanity in order to sanctify us.

### **Hebrews 2:12**

Saying, "I will proclaim Your name to My brothers, in the midst of the assembly I will sing Your praise."

† Quoting Psalm 22:22, the writer shows Christ fulfilling the role of worship leader among His people. He is not distant but present in their assembly.

### **Hebrews 2:13**

And again, "I will put My trust in Him." And again, "Behold, I and

the children whom God has given Me."

† These Old Testament quotes show Christ's solidarity with His people. He trusted in God just as His people must, and they are the children given to Him by the Father.

### **Hebrews 2:14-15**

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, so that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

† Christ became fully human to destroy the power of death and deliver His people from its fear. His victory ended the slavery of sin and death.

† Ignatius of Antioch (Letter to the Smyrnaeans 2) declared that Christ's real flesh and death destroyed death itself, echoing the truth of Hebrews.

† Seneca (Letters 24.12) admitted that fear of death enslaved the Roman world. Hebrews proclaims Christ as the one who broke that chain.

### **Hebrews 2:16**

For clearly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendants of Abraham.

† Christ's work was not for angels but for people, specifically for Abraham's descendants. This fulfills the promises made to Abraham, now applied to all who believe.

† Justin Martyr (Dialogue with Trypho 119) declared that Christians are the true heirs of Abraham's promises, fulfilled in Christ.

### **Hebrews 2:17**

Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brothers so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in

things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

† Christ's humanity qualified Him to be a merciful and faithful high priest. He made atonement for the sins of His people, fulfilling the priestly role once shadowed under the Law.

† The Mishnah (Yoma 5:1) described how the high priest made atonement once a year in the temple, but Christ's priesthood surpassed this by making a once-for-all atonement.

### **Hebrews 2:18**

For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

† Because Christ suffered and was tempted, He is able to help His people in their temptations. His priesthood is personal and compassionate, grounded in shared experience.

† Chrysostom (Homilies on Hebrews 5) stressed that Christ's suffering gives believers boldness, because He understands temptation from His own experience.

### **Application For Us Today**

† Hebrews 2 reminds us of the seriousness of listening to Christ. If ignoring the Law brought judgment, how much more dangerous is neglecting Christ's word?

† This chapter shows the necessity of Christ's humanity. He became like us, suffered like us, and died for us. This gives us assurance that He truly understands our struggles.

† The defeat of the devil and the liberation from the fear of death are already accomplished. We live in freedom, not under slavery to fear.

† Christ is our merciful high priest. He intercedes not as a distant figure but as one who knows suffering and temptation. This gives us confidence to approach Him for help.

† Finally, this chapter pushes back against futurism. The devil and the fear of death are not awaiting some future defeat, Christ already accomplished this. We live in the fullness of His reign, free from fear and bondage.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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- † Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.1.1 - salvation perfected through sufferings
- † Clement of Alexandria, Stromata 5.10 - Christ uniting Himself

to humanity

† Mishnah, Yoma 5:1 - high priest's atonement contrasted with Christ

† Chrysostom, Homilies on Hebrews 4-5 - Christ fulfilling Psalm 8 and aiding the tempted

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