

2 For this reason, we must pay attention all the more to what we have heard, so that we will not drift away. ²For if the message spoken through angels was legally binding^[a] and every transgression and disobedience received a just punishment, ³how will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? This salvation had its beginning when it was spoken of by the Lord, and it was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ⁴At the same time, God also testified by signs and wonders, various miracles, and distributions of gifts from the Holy Spirit according to his will.

⁵For he has not subjected to angels the world to come that we are talking about. ⁶But someone somewhere has testified:

**What is man that you remember him,
or the son of man that you care for him?**

⁷**You made him lower than the angels
for a short time;**

you crowned him with glory and honor^[b]

⁸**and subjected everything under his feet.^[c]**

For in **subjecting everything** to him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. As it is, we do not yet see **everything subjected** to him. ⁹But we do see Jesus—**made lower than the angels for a short time** so that by God's grace he might taste death for everyone—**crowned with glory and honor** because he suffered death.

¹⁰For in bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was entirely appropriate that God—for whom and through whom all things exist—should make the pioneer^[d] of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father.^[e] That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹²saying:

I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;

I will sing hymns to you in the congregation.^[f]

¹³Again, **I will trust in him.^[g]** And again, **Here I am with the children God gave me.^[h]**

Jesus is no angel

We're no angels. I know there was a remake but we tend to watch the 1955 version every Christmas. This movie features some escaped convicts who come to the aid of a failing shop owner and his daughter. They repay his kindness by helping him and his family out of several serious issues. They don't look like angels. They don't talk like angels. But they certainly help this family and play the part of angels more than anyone else in the movie.

Jesus is no angel but he plays the part. He may look like an angel, holy, sinless. He guards and defends us from all evil. He may sound like an angel. He even helps like an angel and helps so many... but he's no angel.

Neither are you. I suppose we can understand that in a variety of ways. The way my parents introduced me, "He's no angel." We might go a little further. We aren't holy. We don't listen. We don't talk like angels. We aren't as helpful or play the part of an angel. We're no angels but we have one who has been made like us in every way and yet was without sin. We have a Savior from heaven who serves as an angel – a messenger, who is greater than the angels and he brings an even greater message.

That summarizes chapter 1. Jesus is greater than the angels. That's what the therefore of chapter 2 verse one is there for... it points us back. Therefore, or "*for this reason, we must pay attention all the more to what we have heard, so that we will not drift away*" (Hebrews 2:1). Pay attention, to what we have heard, so that we will not be washed away. The thing is with so much water moving it's hard to tell where you are at. When I would visit the coast with family and sit on a surfboard or an inner tube it was hard to tell if you were being pulled away from the shore. If your feet were

firmly planted on the ground, you could tell the water was trying to pull you out but if you're floating all the water is moving and you can't tell just by looking how fast you're moving away from the shore. So also when we fail to listen to the message of the messenger. We drift away. The consequences are worse than being adrift at sea.

"For if the message spoken through angels was legally binding and every transgression and disobedience received a just punishment, how will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?" Jesus is greater than the angels with a greater message than the angels. But that message from the angels wasn't something to scoff at either. What was the message from the angels? Stephen the first Christian martyr (having died for his confession) said, Acts 7: 53 *"You received the law under the direction of angels and yet have not kept it."* The Law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. We don't know how the angels were involved but here see Stephen associate the angels with that message delivered to men. They specifically delivered messages to humanity. We can easily think of Mary, Elizabeth, Abraham and the Magi. These were times when angels served as messengers. And that message was legally binding, and transgressions were punished.

So if a greater message comes along and we don't listen how much more severely will we be punished? A greater message from one who is greater than the angels has come and the writer to the Hebrews includes himself in this call to repent, *"How will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?"* This message has been spoken by the Lord, confirmed by those who heard it, and testified to by signs, wonders, miracles. There is no denial of the authenticity of what was spoken. How will we escape?

We must pay careful attention. But it's so easy to drift away. It's been easy to drift away from the church this past year. You miss a week or two, nobody notices, and we miss more. It's easy to do. We've all done it. Especially when we closed our doors and said, "Watch online until we know more." That was hard, we drifted away from church, from family, from one another. During tough times we may have drifted away from God. When the unthinkable happens we always ask, "Where is God in this?" We'll forget that he is right here with us. We'll forget that he is in control of all things, that his holy angels watch over us, guarding and keeping us in all of our ways.

Sometimes it feels like were standing firm, other days it feels like we're floating and being pulled out further. One of the ways which society pulls at us is through the mythical teachings of angels brought to you by talk shows and the imaginations of mankind. They'll say things like, "God needed another angel in heaven." Heaven does not dehumanize us. Once we are resurrected on the last day, we will be more human than ever before. For body and soul will be reunited forever. We don't become angels in heaven. Chapter 1 verse 14 settles that, *"Are they not ministering spirits sent out to serve those who are going to inherit salvation?"* God has enough angels in heaven. When you loved ones die and go to heaven they are with the angels, not another angel. *"For he has not subjected to angels the world to come that we are talking about."* ⁵ *For God did not place the coming world, about which we are speaking, under the control of angels.* It's subject to you. It's been placed into your kingdom.

Our Savior, once made lower than the angels, is crowned with glory and honor. Though angels are powerful, holy, and amazing beings, they are sent to serve us. To become an angel would be a demotion for humanity. The great difference between us and angels is that they are sinless and they know their place. We don't. We neglect, drift away, we ignore the very word of God following after what we want to hear. The magnitude of what we neglect is determined by the importance of the thing we neglect. It's considered a crime to neglect an animal. It's considered even more heinous to lock a child in the car on a hot day. But what should be considered even more criminal is failing to listen to God, to neglect him, his Word. Neglecting home and family may damage more than just you and be hard to repair but this is worse, *"How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation"* (Hebrews 2:4).

There is no escape. We are in great danger. But there is a Great Salvation. The great salvation is the escape from sin, *the just punishment.*

It's what our God has done for us. This is what he has announced to us. This is the message that he has spoken to us *in these last days through his Son* (Hebrews 1:2). That great salvation is a message greater than retribution. It was one of being saved from retribution. Throughout the Old Testament and the New, angels proclaimed the message and person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since there is an escape from receiving a just retribution, then it is a great salvation to celebrate.

Such a great salvation speaks about a God who loves you, who gave his only Son for you, whose blood paid your price for sins committed, whose blood cleanses you from all sin, and sets you free to be people of God. Greatness does not come from you, if it does it's from the greatness of our sin and our need for salvation.

But that is what makes this salvation so great. Jesus didn't become an angel in order to save angels. He became human. The Psalmist questions, *"What is man that you remember him, or the son of man that you care for him?"* When David wrote this Psalm he had in mind the celebration of God's creation of man in his image. He questions the importance of humanity, the mortality of mankind, and the attention and care that God gives. The writer to the Hebrews, in light of the New Testament, and Jesus' claim as *"The Son of Man,"* contrasts *"Adam,"* the father of humanity, and Jesus, *"The Son of Man,"* the representative of humanity.

You made him lower than the angels for a short time; During Jesus humiliation and death he was lower than the angels but later at the Ascension *he is now crowned with glory and honor and subjected everything under his feet.* Jesus, the God-man has taken humanity into the throne room of God where all things are placed under his authority. This is how God remembers humanity he oversees the reign of his Son so that through Jesus we too may share in his inheritance with him.

But it doesn't look like God is in control. We don't see with our physical eyes (opaw) everything subjected to him. We do see (blepw) with eyes of faith Jesus, humiliated so that he might taste death for everyone now crowned with glory and honor. Jesus leads the way. He is not an angel. he is so much greater. And he took on humanity to taste death for everyone. He then exalts humanity bringing them into glory, our status as God's Sons. He became the first to regain all the glory that Adam had lost.

For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. This verse speaks of the common origin of all mankind but it's not explained. Bible versions will differ, one Father, one forefather (Adam), one patriarch (children of Abraham). Since Jesus is the Son of Man, the representative of all mankind, Adam would make sense. The Son of Man Jesus is able to serve on behalf of all humanity.

What does he have to say? *"I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters. I will sing hymns to you in the congregation. Here I am with the children God gave me.* Jesus calls us brothers and sisters. Jesus prayed portions of Psalm 22 while he was on the cross. The first half of the psalm the psalmist complains that God has forsaken him and then prays for deliverance from death. The second half of this psalm we see the joyful response of the Lord's vindication and exaltation after suffering. Here he leads the congregation in songs of praise for deliverance. He confesses his faith that God has delivered from death. The other quote is from Isaiah 8 and here the faithful king puts his trust in God alone to guard and keep from every enemy and finally he presents his brothers as God's gift to him.

Jesus stands together with all God's children, the royal family that God has given him. He is proud to have them as his own. He comes each Sunday and reminds us, "These are mine." Even those who don't look like angels, talk like angels, act or behave like angels. We're no angels. Jesus is not an angel. He is the Lord, the giver of life. It is fitting, appropriate that he should taste death for everyone. Jesus is no angel. He is God and he gave himself for us all. Amen.