

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

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A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Study prepared by
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Text of Hebrews 2

THE STORY OF TWO VOICES: Resurrection Foundations

As Vice President, George Bush sr. represented the U.S. at the funeral of former Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Bush was deeply moved by a silent protest carried out by Brezhnev's widow. She stood motionless by the coffin until seconds before it was closed. Then, just as the soldiers touched the lid, Brezhnev's wife performed an act of great courage and hope, a gesture that must surely rank as one of the most profound acts of civil disobedience ever committed: She reached down and made the sign of the cross on her husband's chest. There in the citadel of secular, atheistic power, the wife of the man who had run it all hoped that her husband was wrong. She hoped that there was another life, and that that life was best represented by Jesus who died on the cross, and that the same Jesus might yet have mercy on her husband. (Used with permission)

She preached about her faith in Jesus even in the face of the world's agnosticism and doubt. She spoke not a word, but her voice was deafening in its silence that day. This is the first voice.

In like circumstances, what would we do? Would we go against the crowd, or would we go with the crowd? Peter, the second great voice, had to answer that same question, in similar circumstances. Peter, even though he had been walking with Jesus for 3 years, heard the cock crow the third time, before he caught himself.

How many times have we heard the cock crow and allowed our fear, or our un-surety to speak with its own voice? Each moment is really our own moment of reckoning. We may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, but we may be focused on the periphery and not on the man. We must build on the man that God sent, His Son. That is the opening message of Hebrews.

The nature of our mission will not allow for any thing less than a crystal clear declaration, made daily, of our faith and devotion to Jesus. Peter made a lesser choice than did Brezhnev's widow.

The simple truth is, is that convictions need solid foundations upon which they are built. It is just a fact of life. If we do not have solid convictions then, this building that we are building will crumble and fall. The responsibility of the preacher is to build such a wall. It is his first duty, as advocated by no less than Jesus himself in the Great Commission.

L.M. Ancell

The Voice of Hebrews 2

2:1 **For this reason** we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so **great a salvation**? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. 6 But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that Thou rememberest him?

Or the son of man, that Thou art concerned about him?"

7 "Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels;

Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour,

And hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands;

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. "

For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. 9 But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying,

"I will proclaim Thy name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Thy praise."

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

And again, "Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me."

14 Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. 16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. 17 **Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.** 18 **For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.**

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Fact:
Angels are as far above us as Jesus is above the angels, but He came here for our needs.



We are thus called to Him, not to just being religious.

How can we make a 'bigger' case for "Jesus" in our lives today?

Freedom from power of death and from slavery to sin

Contrary to conservative thinking, God does have a purpose and plan for the role of Jesus.

Notice The "Logic" Of Hebrews 2

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13 And again,

"I will put My trust in Him."

Jesus is the one that God proclaims and the one that He puts His trust in...

And again,

"Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me."

14 Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. 16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham.

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tempted.

Point One: The first voice says, **He is now the definition of our life / service ministry. He is not an aside!!!**

We must make Jesus apart of our 'Christian thinking

Why??

God had Jesus come down for a reason...

...to taste death for everyone

Jesus is thus the author of our salvation, --perfect in all aspects

If God focuses on Him so, shouldn't we do the same thing

Contrary to conservative thinking, God does have a purpose and plan for the role of Jesus.

Notice The "Focus" Of The Voice of Hebrews 2

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Point

Jesus is the one that God proclaims and the one in whom He puts our future ...

Jesus is the heart and soul of Christianity

Jesus is the one that God has given us as the perfect centrepiece of all Christian thought and all Christian thinking... He is the one we are to obey...

We must never let Jesus be ancillary to any thing, what so ever !!!!

Freeing ourselves from the primacy of rules

After going back and reviewing many of the preachers of the church in the 40's, 50's, 60's, and 70's, we can say that out of the traditions and preaching topics of all of the early restoration preachers came a maximum focus on doctrine and the plan, with an unintended minimalizing of Jesus himself. It still defines so much of the church today, particularly in the more conservative congregations.

First and Primary Practicality

Jesus knows and understands my struggles. He understands the difficulty of living under a purely legalistic system.

In fact, He came to liberate us from all forms of legalism, and to give us directions to avoid antinomian confusion.

Jesus gives us the mercy and the laws we need to survive and build on / with.

Point One: He is now the definition of our life / service ministry. He is not an aside!!!

In a world of religious wars, as we find ourselves today, with conflict after conflict built on the religious views of the Islamic Jihadists, in particular, being fuelled by their beliefs, we must return to Hebrews and the role of Jesus in our thinking. **We must stop giving a secular answer to a religious problem.**

Angels in Jewish Thought

1. The term angel in Hebrew is Mal'ah Elohim (messenger of God), Mal'ah Adonai (messenger of the Lord), or Ha'Qodeshim (the 'Holy Ones').
2. Names, such as Metatron, are given to specific angels in the Talmud, but only a few are actually named in the Biblical text. [Metatron is the chief of the chief of angels in Talmudic thought.]
3. Gabriel, Michael are two names that are found in Old Testament thought. [Cf. Daniel 8:15-17 and Daniel 10:13]
4. There is no evidence of any worship of the angels in the Old Testament, or in the Talmud. They may have been called on to help, to deliver messages from God, to serve God's will in the Old Testament, but they avoided being worshiped themselves. (c.f. the case of Lot)
5. Even though there is no mention of the worship of angels, they were held in high esteem by the prophets. They saw the angels as messengers, and or servants, of God Himself.
6. From the days of the Old Testament prophets on, the Jews saw angels as being very powerful voices of God. This was a point that was often visited in their worship when they remembered the Exodus and the coming of the death angel. He was not worshipped, but held in awe and fear. They then turned to worship the Lord, Adonai.
7. Maimonides, the great medieval Jewish philosopher and rabbi, said of angels, they are 'disembodied intellect', the movers of the universe. He was continuing the growth of the idea of angels that typified his era of Jewish Talmudic scholarship.

“...This leads [Aristotle](#) in turn to the demonstrated fact that God, glory and majesty to Him, does not do things by direct contact. God burns things by means of fire; fire is moved by the motion of the sphere; the sphere is moved by means of a disembodied intellect, these intellects being the 'angels which are near to Him', through whose mediation the spheres [planets] move... thus totally disembodied minds exist which emanate from God and are the intermediaries between God and all the bodies [objects] here in this world.

– *Guide of the Perplexed II:4, Maimonides*

8. ***So what. What does this mean for us today?*** Much of our current understanding of angels is Old Testament based. More is learned about the idea of angels in the Old Testament than in the New. **From the perspective of “The Letter To The Hebrews”, however, the logic given is one that says that Jesus was afforded a much higher place in God's eye than the angels, having a much more significant contribution to make than did the angels, therefore focus on Jesus, letting Him become the thought from which all other thoughts are produced.**

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. What does 'worship', fundamentally, mean to you? What comes to your mind first when you hear the term worship?
2. Is worship more of a completion of the required acts or a movement of the heart for you? Can it be both?
3. How can we use Hebrews 2 today interject a spirit of holiness into our worth-ship / a.k.a., worship?
4. Why would we need to be reminded, as Christians, of the wrath of God being visited upon those who did not listen and obey the word of God as delivered by the angels?
5. If God would punish those who did not heed the word delivered by angels, what would He do if we did not heed the word delivered by the Son? Why?
6. Why did Jesus ask the disciples not to announce Him as Christ in Matthew 17 and Luke 9? Why does Hebrews ask us to announce Him as Christ?
7. What do we need to do to improve our perspective of 'worship'? How can we be more like Viktoria Petrovna?