

Hebrews, Part 2

Key words: better (13x), perfect (14x in Greek), eternal

What Jesus gives us is **better** because it gives us **perfect** standing before Him, and because it is **eternal!**

The Jewish Christians addressed in Hebrews were second-generation believers, won by those who had actually walked with Jesus. They had been persecuted for their faith, and were being seduced by false teachers to take the easy road. They were at a standstill spiritually and in danger of going backwards (because you CAN'T stand still spiritually!).

Thousands of angels assisted in the giving of the Law, so the Jews considered them extremely important and superior. But in chapter one, the author gives us several quotations back-to-back from the Old Testament, in order to prove that Jesus is BETTER than angels. The author is not disrespecting angels, just contrasting the Old Testament with the New Testament – which is far BETTER! He says in chapter two that if they honored the commandments and exhortations spoken by angels, they should “give the more earnest heed” to the gospel!

GRACE IS A HIGHER LAW THAN LAW!

Hebrews 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;

There is an ironic twist in Hebrews chapter two – the author has just proved that Jesus is BETTER than the angels, and now he states that Jesus was made “a little LOWER than the angels.”

Hebrews 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.

This is the message of the gospel: GOD TOOK ON A HUMAN NATURE THAT HE HAD NEVER POSSESSED SO WE COULD TAKE ON A DIVINE NATURE THAT WE HAD NEVER POSSESSED.

Jesus took my sin and death so that I could take His holiness and life.

Hebrews 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.

“CAPTAIN” = “a pioneer, one who opens up the way for others”
“PERFECT” = “complete, effective, adequate” ... through SUFFERINGS!

Hebrews 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,

BRETHREN = same nature, same family, same blood, etc.

Verse 12 quotes Psalm 22:22

Verse 13 quotes Psalm 18:2 and Isaiah 8:18

(prophetic passages where God refers to the church as His “children”)

Hebrews 2:12-13 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

Hebrews 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;

Jesus took on every part of human nature, except SIN. God cannot die, but the body He created for Himself could die on the cross – and, by dying, actually destroy the power of death!

“DESTROY” = obviously not “annihilate” because Satan is still active – means “to render inoperative or of none effect” – that’s why we still have to resist the devil, because he will try to convince us that he has power

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

1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

We spent a lifetime in bondage, but Jesus destroyed our last enemy first! If He could conquer your worst problem, He can deal with any problem!

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

Jesus didn’t come to save angels – He came to save human beings. That meant that God who was higher than the angels had to stoop lower than His own heavenly creation to become a man.

Hebrews 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.

”BEHOVED” = “was needful”

Jesus is both a MERCIFUL and FAITHFUL high priest – He could never “break the rules” on our behalf, so He took our penalty on Himself!

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is FAITHFUL and JUST to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

FORGIVENESS only takes one, but RECONCILIATION takes two – just like a handshake takes two hands. God has extended His hand to offer forgiveness, but it takes our obedience to obtain reconciliation.

Forgiveness does not establish relationship, only reconciliation does - God forgave the world, but just because He offered forgiveness doesn't mean we are saved – we still have to choose to be reconciled!

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath **reconciled** us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of **reconciliation**; To wit, that God was in Christ, **reconciling** the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of **reconciliation**. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye **reconciled** to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

In the Bible, men are invited to be “reconciled” to God; that is, they must change their attitude and accept the provision God has made.

NOT ONCE IS GOD SAID TO BE “RECONCILED” TO US – IT WAS WE WHO NEEDED TO BE “RECONCILED” TO GOD! AND HOW DID GOD DO THIS? BY TAKING THE PUNISHMENT HIMSELF!

Colossians 1:19-22 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

Jesus became a man so He could feel exactly what you feel! He was tempted like you, but did not sin. Angels could never sympathize with us!

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

“SUCCOUR” = “to run to the cry of a child, to bring help when needed”