

HEBREWS 2

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Hebrews chapter 2 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

I believe that Paul was the author of this letter to the Hebrews, and I realize that not everyone agrees with that. Again, not a big deal, the Holy Spirit inspired the writer to write down these words.

In saying that, I probably will use Paul's name as the writer of this letter, and I don't want anyone to tune out or not listen because of that. If you don't believe it was Paul, that is fine, the message is what is important to us and it is a powerful message for the readers back then and for us today!

And what Paul is doing in this letter, as he writes to this Jewish audience, is that he is showing them, using the Jewish Scriptures, to prove that Jesus is greater than everyone and everything.

You see, these Jewish Christians, probably living around Jerusalem, Paul is encouraging them not to go back to Judaism and the sacrificial system under Moses but to embrace the New Covenant and press on towards a maturity in Christ.

In other words, leave the shadow behind, which many of these things were a picture of Jesus, a shadow, and embrace the substance, embrace Jesus Christ who has come!

Paul put it like this in Colossians 2:16-17, **“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”**

That is the key, these things were a shadow of what was to come, Jesus. And now that Jesus has come, why are we embracing the shadow instead of Jesus Himself, and that is what Paul is driving home in this letter to the Hebrews.

In Hebrews chapters 1 and 2 Paul shows us that Jesus is superior to prophets and then angels.

Paul put it like this in Hebrews 1:1-3, **“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”**

In other words, listen to Jesus!

Then Paul shows us that Jesus is superior to angels because He is God, the creator of heaven and earth.

He has an eternal kingdom because He is eternal.

He is immutable or unchanging.

And if you struggle with this idea that Jesus is God, then just listen to what God the Father says of God the Son or the Word in Hebrews 1:8-9, **“But to the Son He says: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.’”**

Now, as we move into Hebrews chapter 2 tonight we will again see the superiority of Jesus over angels but the focus this time, in knowing the truth that was given to us in chapter 1, is the implications that result from knowing the truth, a warning to all who have heard the truth, know the truth and yet, don't hold onto the truth!

In other words, it is the application of Hebrews chapter 1 to our lives.

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in Hebrews chapter 2, beginning in verse 1, and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening and we continue looking at the superiority of Jesus over angels.

HEBREWS 2

VERSE 1

Paul opens up this chapter with the word "**Therefore**" and this word links us back to the principles that were laid down in chapter 1 – the superiority of Jesus over angles and how that should impact our lives!

And here is the admonition.

Paul is saying that we are to have the more "**earnest heed**" or PROSECHO in the Greek, which speaks of the mooring of a boat or ship that it is anchored in place.

Why is that needed?

Because if it is not anchored, it will drift away!

Now, the big question is, "*Who is Paul speaking to – believers who are drifting away from the truth of God or unbelievers who have heard the truth but have not applied it to their lives – just head knowledge of God?*"

That is a great question and it has been debated with both sides giving good arguments.

Personally, I see a warning to the saved, not that they can lose their salvation, but they have neglected what was given to them and they are drifting away!

Now we also need to understand that this can apply this to those who have heard the truths of God and not applied it to their lives and thus, we will look at both issues, both kinds of people to see what we can glean from this point that Paul is making.

First, let's look at the believers who were drifting away from the truth.

Let me start out by saying that I don't believe that the Scriptures teach that believers can lose their salvation, as I have said, but they can truly be put on the shelf, they can drift away from God!

How does that happen?

I don't think it is an instantaneous process but a slow process of moving away from God by not anchoring their life in God's Word, by not reading the Bible, not engaging in fellowship, not going to Bible studies, and-so-on.

For a time, things may seem okay, but then, their life is falling apart, and they wonder why? It is called backsliding and the warning is to anchor your life in God and His Word or you will drift away!

Listen to what Paul wrote to the Galatians and their falling away. He wrote in Galatians 3:1-3, **“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”**

And, like the Galatians, these Jewish believers were saved by grace and not by the Law, but now they were beginning to drift away from the simple Gospel message and into a works salvation! And Paul says that this is nothing more than foolishness!

The reason it is foolish is because they were thinking that God could not take them to glory, but they would have to earn their way in by keeping the Law. Again, foolishness!

Let me share a few things that can cause any Christian to drift away from Christ and back into the world.

First of all, ***BY NOT WALKING FORWARD WITH A PURPOSE EVERY DAY!***

You can't just meander through life; you will not go anywhere. Paul said that this is the way we were in Ephesians 2:2-3, "**in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.**"

That is just meandering through life, following the course of this world, which takes you nowhere!

But we are not like that any longer. Once we come to Christ, we have a purpose in life, He shows us where we are to walk.

In fact, Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:15-16, "**See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**"

In other words, pay attention to where you are walking, let the Spirit of God guide you, be wise, the days are evil!

So we can drift away ***BY NOT WALKING FORWARD WITH A PURPOSE EVERY DAY!***

Also, we can be ***NEGLIGENT IN THE BUILDING UP OF OUR FAITH!***

Think about it like this. If you were to lay in bed for a few weeks, not get out of bed, your muscles would begin to atrophy. The same is true in our spiritual lives. We need to exercise our faith so it doesn't atrophy, in a sense.

Jude put it like this, **“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.”** Jude 1:20.

So we can drift away by being ***NEGLIGENT IN THE BUILDING UP OF OUR FAITH!***

And here is another important reason why people drift away from God, ***BY NOT STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD!***

In other words, how are you going to know what God desires of you, how are you going to know how to walk if you don't hear from God. And we hear from God by reading and studying the Word of God. He does speak to us today, are we listening?

Paul wrote in II Timothy 2:15, **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”**

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.”**

So we can drift away ***BY NOT STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD!***

And here is one that many don't think is that important. We can drift away from the Lord
BY NOT BEING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS!

I know, some of you are like, ***“No way. Come on, that is not right!”***

It is right and it is important. We keep each other accountable. In Proverbs 27:17 we are told, **“As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.”**

And, in Hebrews 10:24-25 Paul tells us, **“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”**

As the Day of the Lord is approaching, we will need each other more and more as persecution, false doctrine, all kinds of things come our way. And thus, we can encourage and correct each other, stimulate each other for good works. It is that important.

And thus, we can drift away ***BY NOT BEING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS!***

These are very important if we want to stay anchored to Christ. Make no mistake about it, Jesus is the anchor of our soul, as Paul reminds us in Hebrews 6:19, **“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast . . .”**

One writer summed this up for us like this. ***“The protection against drifting is to have Christ as once the anchor and rudder of life. The anchor will hold us to the truth, while the rudder will guide us by the truth.”*** (Griffith Thomas)

Now, what about unbelievers, can they drift away from the truth as well?

Absolutely they can and their consequences are more devastating. Think about this for a minute.

Hell is filled with people who are not necessarily in opposition to Jesus, they know the truths of God, they may even agree with it, but they never apply it to their lives, they never ask Jesus to be Lord and Savior of their life.

Because of that they are drifting away because their life is not anchored in Him and His Word!

They, in a sense, missed heaven by 18 inches or the distance between their mind – head knowledge, and their heart – giving their life to Jesus!

Remember what the Philippian jailer asked Paul in Acts 16:30, *“What must I do to be saved?”*

And Paul answered him, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”* (Acts 16:31)

But, the other side of that question is this. *“What must I do to be lost?”*

And the answer to that is simple, *“Do nothing!”*

You know where you stand with God, sin has separated you from Him.

You know that Jesus died for your sins.

But you do nothing, and you have drifted away from Christ and you will spend an eternity apart from Him!

VERSES 2-4

When Paul speaks of **“the word spoken through angels”** he is speaking of the Mosaic Law.

Stephen tells us this in Acts 7:53, **“who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.”**

Also, Paul tells us in Galatians 3:19, **“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.”**

Even Moses made this point in Deuteronomy 33:2, that they brought the Law to him, **“And he said: ‘The Lord came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came with ten thousands of saints [holy angels]; From His right hand Came a fiery law for them.’”**

Keep in mind that the Mosaic Law was strict, there were consequences in transgressing it.

What’s the point?

The point is simple. If we are to take the word which came by angels so strictly, how much more are we to take the word which was given to us by Jesus!

You see, Paul is moving from the lesser to the greater – from angels to Jesus, from the Law to the Gospel of Grace.

The Law came to bring us the knowledge of sin while the Gospel came to bring to us the knowledge of salvation.

If God has done all this, how can we neglect it – this salvation? A stern warning!

The word **“neglect”** in the Greek is AMELEO, (am-el-eh’-o) and it can mean “to be careless of.”

That is what we have been talking about here in Hebrews. That we can get careless with what we believe because we are so busy or so familiar with it and we can drift away because we are not anchored in Christ!

Again, Paul said that in these last days, the days we are living in, God spoke to us through Jesus, the Word!

Thus, Jesus spoke forth the Gospel message and it was then passed on to His disciples and then to others, spreading on.

Now to authenticate His ministry, to authenticate the disciple's ministry, to authenticate our ministry, God brings forth "**signs**" or things that will point people to Jesus.

He does "**wonders**" through us, or things that people see and are amazed.

He also works "**miracles**" through us, or supernatural things.

Now are the gifts of the Spirit, the gift of miracles and-so-on for today?

I believe they are. I do realize that some will disagree with this, and that is fine. This is not a foundational issue, but I do think this is important.

In Mark 16:15-18 we are told, "**And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'**"

What I want you to see here is that this is not limited to some period of time. Who are these signs for?

Jesus tells us that "**. . . these signs will follow those who believe . . .**" That means you and me. Again, not limited, you just don't see it in the text, it is not implied in the text and the only way you can come to that conclusion that this has stopped, is to approach it with your own preconceived ideas.

And yes, there are those who abuse the gifts or do things out of their own power or strength and attribute that to God. It is not. But don't negate what God has said because of this.

And here are some examples. For instance, some take these verses here in Mark and they will handle poisonous snakes, drink deadly poison, but that is not what Jesus is saying here.

He is saying to those who are serving Him, those who are following after Him, those who are in ministry will see God work miraculously in their lives.

Jesus said, “**And these signs will follow those who believe.**”

And let me say this, because this makes me mad. When I hear people say we are going to have a healing service on such and such a night, I don't see that in the Scriptures. God works as He sees fit, not when we want Him to. You serve Him and let Him work through you. Notice, it is according to His will, not yours!

That is Paul's point in I Corinthians 12:1-11, “**Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.**”

The Devil doesn't care if you reject the gifts or you abuse them, but he is terrified of those who follow after Jesus because signs and wonders will follow in their lives!

Even the apostles could not do miracles at their own will. Let me give you this example.

In Acts chapter 3 Peter and John went to pray at the Temple. And they pass by this lame man who has been lame since birth. He never walked and day in and day out he sat there at the Temple begging for alms from those who entered into the Temple.

Now we just read that but let's think this through. How many times did the apostles pass this man on the way to the Temple? Probably many, many times. How come they didn't heal him? Because God did not give them the gift of faith to reach out to this man and lift him up, nor did God give them the gift of miracles to heal this man.

And if you think about it, Jesus passed this man many times as well, and he was never healed.

But on this day, not something that Peter and John had planned, ***“Hey John, you know that lame guy by the Temple, let's go heal him!”***

No, they did not do that. They went to pray, and God was working. And as this lame man asks for money, we are told, **“Then Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.’ And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them - walking, leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God.”** Acts 3:6-9.

God gave Peter the gift of faith to lift this man to his feet and the gift of miracles to heal him! And God does the same today, “**. . . one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.**” I Corinthians 12:11.

As we read on, we will see Paul return to the persecution that this group of Jewish Christians were going through. Not only from their fellow Jews, but from Nero as well!

And he is trying to encourage them to continue in the faith.

What Paul is going to share with them, and we will see that in a minute, is this. *“Hey guys, I know it is tough, I know you are being persecuted for your faith by the Jews and by Nero. But don’t give up because Jesus is coming back to rule and reign during the Millennial Kingdom and you will rule over everyone, even angles!”*

VERSES 5-8a

When Paul speaks of “**the world to come**” he is speaking of the Millennial Kingdom. That is important for us to understand because Paul is showing us what has happened and that the Lord is coming back to restore what sin did to this world through Adam.

Again, Paul is speaking of Jesus being superior to angels and thus, he tells us that God has not placed angels to rule over the world.

In fact, in Hebrews 1:14 we are told of angels, “**Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?**”

And, as Paul quotes out of Psalm 8, he tells us that man was created lower than angels but has been placed in charge over the Lord’s creation.

That is David's point in Psalm 8, look at what David wrote starting in verse 3 of Psalm 8, **“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen - Even the beasts of the field, The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!”** Psalm 8:3-9.

But, as we can clearly see, man has rejected the Creator and he worships creation. And we will talk more about that as we read on.

The point I want to make is that as you look at creation today, things are out of control. What do I mean by that?

There are lions and tigers and bears, oh my! In other words, I don't have control over them!

That is not how things began as God created the heavens and the earth and all life. Everything was very good. Man ruled over creation, in fact, all creation passed by Adam so he could name the animals! And man lived in harmony with creation!

In Genesis 1:26-31 we are told, **“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food’; and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”**

Then what happened?

Like I have said. Sin entered the world through Adam and now man forfeited the earth to Satan and now creation is not subject to man.

That is the problem! By all appearance the promise of Psalm 8:4-6 seems to be unfulfilled. We do not see that all things are subjected to man.

That is true. Is God lying? Not at all! We are not done yet!

But what is the solution?

Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 8b-9

Now this is the key to not only our redemption but Jesus ruling and reigning in the Kingdom Age.

Paul said that He “**... might taste death for everyone.**” What is the point?

If God did not become flesh, He could not have tasted death!

The reason being is that God is Spirit and a spirit can't die. But flesh and blood can and does die and thus, Jesus could be our Kinsman Redeemer and save us from our sins!

Now some may argue, “*If Jesus died, how can He be greater than angels if they can't die?*”

That is true, angels don't die, but only Jesus could save us from our sins, angels can't do that. Only Jesus can restore this sinful world back to God, angels can't do that!

Now let's look at this rebellion of man a little closer.

When man was created, he was given charge over the world. Then sin entered the picture and because of that, man is not ruling over creation!

Paul, in Romans 8:22-23 tells us, “**For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.**”

You see, all of creation was subject to the sin of Adam with its devastating effects.

But God became man, flesh and blood with the purpose of redeeming man and restoring creation to its original way.

Again, listen to what Paul said in Romans 5:12-21, **“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned - (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 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. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.). Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

Jesus Christ purchased us back, He redeemed us from sin and one day He is coming back to restore this world to the way it was in the beginning.

You see, the cross conquered the curse and the Kingdom will be restored to man again, we will rule and reign with Him in the Kingdom Age.

We see that in Revelation 1:5-6, **“and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”**

And in Revelation 5:9-10, **“And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.’”**

And yes, there is still much beauty in this world, but sin has also corrupted that beauty, but one day it will be restored!

Look at the changes that will occur in the Kingdom Age.

First of all, man will be changed.

We are told in Isaiah 2:2-4, **“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD’S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.”**

No more war, righteousness will fill the land!

The animals will be changed.

We see that in Isaiah 11:6-9, **“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.”**

These animals don’t get along with each other today and with us, but in the Kingdom Age, there will be this harmony among all of creation!

And we will even see this with the plant life, the landscape, it will also be changed.

We see this in Isaiah 35:1-2, where we are told, **“The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, The excellency of our God.”**

Righteousness will flow throughout this land in the Kingdom Age as Jesus rules and reigns and we will rule and reign with Him!

The sacrifice that Jesus made, ***HE TASTED DEATH***, has not only saved us, but all of creation will be restored in the Kingdom Age!

VERSES 10-13

Keep in mind that Paul is writing to Jewish believers who were struggling with their faith, being drawn back or drifting back to Judaism, the Law and away from grace.

And yet, Paul opens up here in Hebrews 2:10 by saying, “**For it was fitting for Him . . .**” And the idea here is that it was fitting to suffer a horrible and detestable death on a cross for us!

In fact, in Deuteronomy 21:23 it says that “**he who is hanged is accursed of God.**”

So for the Jew, they could not even imagine their messiah dying on a cross!

And yet, listen to what Paul wrote in Galatians 3:13, “**Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).**”

In other words, Jesus gave up His glory to become a man. He paid the price for sinful man so that He can redeem man from His sin. And He became accursed of God as the sins of the world were placed on Him as He hung on that cross!

And look at how this all plays out for us. Here in Hebrews 2:10 Paul says that Jesus did this “**to make the author of their salvation perfect, through sufferings.**”

That verse is better translated, “**to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**”

The word “**captain**” literally means a pioneer or “*one who opens the way for others to follow.*”

And that is exactly what Jesus has done for us. He has made the way for us to follow so that we can enter into eternal life with Him!

It all comes down to this. God became flesh, He dwelt among us, became man, a little lower than angels in order to die for our sins to bring us to salvation. He was born to die.

Paul said in Romans 6:23, “**For the wages of sin is death, but the [free] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

It is a free gift of God while the payment for sin is death. But we can have eternal life through the free gift, through Jesus Christ.

In Isaiah 53, a picture of the suffering servant, a picture of Jesus paying for our sins as they are laid upon Him, we are told in verse 10, “**Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.**”

Why did it please the Father to bruise, or literally crush the Son, Jesus?

In order to bring “**many sons to glory,**” to save us! It is what was needed.

You see, God could have saved us any way that He wanted but God showed His love for us in His sacrifice, and God could not sacrifice Himself unless He applied humanity to His deity and suffered on our behalf.

It is as Paul said in Philippians 2:5-11 of Jesus, **“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 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. 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.”**

Again, something we might miss here in Hebrews 2:11 is the fact that **“... He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”**

Did you know on the other side of the cross Jesus never called His people brothers?

In John 15:15 He said, **“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”**

You see, He called them friends, disciples, sheep but He never called them brothers until after the cross because they couldn't be brothers until their sin was paid for and neither could we.

In John 20:17, after the death and resurrection of Jesus He spoke to Mary, and **“Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”**

As we read on Paul is going to continue speaking of God becoming flesh to redeem us. And please remember that in the Incarnation God did not become fully man nor was He 50% God and 50% man. In the Incarnation He was fully God and fully man!

VERSES 14-16

Way back when President Clinton was in office, there was this cartoon in the newspaper that showed President Clinton bidding farewell to U.S. troops as they were leaving for Bosnia.

He said to them, *“Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do.”*

And one of the soldiers replied back, *“We already are.”*

That is not the case with Jesus. He became flesh and blood, He became man and dwelt among us and thus, He understands exactly what we are going through!

Now Paul tells us that Jesus came so that **“. . . He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.”**

And your question may be, *“I thought only God had the power of life and death and here it seems like the Devil does?”*

Make no mistake about it, God alone has the power of life and death, just read the first chapter of Job. Satan could not do anything unless God allowed it.

But Satan does destroy lives as people listen to his lies, they will enter into eternity apart from God.

Thus, people who don’t know the Lord fear death but with Jesus, death has no power over us!

Remember what Paul said in I Corinthians 15:55-57, **“O Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Now we also see that Jesus said that He would **“destroy”** the Devil who has this power to destroy lives. And that word does not mean to ***“annihilate.”*** I think we understand that because Satan is still very active today!

The word means to ***“render inoperative, make of no effect.”*** Yes, Satan is still around and very active in this world, but the Lord has disarmed Him!

Death has no power in our lives!

In the Bible, when it speaks of Christians dying, it speaks of them going to sleep. Death has no power over us because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

(II Corinthians 5:8)

And one day we will get our resurrected bodies, our eternal bodies that will never get sick, never fade away.

That is Paul's point in I Thessalonians as he speaks of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord, those who have died before the rapture occurred, "**But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.**" I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

You see, absent from the body and present with the Lord.

This earthly tent will fade away, go back to the dust of the earth but our spirit and soul will go to be with the Lord who is preparing for us a new body, a mansion for our spirit and soul to dwell in for eternity!

You see, Jesus, by His atoning work for us has put the Devil out of business, destroying the power of death the Devil had over us!

I like the way that Spurgeon summed this up. He wrote, "*The massive door, you will observe was taken away from the grave - not merely opened but flung aside, rolled away; and henceforth death's ancient prison-house is without a door. The saints shall pass in, but they shall not be shut in. They shall tarry there as in an open cavern, but there is nothing to prevent their coming forth from it in due time.*"

Praise the Lord for that! No more fear in death, just moving from an earthly tent to a heavenly mansion!

And then, in Hebrews 2:16 he speaks of the fact that angels can't be saved, they can't be sanctified, thus, He doesn't give aid to them!

Warren Wiersbe put it like this, *“Jesus Christ did not take on Himself the nature of angels in order to save the fallen angels. . . . Instead, He stooped lower than the angels to become Man! And not just “man” in general; but He became a Jew, a part of the “seed of Abraham” (Heb. 2:16). The Jews were a despised and hated race, and yet our Lord became a Jew.”*

Now he says that he gives aid to the **“seed of Abraham.”** What about Gentiles? Are we lost?

Keep in mind who Paul is writing to, Jewish believers and thus, that is his focus.

Also keep in mind that we are of the seed of Abraham by the new birth, by being born again!

Paul said in Galatians 3:26-29, **“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”**

Also, in Romans 2:28-29 Paul tells us, **“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”**

Make no mistake about it, salvation wasn't limited to the Jewish people (Gen.12:3) but, like I have said, the writer is addressing Jews primarily and the role the nation played in God's overall plan of salvation for all mankind.

Thus, to the Jehovah Witnesses, Jesus is not Michael the archangel.

To the Mormons, Jesus is not the brother of Lucifer, an angel.

He is God who became flesh and blood, 100% God and 100% man in the Incarnation in order to redeem us back to God!

VERSES 17-18

As Paul finishes up this section on the superiority of Jesus over angels, he kind of puts the last nail in the coffin in regard to this point.

You see, angels never became flesh and blood. They never were descendants of Adam and Abraham. Thus, angels could not die for our sins and save us from our sins!

Remember what Paul wrote back in Hebrews 1:14, "**Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation.**" They are serving God and ministering to us, in our lives, and thus, they are inferior to Jesus who is over all!

And not only that, but they could never sympathize with our temptations because they were not human, they could not understand what we are going through. But Jesus can because He became flesh and dwelt among us and He knows exactly what we are going through!

In Hebrews 4:15 we see this same thought, "**For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.**"

Jesus was tempted as we are, but He was without sin. But make no mistake about it, He felt the pain, the sorrow, the temptations, the pulls of this world. He experienced these things and because of that He knows exactly what we are going through because He has been there!

I don't know where you are at this evening, what you are going through in life. But, whatever you are going through, understand that you have a God in Heaven who knows by experience what you are going through because God became man and in His humanity He felt, to a deeper degree, more than we could ever experience in regard to temptation.

Why is that?

Because we usually succumb to the temptation long before that degree is reached but Jesus was without sin!

So wherever you are at, whatever you are going through, however you are being tempted, know that you have a God who understands.

Thus, **“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”** Hebrews 4:16.

Bring it to God, release it to Him, and gain the victory that He has for you, He has given us the power to do so!

THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS OVER PROPHETS, (as we saw in Hebrews 1:1-3)
and now, ***THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS OVER ANGLES!***