

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 4

December 17, 2017



'Pieta' by Andrea Solario made in 1504 - 1507

Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Four

CHRIST IS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED

December 17, 2017

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Hebrews 2:1-9

¹Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. ²For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; ³how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; ⁴God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? ⁵For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak: ⁶but one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? ⁷Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: ⁸thou hast 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 see not yet all things put under him ⁹But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (KJV).

PAY ATTENTION TO THE NEWS OF JESUS

Hebrews 2:1

¹Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip (KJV).

The apostle now affirms and provides a concluding statement regarding the material he presented in the first chapter. He says that the Son is supremely great and will demonstrate a final triumph over His enemies. Therefore, the readers and those of the apostle's contemporary audience who did not see Him but heard of Him from the eyewitnesses should pay very careful attention to what they have accurately heard. They heard the Gospel and the body of doctrinal truth along with it. The danger he cites is that if they drift away from this truth they would be in danger of spiritual death through unbelief or treating it in a careless manner and letting it drift away. Interestingly he uses a Greek word here *pararyomen*. It is used only one time in the New Testament and meant to convey losing something through neglect. The Gospel may be lost to some that hear it, because they don't accept it and therefore fail to take advantage by it. Therefore, some who hear the Gospel may be lost and

perish; but the grace of the Gospel can never be lost. It stands incontrovertible regardless of who does or does not receive it. Paul is simply saying to these people, “don’t lose your opportunity of eternal live.” They must pay special attention to the new revelation of God’s truth as given by means of the Son, our Lord Jesus.

IF PRIOR DISOBEDIENT RECEIVED PUNISHMENT SO WILL WE

Hebrews 2:2-3

² For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; ³ how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; (KJV)?

Angels are here again introduced into the argument to convince the unbelieving Jews that Jesus brings truth in His Gospel. It is impossible to escape the judgment will come on the disobedient. The message of the Law of Moses was given by angels who were the mediators. This truth is only given vague references in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 68:17). But it is clearly affirmed in the New Testament and this verse is one of those passages. The others are Acts 7:53 and Galatians 3:19. So the text asks the question, “If the Word spoken by angels was steadfast or sure and firm, how much stronger is this true if spoken by God incarnate Himself?”

The apostle now lets his audience know the results of neglecting the sure word of salvation provided by the Lord Jesus. He alludes to previous examples of those who neglect the authority and strength of God’s Word. In the celestial realm, the angels who followed Satan in his defection from God’s Word received their just recompence (II Peter 2:4). Other examples, are the two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, who disobeyed the Mosaic Law by burning the incense improperly and they were smitten physically dead (Leviticus 10). In Numbers 16, three rebels, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, led a revolt against the office of the High Priest given to Aaron. God judged them by having the earth open up and swallow them and their families. Achin disobeyed the Law and he was stoned to death (Joshua 7). The Law was given by God to Moses through angels. Even though it was divinely delivered anyone who disobeyed it still received a just punishment. The delivery method still required obedience for reward.

Neglecting the Word of God is being lukewarm to it. One neither denies it or affirms it. It is just neglected or allowed to slip away through apathy. The Lord Himself in His letter to the Church of Laodicea gave them a strong warning against this attitude.

Revelation 2:14-22

¹⁴ And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; ¹⁵ I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee

out of my mouth. ¹⁷ Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: ¹⁸ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. ²¹ To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. ²² He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (KJV).

The text of verse three concludes with a summary. While all these past examples of God judging those who disobeyed His law reveal what He did to them, how can we expect to avoid His judgment if we do not heed the witness of those who confirmed this to us? If the disobedience is to God's law after salvation it will result in difficult life circumstances or even an early physical death for those who neglect it. If prior to salvation it will certainly mean a spiritual death as well.

APOSTOLIC AUTHENTICATION OF GOD'S MESSAGE

Hebrews 2:4

⁴ God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will (KJV)?

The apostles and those on whom they ordained by the laying on of hands were able to demonstrate special spiritual gifts such as signs, wonders, and a host of miracles to emphasize the truth of the Gospel message. Signs are special miracles that show the divine authority of a person's claims. Wonders clearly attract attention and cause amazement. Divers miracles show that the source is one of divine power. Gifts are divine enablements also known as spiritual gifts. The apostles had special "sign" gifts which enabled them to provide a very quick and firm start to the Church Age after the ascension of Jesus back to Heaven. Since God is the sole author of miracles; He gave these sign gifts to the apostles and their delegates in the first stage of Christianity, to affirm its truth and to firmly establish it.

There were various manifestations of these gifts of the Holy Spirit. Some of these were the gifts of healing and working miracles, foretelling things to come, discerning of spirits, speaking with divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, (1 Corinthians 12:8, 9, 10) according to his own will; either according to the will of God, who bore testimony by these miracles and gifts; or according to the will of the Holy Spirit, who distributed them to men as He saw fit for His own purposes.

I Corinthians 12:11.

¹¹ But that one and very same Spirit works all these, dividing to each one individually as He will (MEV).

ANGELIC AUTHORITY

Hebrews 2:5

⁵ For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak (KJV).

Earlier in chapter one verse fourteen it is stated that the angels are servants and therefore they cannot be rulers. Some evil angels known as demons have authority in this present age, but it is limited and will only last for a short while. This is why Satan is called the prince of this world. In some sense, even he is subject to the good angels as they are used by God in the execution of His will giving direction in moving the governments and inflicting His judgments on kingdoms and nations to care for His people. For the born-again believer in this present age we are under the special care and direction of the Redeemer himself. Never will Satan fully control the world. He strongly influences it but only with God's designated authority. When the prince of this world is finally cast out, the kingdoms of the earth will become the Messianic Kingdom of Christ. Even then the government will not be given to the angels; but to our Lord Jesus Christ. God never says He makes use of angels to give the Gospel as he did to give the law. God does not put so great a trust in his holy angels who are unequipped for such a role. What the apostle is making reference to the coming Messianic Age wherein they will also not have any ruling authority. So, the Messianic Kingdom will not have any angelic authority but will be ruled by the Son, the Lord Jesus the Messiah.

MAN'S ROLE IN CREATION

Hebrews 2:6-8

⁶ but one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? ⁷ Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: ⁸ thou hast 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 see not yet all things put under him (KJV).

Paul now quotes as before some Old Testament passages that his Jewish audience would be familiar with. He uses a portion of Psalm eight to affirm man's role in creation. This Psalm is usually read as a general exposition of the role of mankind in Creation. It is clear here though that here in Hebrews it also applies to the Messianic Kingdom. God gave man dominion over the earth in the Garden of Eden. It was Satan who usurped that authority when he caused man to sin. This is how he and his fallen angels became the so-called rulers of this earth. God created mankind to be a little lower in stature than the angelic realm. So the text here says that God crowned mankind with glory and honor and set us over the earth to control it. That

is, He put all things under our subjection. That is all things. He did not leave anything out on this earth that we would be able to exert control over. We have never had the full opportunity to realize this full control because of the sin we brought into the creation. It will be realized in the Messianic Kingdom though. So because we lost the control we also do not have the ability to recover it. It is only Jesus who provides the remedy for us to recover our lost heritage. No man has ever recovered the control over this earth that Adam lost in the Fall. Not any government ruler or boasting politician or wealthy individual. None have the control lost. Solomon with all his riches did not achieve it or any other person such as Alexander of Macedon, any of the Caesars, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus or Herod. The coming future Antichrist will believe he has it but will not. Only Jesus has the ability to restore our position which was lost in the Garden of Eden.

IT IS ONLY JESUS WHO PROVIDES

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (KJV).

This culminating statement is making certain that the Lord's physical body in which He lived is what is a little lower than the angels. Certainly not His Deity. Jesus became a man so that he could die. This was how He was able to restore our control over the earth and take it back from the usurper Satan.

We don't see Jesus through bodily eyes, but with the eyes of our mind as we have been given the Scriptures providing the eyewitness accounts of His life, death and resurrection. Now because of what He has done all things are made subject unto him. The incredible humiliation He suffered resulted in our salvation and now He is exalted. Jesus became lower than the angels, also by, or through suffering death. In this He was also was lower than them because they do not die. The statement *that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man*; affirms that that Jesus could then die for his church and its people. Interestingly the statement to *taste death*, is a Jewish phrase, that signifies the truth and reality of death. He experienced the bitterness of it, as the wrath of God was being poured out on Him instead of mankind.

This was God's plan from the earliest of time on this earth when He responded to Satan's actions in the garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:15

¹⁵ and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel (ASV, 1901).

The seed of the woman is the coming Messiah, who would be God incarnate. Jesus of course fulfilled this. With the plain text of the Hebrew we read, she begot a "man God". Either she

thought that God was fulfilling the “seed” of the woman prophecy in her lifetime, or she realized that this was the first male child who would be in the line leading to the Messiah. In any event, the Hebrew makes it quite clear that the seed of the woman would be God coming in human flesh at some point in the history of mankind to redeem the world from the sin that Satan influencing Adam and Eve brought into the world. Interestingly, orthodox Jewish commentaries on Genesis clearly state this, but then backtrack because they say to make a “man God” is heretical, so it must not mean that. Because they do not believe Jesus the Messiah is the “man God”, they look for other explanations. They realize though what the clear plain text says.

Christ did not die as an example, or for the good of men. He died as surety, instead of us. He gave His life *for everyone*. But it is only efficacious for every one that believes that He died and rose from the dead.

This is strictly God’s grace and has nothing to do with anyone keeping the law of the Old Testament. Christ fulfilled that by His appearing, death and resurrection. It is over and we are most blessed that He provided us a way to achieve glory as well as a position in the Messianic Kingdom through our restored dominion over the earth.

The ruling authority over the Earth was promised to man, not to angels. Mankind lost this because of the Fall. We still have title so to speak just not the ability to exercise full control. The Lord Jesus the Messiah restored this sovereignty for man because He defeated Satan at the cross. We will not be able to exercise full sovereignty until He sets up His Messianic Kingdom. This was never promised to the celestial beings only to mankind.

Next message: The Book of Hebrews Chapter Two Continued

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