

Heb. 2:1 ¶ Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.

Therefore – Considering the fact that Jesus is far greater than the angels...

The writer is saying that Who Jesus Is should cause us to pay close attention to and apply to our lives the truth that He taught and, in turn, has been taught to us by His disciples. If we aren't careful to do so, we are in danger of carelessly missing out (from the Greek for *slip*) on the blessings that accompany such obedience.

Heb. 2:2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

Heb. 2:3 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*;

Heb. 2:4 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?

Side note: The author of Hebrews did not "sign" his letter, so we cannot be sure who wrote it. I think many believe the author to be Paul. Allistair Begg notes that Paul heard directly from Jesus. He did not hear from "them that heard him" (verse 3).

"the word spoken by angels" – According to what I've learned, the Jews believed that God's law was given to Moses through the angels. I remember discovering this (to my surprise) in my study of Galatians.

Gal. 3:19 ¶ Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

The Old Testament passage that alludes to this is found in Deuteronomy.

Deut. 33:2 And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand *went* a fiery law for them.

God's law established principles by which the people were to live and the consequences for disobedience were clear; that was the main point Moses was driving home to the people as he gave them the message recorded in Deuteronomy. As we look at the history of the nation of Israel, God's word has proven true over and over again.

In verse 3 the writer is basically saying that just as surely as God's words to the nation of Israel has proven true, so too will his word to the "church," those who have accepted the gift of salvation. To *neglect* our salvation is to make light of it or disregard the benefits that are ours as part of that salvation. This salvation was first declared by the Lord and established as true by those He taught. I think the writer is drawing a distinction between the Old Testament Law and the truth embodied in that law as revealed by the Savior. The Jewish life as detailed in the Old Testament was full of rituals that pointed to Christ and laws that governed how to live their lives. Jesus taught that He would die for the sins of the world and put an end to the need for the sacrificial system. He taught that the law

involved more than just obeying the letter of the law; it involved obeying the heart of the law (e.g., The Sermon on the Mount).

God the Father affirmed Jesus by empowering Him through the Spirit to perform signs and wonders, many miracles and the ability to utilize the gifts of the Spirit according to the Father's will. I'm not totally sure how to explain the difference between signs, wonders and miracles, but I do know that they are all supernatural workings that transcend the laws of science. Nicodemus explained it best.

John 3:2 ... Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Again, Mr. Webster comes to the rescue; he defines a *sign* as "that which furnishes evidence; a mark; a token; an indication; a proof." The Old Testament scriptures were full of prophecies about the coming Messiah. Jesus gave evidences or signs that He was that Messiah by the miracles He did. This was basically the answer that He sent to John when He asked for verification from prison that Jesus was the Messiah.

Luke 7:19-22 And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, **Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.**

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the same as those available to us as detailed by Paul in his letters to the Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians; and scripture states that Jesus possessed the Spirit in His fullness, with no limitation. (2/09) We may possess one or more to varying degrees; He possessed them all without measure.

John 3:34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him*. I think the correct inference is that Jesus operated according to the Father's will because He said so.

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Heb. 2:5 ¶ For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

The wording of the KJV is confusing; every other of the nine translations I checked are clear that angels will not control "the world to come." Fruchtenbaum notes that this phrase was most common rabbinic reference for the Messianic Kingdom.

The following verses quote from Psalm 8 and verse 6 of that Psalm states that after man was created, he was given that privilege.

Psa. 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Psa. 8:5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Psa. 8:6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

Heb. 2:6 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?

Heb. 2:7 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:

Heb. 2:8 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.

In context, this quote from the psalmist is an expression of awe of God's creation, and he is wondering how man possibly qualifies for any attention from the Creator. Not the greatest comparison—but I couldn't help but think of the response of the spies sent in to check out the Promised Land and came back saying, "we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." (Number 13:33)

It's hard for me not to connect the term "son of man" with Jesus, but verse 9 that follows makes a definite contrast between the reference to man in these verses and the man Jesus. Man was created "a little lower than the angels" in position, power and ability at this time. How was man "crowned with glory and honor?" He was created in the image of God. He was created to rule in creation, but he forfeited that position when he chose to disobey the Creator. That he will be restored to that position is declared with the words "not yet." This leads right into the truth of the next verse, because man needed God's intervention in love and mercy on His behalf to reclaim the position for which he was created.

Heb. 2:9 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.

How did God intervene? He sent His Son Jesus to be born as a man to suffer and taste death for every man.

In context, the writer is emphasizing that Jesus became a man. He was born the second Adam; He was born the seed of the woman.

Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and **her seed**; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

He did not inherit a sin nature. He came to succeed where Adam had failed. In doing so He became the only acceptable sacrifice for the atonement of man's sin. Paul is very clear concerning this truth in his letter to the Corinthians.

1Cor. 15:21-22 For since by man *came* death, **by man came also the**

resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so **in Christ shall all be made alive.**

And in his letter to the Romans.

Rom. 5:15-19 But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* **by one man, Jesus Christ**, hath abounded unto many. And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. For if **by one man's offence** death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life **by one, Jesus Christ.**) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as **by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**

And in his letter to Timothy.

1Tim. 2:5 For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus....**

The suffering Jesus endured was much more than physical; it was spiritual. When we look to Jesus in faith as our Lord and Savior, our salvation is deliverance from eternal separation from God—spiritual death—not physical death (unless we are privileged to be part of the rapture). Jesus experienced (from the Greek for *taste*) the horror of such a separation as evidenced from His cry from the cross, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) Why did He endure such separation? Because of the *grace* of God the Father. *Grace* is defined as “the divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life.” It was God’s will for Him to do so—a truth I’m not sure I will ever truly understand as I consider man, especially me.

John 3:16 **For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Matt. 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless **not as I will, but as thou wilt.**

Matt. 26:42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, **thy will be done.**

Phil. 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became **obedient unto death**, even the death of the cross.

Gal. 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, **according to the will of God** and our Father:

1John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that **God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.**

As affirmed by the scripture listed above, Jesus' sacrifice made possible salvation for "every man." Scripture is also clear that although "many" (see Romans 5 above) will choose that gift, it will be "few" in comparison to the whole.

Matt. 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

"crowned with glory and honor" – Jesus came as a man not just created in the image of God, but as the express image of God in flesh (Heb. 1:3). Though the first "Adam" failed, Jesus, the second Adam, would be crowned with glory and honor for his obedience to God the Father even to the death of the cross.

Heb. 2:10 ¶ For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

"it became Him" – God the Father

"captain" = author

God in His fullness and unity, the Creator and Sustainer of His creation, devised a plan that would bring Him a family, "many sons," (or children from the Greek). He wanted this to be a family that could express love to one another and chose to give man a will of his own because true love is an expression of choice—not compulsion. He placed the perfectly created man and woman in a wonderful garden with complete freedom to enjoy it as they pleased with only one thing forbidden to them. As I read through the scripture, I think the purpose of that one command was to prove their love for Him, their desire to accept Him as Lord. That principle was brought to mind in my recent studies in Deuteronomy.

Ex. 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, **that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.**

Ex. 20:20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for **God is come to prove you**, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

Deut. 8:2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, **and to prove thee**, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Deut. 8:16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and **that he might prove thee**, to do thee good at thy latter end;

In His omniscience God knew that man would fail the test. So in His own love and mercy that plan included sending His Son as the author or captain of their salvation, their deliverer, to give them a second chance. That plan required that His Son, Jesus, suffer in order to redeem them from their sin and make it possible for them to become a part of His family—a family bound together by the love of and love for the Father. As *captain*, Jesus stands in the position of authority to

these “many sons.” As *author*, Jesus is the Creator or Originator of the salvation of these “many sons.”

It is also important to note that Jesus endured many sufferings—plural—including physical, emotional and spiritual. His sufferings positioned Him as the unarguable Lamb without blemish who alone could atone for man’s sin. He didn’t come to earth as a handsome man and live a privileged life that was free from persecution and sorrow. He was a man “of sorrows and acquainted with grief”; He was “despised” and scorned. (Isaiah 53:2-3) In spite of it all, He never yielded to the flesh; He remained without sin and obedient to the Father. He came into this world a man without sin, as did Adam; but very unlike the first man, He never yielded to temptation and died victorious over sin to become the captain of our salvation.

Heb. 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,
Heb. 2:12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.
Heb. 2:13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

“he that sanctifieth” = Jesus

“they who are sanctified” = those who accept God’s gift of salvation in Jesus

“of one” = of the same origin, the same Father [God]

Verse 12 is a quote from Psalms: Psalm 22:22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Verse 13 quotes from Isaiah: Isaiah 8:17-18 And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

The man Jesus is not ashamed of His earthly family; He recognizes them as originating from the same Father. He is proud to declare the Father to His new family, the church, those He has sanctified, and to praise the Father along with them. In looking at the Greek for the word *name*, it makes reference to “authority and character.” In every aspect Jesus declared the authority and character of God the Father in His life, ministry, death and resurrection.

Jesus was unswerving in declaring His faith in His Father and clear to those who followed Him that faith in Him was faith in the Father, seeing Him was seeing the Father, hearing Him was hearing the Father.

John 5:26-30 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is

just; **because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.**

John 10:30 **I and *my* Father are one.**

John 10:38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that **the Father is in me, and I in him.**

John 12:49-50 For I have not spoken of myself; but **the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.** And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

John 14:9-10a Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?

John 17:8 For **I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me;** and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

Side note: It's very interesting to me how often I have made connections to the writings of John.

Heb. 2:14 ¶ **Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

Heb. 2:15 **And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

"the children" = "the many sons," His "brethren," His family, "those who are sanctified," "the church"

"destroy" = render useless, make of no effect

Since those who had been set apart to be His family, His brethren, shared in flesh and blood, Jesus also took on flesh and blood—became human. Why?

- So that by His death He could destroy the one having the power of death, the devil.
- To deliver those held bondage by the fear of death.

"partakers of flesh and blood" – As I thought about this phrase, it hit me that all mankind share in flesh and blood from a common originating source; they don't, however, share soul and spirit. The soul and spirit are unique to each individual. Jesus shared in the same human lineage of flesh and blood through His mother Mary.

Man died spiritually when Adam yielded to the temptation of the devil and chose to disobey God. In that single act, the devil gained the "power of death." Because his eternal future with God was no longer guaranteed, physical death

became a very frightening prospect. The devil has been able to use that fear very effectively in his continual temptation of and deceitful workings among mankind. Those who trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior, however, are no longer held under that same bondage of fear. Though they may fear the process of dying, they have a hope for the future. They look forward to living in the presence of the Savior forever. Paul states it this way in his letter to the Romans.

Rom. 8:13-17 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

I almost missed the phrase “He...took.” It was His choice. I couldn’t help but think of my study in Philippians as excerpted below.

Phil. 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

“made himself of no reputation” and “He humbled Himself” – These phrases emphasize that Jesus came willingly in obedience to the Father to provide the sacrifice needed to redeem man. He affirmed that truth to His disciples during His time of ministry as told us by the Apostle John in one of my favorite chapters in scripture.

John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

John 10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

The Greek for *no reputation* emphasizes the truth that He *emptied* Himself; He lived in the flesh as a man; He lived in dependence upon the Spirit—just as we are supposed to. He didn’t cease being God; He just **chose** to live with the limitations of a man, albeit a sinless man indwelt by the Spirit—just as Adam was created and intended to live. (I know I am repeating myself, but I think this truth is very important.)

Heb. 2:16 For verily he took not on *him* the nature of angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.

My paraphrase—Jesus didn’t choose to partake or share in angelic nature; He chose to become like the seed of Abraham—human, flesh and blood. All the translations add the thought that He did this to help mankind; this thought seems to come for the Greek “took on,” which states, “to seize (for help...or any other purpose....).” This is in direct contrast to His dealings with the angels that rebelled.

Why the “seed of Abraham?” Because it was with Abraham that God made a covenant to bless all families of the earth.

Gen. 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land

that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and **in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

Heb. 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining to God*, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Heb. 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Why was it so important for Jesus not only to become a man, but to experience the sufferings of man? To prove Him as One who could relate to the sufferings of mankind and help them through their own sufferings. Since His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father, Jesus has been serving as our High Priest. The High Priest was the designated choice of God to represent the people before God and God before the people. Unique to any other high priest that served before Him, Jesus is worthy through his obedience to the cross to impute His righteousness to each child of God and provide unrestricted personal access to the Father for each one. Jesus is the fulfillment of all that the temple practices pointed toward. Jesus' sacrifice of Himself made atonement for the sin of man once for all for all who will accept it.

As our High Priest, He is merciful/compassionate and faithful/trustworthy. Jesus the man could relate to showing mercy and compassion as One who knew from His experience as a man its powerful effect in the life of a person. I could not help but think of the verse in Corinthians that declares the truth of this principle.

2Cor. 1:3-4 Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, **that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**