

# OpenTheo

## Hebrews 2



### Hebrews - Steve Gregg

In this lecture, Steve Gregg explores the second chapter of Hebrews, which focuses on Jesus as a superior revelation of God. Gregg emphasizes the importance of recognizing Jesus' authority as greater than that of Moses and the angels. He also discusses the role of signs, wonders, and miracles in confirming the truth of Jesus' teachings, but warns against becoming distracted by them. Ultimately, Gregg emphasizes the significance of Jesus taking on human nature in order to defeat death and overcome the exploitation of the devil.

## Transcript

Alright, we're turning to Hebrews chapter 2 and picking up the same theme in this chapter that was in chapter 1, which was that Jesus is the superior revelation of God over all others. In the opening verses of chapter 1, he contrasted Jesus with the prophets. In the Old Testament, God revealed himself and spoke through the prophets.

But now, he speaks through a superior messenger, his own son, who is the bright shining of his glory and the express image of his person. Then he also got into talking about the angels, because the angels actually had a role, at least in Jewish thinking, the angels had a role in the transmission of the law from God to Moses. Therefore, the law had a certain dignity that was beyond that of human leaders.

There were these super human beings, these angels that were involved in the giving of the law. Certainly, we ought to have respect for them. The problem, of course, with the readers was that they were perhaps giving a little more respect of a different kind than they should to the law, thinking they ought to maybe go back to keeping the law, perhaps even at the expense of following Jesus.

Not just that they'd add some Jewish practices to their Christianity, but that they would actually depart from Christ and rely again on the Old Covenant arrangements that God had made with their ancestors for their redemption and atonement and justification, all those things related to salvation. This is the way they were going, and he wanted to stop that. He's going to address various authorities in the first several chapters that are

connected in some way with the dignity of the law and point out that Jesus is far superior to them.

In the first chapter, he did begin talking about the angels in this way. He quoted quite a few Old Testament scriptures. First of all, he quoted two scriptures where Jesus in the Old Testament is called God's son in a unique kind of a way.

You are my son, this day I have begotten you. I will be a father to him and he shall be my son are the terms he used. He said angels never have had the dignity of having God speak that way about them.

Then he says that God commands all the angels to worship Jesus in verse 6 of chapter 1 and that the angels are transitory beings. They're not like God, not like Jesus. He makes the contrast by quoting from the Septuagint of Psalm 104.4 about the angels and then from Psalm 45 and Psalm 102 about Jesus.

Now Psalm 45, Jesus is addressed as God. God speaks to Jesus as your throne, O God. In Psalm 102, it is Yahweh who is being spoken to in the Psalm.

And yet the writer here tells us that this is addressed to Jesus. So the writer has really presented a very high Christology for us right here in the opening chapter. Saying that Jesus is first called the son of God and that in itself places him above all the angels.

But if you go further, even more exalted language is used of Jesus calling him God or even Yahweh in the Old Testament. And he says at the end there of chapter 1, 13 and 14, he says, But to which of the angels has he ever said, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool? To sit at the right hand of God, reigning, inheriting all things, including his enemies, is something that places him above all creation. And certainly above the angels which are part of that creation.

And he says in verse 14, about the angels, Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who inherit salvation? While we think of the word minister as being like a preacher, the word minister means a servant. It's an old word for servant. And the Greek word that's here means servant.

Are they not servants? Are they not serving spirits in the household of God sent forth to serve the interests of the people of God? Now he's going to continue in chapter 2 on this theme. But as I mentioned in our introduction, the writer from time to time goes off onto a digression. There's about five of these.

I think there are five exactly in my, the way I count them up. The beginning and end of these digressions is not always entirely clear, although the early ones are fairly clear. In this case, chapter 2, verses 1 through 4 is a digression.

And it's, and then he returns to this subject of Christ's superiority over angels in verse 5

and continues with it through the chapter. But these digressions or parentheses are occasions when the author feels that something he has already just said should remind the readers, or maybe it just reminds him of the need to beware of falling away or neglecting or failing to go forward. That is, failing to live up to the privileges of being a Christian, failure to appreciate what Jesus has accomplished.

And these parenthetical sections are mostly warnings against spiritual lethargy or immaturity, unnecessary immaturity, or even falling away altogether to, back to Judaism from Christ. And one of the shortest ones is this one right here in chapter 2. He says, And here we can see that that is a reference to the law. Every disobedience received a just reward of those who violated the law.

He says, Now, after this little section, he goes off and talks about the angels again and the contrast between Christ and the angels. But this section is called for because he is thinking about the angels and their role in the giving of the law. And that they are serious authorities.

If an angel of God comes and gives you instructions, that's not something you can take lightly. But he's saying, And yet that's what some of the listeners apparently were in danger of doing, maybe even already doing, because in chapter 10 he said, Already some of his listeners had stopped meeting with the Christian assemblies, probably because of the persecution they incurred by those associations. So there are some already moving away, as it were, from their open Christian profession.

And he said, Which is in chapter 10. He says, The same thought, only pushing it further. In Hebrews 10, 28, he says, That's the same thing he was saying, of course, there.

You know, every violation of the word given by the angels received a retribution and punishment. Well, here he says that punishment was death. If two witnesses would testify against you on a capital matter under the law, you'd be put to death.

But look at verse 29 of Hebrews 10. Notice, And this is just the opposite attitude of many Christians. Many Christians say, well, the law was a system where you really couldn't get away with something.

But we're under grace now, so you can get away with stuff. It's like you can get away with stuff under grace that you can't get away with under the law. Well, that's not what the writer of Hebrews sounded like.

It sounded like, you violate the law, you die. You violate Christ, it's even worse. Worse punishment is due.

And that's the same contrast that the writer is making in chapter 2, not quite so starkly. He just says, there was severe penalties for violating the law, though it was only given by angels. And therefore, how will we be guiltless? How will we escape if we neglect so

great salvation? Now, I would say a few things about these first four verses.

He says, we must give the more earnest heed to the things that we've heard. He means that we've heard in Christianity, the Christian things we've heard. We should give the more earnest heed to them, recognizing that the source of those things is so much more authoritative than the source, Moses himself or the angels that gave such dignity to the law.

Well, the greater dignity of Christ means that we should pay even more heed to him. And we should not drift away. So this is a warning, apparently, against the possibility of drifting away.

Some were already forsaking the assembling of the Christians. They weren't going there anymore. They were drifting away.

In the King James, it says, lest we should let them slip. But the Greek word actually is a reference to a ship that's anchor has lost its grip. And by stages, the tide is taking it out a little, perhaps at night while they're asleep, they're counting on the anchor to hold them there.

And the anchor is not working. And so they wake up in the morning, they're far from where they thought they were going to be because it's talking about a gradual drifting away like a boat without moorings. And by the way, later on, he's going to talk about the hope we have in Christ is like an anchor to the soul.

Chapter 6 is going to come up. So this is the imagery he's using. We're like on a voyage.

We're like people in a ship deliberately going a certain direction. However, if you're inattentive, a ship can drift off course. There are forces of nature that that will move the ship unless attention is given to preventing that.

Unless you've got a firm anchor, you're going to be moved by the world, by the environment. And so there is some analogy to sailing in the Christian life. And he says in verse two, if the word spoken through angels.

Now, I've been saying this is a reference to the law and it is. And there are two other places in the New Testament. I alluded to in a previous lecture here, where the intermediary role of angels in the giving of the law is mentioned by New Testament persons.

One of them is Stephen in Acts chapter 7. And near the end of his sermon, which got him stoned to death because it was so confrontational. He says in verses 52 and 53 in Acts 7, 52 and 53, which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? He's addressing the Sanhedrin, the same people who crucified Christ a few weeks earlier. He knew they were bloodthirsty people who'd kill people like him.

And he was not letting that make him hold back. He was bold. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the just one of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who having received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.

Notice Stephen seems to be confirming the Jewish tradition. There's nothing in the Old Testament that tells us that the angels were involved in giving the law, but I guess they were. I mean, New Testament writers confirm what the Jews had traditionally come to see as the angels' role there.

Stephen says that they had received it by the direction of angels, and yet they had not given it proper weight. In Galatians 3, Paul also confirms the role of angels in the giving of the law. In Galatians 3, verse 19, Paul says, What purpose, then, does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made, and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator, Moses.

So it was appointed through angels. So Stephen and Paul both affirm that. Now the writer of Hebrews is talking about the same things as the word spoken through angels.

He's referring to the law here. If that was steadfast, Hebrews 2.2, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, I want to point this out, that the rewards of the Old Testament, the writer says, were just rewards. There was capital punishment in the Old Testament for a lot of offenses that we wouldn't have it for in our society or in any secular society.

But though we read of very severe punishments for things in the Old Testament, and they kind of go against our grain, we think, well, I don't know, should a person be stoned to death for that? Well, the New Testament affirms, as the Old Testament does, that there's no injustice in God. Every law, every statute made is perfectly just. David in the Psalms rejoiced in the justice, the perfect justice of God's laws.

And it's not just the justice of the laws, but even the penalties. The writer of Hebrews says every disobedience of the law received a just penalty. So the writer confirms that severe as those penalties may seem to us, they are just.

Not only the Old, but the New Testament writers confirm this. And that means, of course, that the law is instructional. It's a schoolmaster.

It teaches us things we wouldn't know. If I think, well, I don't think a person who's an adulterer deserves to be stoned to death, well, when I find out they do, that tells me something. I learned something.

Oh, it's worse than I thought it was. I guess I've gotten a little soft morally on that issue. I guess I've gotten a little too permissive.

I've gotten, you know, if people think that stoning some of these people is unfair, it doesn't tell us anything about how unfair the law is. It tells us how our own perceptions have drifted from a sense of justice, because the law is just. God never authorized a penalty that was more severe than what was deserved.

And therefore, where the law's penalties go against our grain, it just shows our grain is misaligned. We're the ones who need to be recalibrated, because we are products, in many respects, of our own culture. And our culture tends to get more and more lenient, and we tend to be more and more lenient, too.

Now, we need to be gracious. I want to make it very clear. If I speak against being lenient, I'm not speaking against being gracious.

Lenience and graciousness are two very different things. A lenient father is one who lets his kids do anything they want. He doesn't care what happens to them.

He doesn't care about their moral behavior. He's just lenient. It's a form of apathy.

Moral apathy is lenience. God is not morally apathetic, as the law makes very clear. Very severe penalties for sin.

God takes sin very seriously, but he can be gracious. That is, though he takes it very seriously, he can forgive. That a person forgives doesn't mean they didn't care.

It doesn't mean they're apathetic. God is not lenient at all, and he proved that. But he is gracious.

And, of course, he can be gracious, according to Paul in Romans 6, because Jesus received the penalty for the sins of the world. And now God has an excuse that he may be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus, Paul says. So, these are just penalties, as harsh as they may seem.

And what they serve for us is to realign us with moral reality. Oh, I would have never thought that was that bad. It must be.

If God said it deserves that penalty, it must be just, it must be that bad. I've got to realign my moral thinking along with God. Say, that's not an okay thing.

Not even a little bit. For a child who strikes his parents to be put to death. We wouldn't do that in any society.

But that's the right thing. It's a just reward for that penalty, for that sin. Just penalty.

And, verse 3, he says, How shall we then escape if we neglect so great salvation? Now, this has been, since my childhood, known to me as an evangelistic text. It's the sermon, it's the verse you quote at the end of the sermon, when you're about ready to give the

altar call. Don't neglect to become a Christian.

Don't neglect salvation. But the writer is not talking to non-Christians. He's talking to Christians.

About the danger of neglecting the salvation that they have. Neglect means that you fail to respond in a way that you have some obligation to respond. Neglect means that you're defaulting on something that you had some responsibility for.

And to neglect your salvation for a Christian who's already a Christian and saved, to neglect their salvation means that there's responsibilities that come with salvation, which are being defaulted on. Those responsibilities are implied also later in Hebrews chapter 6, where he says in verse 9, But beloved we are... And this is in one of the other warning sections, the third one. He says, but beloved we are confident of better things concerning you.

Yes, things that accompany salvation. Though we speak in this manner. There are things that accompany salvation.

There are responsibilities and behaviors that accompany salvation. Some people think they have salvation, but they don't have any of the things that accompany it. So, since these things always accompany it, someone who doesn't have the accompaniments doesn't apparently have the salvation either.

What things accompany salvation? Well, it's very clear that love for God, love for your brethren, obedience to God, the general orientation toward Christ instead of self and the world. This is a change in a person that accompanies the phenomenon of salvation. But those things are responsibilities to maintain.

They come with the package of salvation, but they are our responsibility to manage them and to steward them and to make sure we don't let them drift or we don't drift from them. And if we neglect them, they do drift off. And as those, I mean, there's, we're neglecting our salvation and its responsibilities.

If we are not actively working out our salvation with fear and trembling, as Paul says in Philippians 2, he says this salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord. And that's the important thing because the Lord is here being contrasted with the angels. The law was given through angels.

Our salvation was spoken by Jesus who is, as he's pointed out, greater than the angels. But then he says, and it was confirmed to us by those who heard him. This line is often one that commentators, when they're trying to decide of the authorship, they say, well, this, this probably means that Paul didn't write the, the, this epistle because Paul wouldn't say that he was among those who had the word confirmed through those who heard Jesus.

Paul's very emphatic, especially in Galatians, that his gospel was not learned from people. It was revealed to him by Christ. And many commentators have pointed out Paul who would speak so strongly that he didn't get his gospel by second hand in Galatians would not speak.

So this man in this manner, he speaks of the gospel as something that he heard about from those who heard Jesus as if it was secondhand. Of course, um, to say it was confirmed by those who heard him doesn't mean that you originally learned it from them. I mean, I believe that Paul, I'm not saying Paul is the author, but I'm saying that Paul could have said this if he meant by that.

I learned what I learned about Jesus from personal revelation on the road to Damascus and in my private time in Arabia. Since then, I later went to Jerusalem and what I heard from God was confirmed to me by those who heard Jesus speak. I mean, they confirmed what I already knew.

In fact, in Galatians two, he says he went down to Jerusalem to see if he'd been preaching in vain because he wasn't sure that the other apostles would confirm his message, but they did as it turns out. So to say that we heard the word confirmed by those who heard Jesus would not, it's in itself be something that Paul couldn't harmonize with his emphasis on the fact that he had received the gospel at firsthand from Christ. It would still have been confirmed.

We often need confirmation from the brethren on things that God has spoken to us about, I think, and it's, it, to me, it's not, it's not certain to me that Paul couldn't have written that line. Um, though I'm not necessarily of the view that Paul did write this. He says, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy spirit according to his own will.

Signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy spirit. Now signs and wonders and miracles. Uh, Paul in one place in, uh, for second Corinthians 12, 12 refers to those things as the signs of apostleship.

If a person is working signs and wonders and miracles, Paul refers to that as the confirmation that they are in fact an apostle. And he speaks of himself in a situation where the Corinthians had some people among them that were denying that Paul was an apostle. And so in second Corinthians, he's going to great pains for several chapters to convince them that he is an apostle and they need to realize that.

And in that discussion in second Corinthians 12, 12 Paul says, truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance and signs and wonders and mighty deeds. Um, and so when the writer of Hebrews says that those who heard Christ, he means the apostles confirmed the word and they were further confirmed with signs and wonders and miracles. Uh, this is confirming also what the last verse of the gospel of



Mark says.

Mark 16, 20 says the apostles went everywhere, preaching the gospel of God, working with them, the Lord working with them, confirming the word was signs following. So the apostles went out, they heard Jesus, he commissioned them to God, preach, they preached and God confirmed their words with signs and wonders and so forth. And that was the apostolic proof of their, of their being sent from God.

Now we do know that signs and wonders were not only worked by apostles, which is strange because if Paul refers to them as the signs of an apostle, you'd expect that you wouldn't find them among people who are not apostles. But we do know that Stephen, for example, in acts six worked signs and wonders and he was not an apostle. Philip, who is not called an apostle, but evangelist also worked signs and wonders in Samaria and acts chapter eight.

so in addition to the apostles, we read of at least two other people in the first century church and there probably were others. We don't read about everybody there. Uh, there probably were others, but, um, you know who did signs and wonders.

And that was not showing them to be, um, apostles. I'm trying to think of one other place in acts. I think it's in chapter, it's either chapter two or chapter four where it says, um, yeah, acts, acts two 46.

This is the early church. It says then fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. When I first got baptized in the spirit and became aware of the supernatural back in 1970 in a sort of charismatic kind of setting.

And we actually began to see gifts of the Holy spirit in operation and the supernatural. I'd never seen previously in my Baptist upbringing, I would read the book of acts through that lens. I, I began to feel like in the book of acts, everyone was running around doing miracles and every Christian was healing the sick and doing miracles.

I figured that was the normal Christian life. Uh, and that's only because I was interpreting the book through my current experience and no doubt prejudices at the time. As I read the book of acts with a cooler head later in later years, I realized that the book of acts does not say that most of the Christians were going around doing miracles.

The apostles are the ones that are always seen doing miracles with very few exceptions. Steven, who is a Christian apologist and Philip who's called an evangelist, but most of the Christians are not said to be doing that in acts two. Here's what most of the Christians were doing.

First 42, they continued steadfastly in the apostles teaching and fellowship and breaking of bread and prayers. That was the life of the average church member. And then it says, and great with great power, the apostles went out and did signs and wonders.

Now is my opinion that signs and wonders have the primary purpose as Hebrews tells us of confirming the word that signs and wonders normally if they occur and they sometimes do in a ministry, it is to confirm that the word that's being brought is supernatural in origin. Unfortunately, though we read in second Thessalonians two that the man of sin comes with all kinds of lying signs and wonders through the power of Satan. So not only God can do signs and wonders, Paul did signs and wonders, but there are still people who doubted his apostleship.

So what is the role of signs and wonders in confirming the word? If the devil himself can do signs and wonders, confirm the ant, you know, the man of sin. Um, I think it's this, what the signs and wonders really do is demonstrate that there is something more than human power in the message. It may be God's power or demonic power.

There's other forms of supernatural besides God, signs and wonders simply mean it's not merely someone making this up. This is not just something a man came up with. There's some kind of supernatural backing to their message.

It might not be God though. In order to know whether it's God or Satan, you have to test it other ways. But one thing we can say, if people say, well, I don't think Paul's an apostle.

And some people say that. I encountered someone just recently on our Bible forum who said he only believed in the words of Jesus, thought that Paul messed up the gospel and was wrong. Uh, I like to point out to people like that.

Well, you know, that's actually how the other apostles felt about Paul initially too. We read in the book of Acts that when Paul first got saved and came back to join the apostles in Jerusalem, they were afraid of him. They didn't believe he was saved.

They'd heard his testimony. They knew that he said he'd met the Lord on the road to Damascus and he'd been away for three years. And when he came back, they knew his testimony, but they weren't sure they believed it.

They didn't want to trust him. He'd been an enemy and they weren't going to make themselves vulnerable. It says they were afraid of him.

They didn't believe he was a disciple. Interesting. They knew his testimony, but they didn't believe it.

However, they changed their mind. And what made them change their mind? Well, a number of things. One of them was the signs and wonders.

Now, true enough, if that's all there was, then he might be a man of sin. He might be energized by signs and wonders and the power of Satan, but that's not all they saw. But the very fact that they did see signs and wonders meant at least one thing.

That's as a starting point. He's not just making up a story. Something happened.

He does have supernatural something going on. Now, to decide whether it's of God or Satan, you have to test it by the various tests of the supernatural. There are such tests.

One of those is found in Deuteronomy 13. It talks about a supernatural phenomenon that actually apparently is not of God. Deuteronomy 13, one says, Moses is instructing the people.

If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, there's those signs and wonders again. And the sign or the wonder comes to pass. So this is, this is, this is really happening.

He says, I'm going to perform a sign and he does it. And it really happens. He can give you a supernatural proof that he's really from God.

It says, if that person gives a sign or a wonder by which he spoke to you saying, let us go after other gods, which you have not known and let us serve them. You shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord, your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul.

Interesting. I would have probably said if a person gives a sign or wonder and he's leading you after other gods, that's the devil. And it probably is, but Moses doesn't put it that way.

The devil's hardly even known in the old Testament. Moses says, the Lord is testing you. In other words, it may be the devil, but it's the Lord allowing the devil to test you.

The Lord is using this thing to see if you're going to be loyal to him or not. You're going to be dazzled by some kind of miraculous thing and wander off, off the path of following God. Then you weren't very loyal to God.

You failed the test. If someone can dazzle you and say, leave Jesus, leave Jesus or leave Yahweh and you'll go. Well, you failed the test.

God is testing you. See if you love the Lord or not. There's a lot of tests like that in the neo charismatic movement too.

A lot of strange phenomena. They're drawing people off to be distracted, in my opinion, from just discipleship, just from following Jesus. And it's not like these people are denying the Lord.

It's not like they're embracing another religion or something and saying, Jesus isn't Lord. In fact, they do believe Jesus is Lord, but they've been drawn off of the main course by things that they would call signs and wonders. Some of which I have to say are inexplicable.

I don't know where gold dust comes from when it lands on your page, your Bible in your meeting. I don't know if it's in the air conditioning ducts. Someone's put glitter in there or what? I don't know where it's coming from, but I can't explain it.

But even if it's supernatural, it doesn't mean it's from God. Just because it happens in a church doesn't make it from God. We remember the Toronto blessing of a few decades back.

It was characterized by what they called holy laughter. People just falling down and laughing in church, sometimes in the middle of the sermon. It's like the one thing that could preempt all other activities in these meetings was laughter.

In the middle of worship, in the middle of a sermon, in the middle of prayer, if someone starts laughing, that's the Holy Spirit. That's holy laughter. I remember people saying, what do you think about holy laughter? I said, I think holy laughter is a good thing, but how do you know if it's holy or not? Just because someone's laughing in church doesn't mean that's a holy thing.

The devil goes to church every time the doors are open. How do you know that's not the devil? Trying to distract. Just because something happens in the Christian community or in the circle of the church doesn't mean God's doing it.

And that's why Moses warned them, Israel's God's community. Some prophet or dreamer is among you and gives you a sign or a wonder and it comes to pass, but he's leading you away from Yahweh. God is testing you.

And I believe God still tests Christians in some of those same ways. So the fact that Paul did signs and wonders when he showed up back in Jerusalem from Damascus, doesn't mean that he necessarily was telling the truth, but it does mean one thing. It means that if anyone suspected that this story of Paul's conversion was just something he thought up as a trick, well, there's more to it than that because there's miracles being done through this guy.

The apostles were also convinced by his character, by what he's willing to suffer for Christ's sake. And of course, after they accepted him, there were even more evidences of what he was willing to endure and suffer and die for Jesus. I mean, the evidence that he's a true apostle is pretty convincing, but the writer of Hebrews says, that's how God has confirmed the Christianity to us is through those who heard him and who God bore witness, both through signs and wonders, various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Now the gifts of the spirit, unlike the signs and wonders is something that everyone has who's a Christian. Every Christian has a gift. Paul says in first Corinthians 12 and in Romans chapter 12, they're not all stunning gifts.

Not everyone does supernatural miracles and healings. That's that might be what we

think of as gifts. Or maybe some of them thinks of speaking in tongues or prophecy.

Those are gifts of the Holy Spirit, but there's gifts that are much less spectacular. Gifts of serving and gifts of giving and gifts of leading and gifts of showing mercy are all in the list. When people have those gifts and you don't necessarily see miracles through them, but, but God is doing something ministering through them.

And through the various gifts that God gives, it says, uh, that are given according to his own will. It makes it clear that the gifts of the spirit that each person has are distributed as God wishes. That doesn't mean that someone who'd like a better gift can't pursue it because God may wish to give them that further on down.

Remember Paul said, seek the first gifts are the best gifts, especially that you may prophesy. He said in first Corinthians 14, one seek the best gifts, especially that you may prophesy. So there's nothing wrong with seeking gifts that you don't have.

If by that you're asking God to give them to you, but if he doesn't give them to you, it's because he didn't, it was not his will. He gives Holy gifts, according to his will. In any case, all the things mentioned there in verse four are supernatural things.

Not all of them look supernatural because the gift of showing mercy like mother Teresa had might not look like she's doing anything miraculous, but if it's the spirit of Christ using her to bring Christ to the sick and to the world, even through her mercy that she shows, that's something that is the Holy spirit is doing too. Now, all these things, the writer says, confirm to us that what Jesus said is true. And what we've heard about what Jesus said is, is he really did say, because those who heard him have these signs and wonders to confirm it.

And having given that brief warning, not to neglect, not to drift. He comes back to his subject, the contrast between Christ and angels and verse five. He says, for he has not put the world to come of which we speak in the subjection of angels under subjection to angels.

But one testifies in a certain place, saying what is man that you are mindful of him or the son of man that you take care of him. You made him a little lower than the angels. You crowned him with glory and honor and set him over the works of your hands.

You have put all things in subjection under his feet. Now, this is a quote from Psalm chapter eight, verses four through six. And it's interesting that the writer, he was a someone and somewhere said this, which is very interesting when, when you think of our views of inspiration and stuff like that.

Like if you ever thought that, you know, these rise were channeling the Holy spirit and, you know, he's just putting the thoughts in their head. This is one of those places where you think, well, the guy couldn't remember where it was. You know, I remember

somewhere in our Bible, it says so-and-so a lot of times people say that.

And it isn't in the Bible. I've had people call me on the air and say, well, the Bible says such and such. I say, well, I don't think that's in there.

Well, it is. I said, well, where is it? It's somewhere in there. I'm, you know, that's not what the writer of Hebrews sounds like.

It's somewhere in there. It's in there somewhere. I, someone somewhere said this, well, he happens to be right in this case, he quotes accurately, but he doesn't cite, he doesn't mention who it is, who said it, but it was David who said it.

David was marveling that God would pay attention to man. When man is so small compared to the universe that he was contemplating when he wrote that song. Now in verse five, it says that God did not put the world to come of which we speak in subjection to angels.

Now the world to come of which we speak. Interesting. Uh, he hasn't spoken of any world to come previous to this, in this book, but it's assumed that Christians have heard Christian teachers speak about a world to come.

Now, the world to come is not a reference to heaven as near as I can tell. It's not. Uh, there is reference to a world to come in second Peter three and in revelation chapters 21, 22, it's a new heaven and new earth.

There's a new world coming and God's not going to put it under angels any more than he put the first world under angels. He put the world under man. When God made man originally said in, in a Genesis one 26, I guess it was, let us make man in our image and let us give him dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and the beast of the field.

Uh, that is God made, uh, a world. And he said, let's put this under somebody. Let's make somebody like ourselves who can run this thing.

And so he made humans to be the rulers. Now it's evident from scripture that the redeemed humans are going to be the rulers of the redeemed world. God is going to restore the world.

It says in Romans chapter eight, Paul says the creation is groaning and travailing, looking forward to the time when the sons of God are manifested because this creation has been subjected to vanity, not by its own will, but because of him who subjected it, but it will be delivered also from the bondage of decay into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. So Paul and Peter and revelation all speak of a time when the world that we are living in will be renovated, will be redeemed, will be renewed. It'll be, the curse will be no more.

What came upon the world through the curse in the fall will be gone. According to revelation 22, three, there will be no more curse and it'll be as it was before man sin, this world to come. It was not, the world was not originally put under angels, but man and the world to come is not going to be put under angels, but man.

And that's the point he's making here. And he quotes Psalm eight because that's a place where it is actually announced that God has put all things under man. Now the Psalmist is not talking about the new heavens, new earth.

He's talking about the present heaven's earth. He's marveling that man now enjoys even the dignity of being noticed by God. How is it that you are mindful of someone so small as me? When I look at the heavens, I'm not even sure how you'd notice the earth.

The earth is like a tiny little molecule in a vast sea of planets and stars and things like that. How would God even notice earth? And then on earth, I'm, I'm, you know, microscopic as an individual. There's 6 billion of us here on the earth.

How could God even see the earth? It's so small. And for that matter, how could he see any of us individuals on the earth? Well, one of the Psalms says that God humbles himself to behold even the heavens and, and the earth. God has dignified the earth as being a special place of his activity, including the place he visited and was crucified and resurrected.

And it's the place where he made man in his own image. And man is that creature that God has dignified. And David is constantly, how could that be? When you see these heavens so big, how could you, what is man that you're mindful of him or the son of man that you take care of him? Now I want to point out that in verse six, the word son of man is not a reference to Jesus, not directly.

Son of man in, in any old Testament passage is likely to mean a mere man. It's a Hebrewism. There are certain people who are addressed as sentiment.

Daniel was called son of man in one place. Ezekiel was called son of man about 70 times in the book of Ezekiel. God addressed Ezekiel as son of man, but the term means mere human, a son of dust, a mere man.

And it is used not only of Ezekiel and Daniel, it's used throughout the Psalms, throughout the prophets, throughout Proverbs, and really pretty much throughout the literature of the old Testament. In the Hebrew language, son of man was simply a phrase that meant a mere man. And Hebrew poetry like the Psalms, it was used in juxtaposition with the word man by itself.

And that's what's going on here. What is man? What is the son of man? It's the same question. And so although we are accustomed to think of the son of man as a term for Christ because he used that of himself in the Gospels, that's not how David is thinking.

David is not marveling at what God has given Christ. He's marveling at what God has given to us puny humans. What is man or the son of man that you'd notice him? You made him a little lower than the angels, crowned him with glory and honor.

That is by giving us dominion. You set him over the works of your hands. You've put all things in subjection under his feet.

The quote ends there. Now the writer in quoting it is saying, look, it's not angels, it's humans. Now, what's that got to do with Jesus? The writer's concern is to show Christ's superiority over angels.

But up to this point in these verses, he's only shown that humans are superior to angels. Although we're made a little lower than the angels, we actually have a greater dignity and destiny than the angels to rule over all God's creation. So he's only shown that man now holds a position distinguished from the angels.

But where he goes from here is to point out that Jesus is a man. Jesus didn't become an angel, he became a man. And therefore he tapped into the destiny of the human race in such a way as to bring it back up from the fall and to be the prototype man, to be the new Adam, to be the one who goes ahead into what the rest of mankind will be entitled to follow him to.

That is the destiny of ruling over the world to come that he has already mentioned. He's not given the rulership of the world to come to angels, he's given it to man. Just like David points out that God gave this creation, this world to man.

Christ is the first of a new creation. Christ is the first born from the dead. We're going to be born from the dead too in the resurrection.

We're going to follow after and we're going to reign with him. But the point here, it's as a human that Christ reigns, not as some angelic being. It's by being part of the race that God has already titled over to the human, the earth is titled over to the humans, not the angels.

And therefore it says, for in that, in verse 8, in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him, under man that is. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. That is not, the creation doesn't all obey God, obey man right now.

If you want to find that out, go out into a pond full of crocodiles and see how much they respect you. Not all the creation is yet viewed, seen as subject to man, but there is a representative man that has already, the creation is subject to him. He says, but we, we don't see all things put under man, but we do see Jesus who was made a little lower, the angels for the suffering of death.

Now he adds that David said that man was made a little lower than the angels. Well,



Jesus became a man, therefore becoming a mortal man, he himself took for a little while, a position lower than the angels. That's how humbling it was for him to become one of us.

He had to come down to a lower level, lower than some of his created beings in many respects. And, but we do see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. Now that's the term that David used in verse 7 of man.

Man has been crowned with glory and honor. When God made Adam and Eve, he crowned them with glory and honor by giving them dominion. Well, Christ has already gone and, and, and recycled that process.

He has been made lower than the angels, but he has already been crowned. He's already got dominion. And as such, he's the first fruits of the rest of us.

He is, he's dragging the rest of the human race with him, but he's the, he's the lead dog. He's the one who's pulling the rest of the team. And, we don't see yet everything under us, but we do see everything under Christ.

And that's the, that's the guarantee that that's going to be true of the rest of us too. He's the first fruits, the beginning of all this. So we see him crowned with glory and honor that he, by the grace of God might taste death for everyone.

Now in this passage, there's, there's, there are some things to, to say. This writer, he of Hebrews indicates that all things are put under man. Every last thing in first Corinthians 15, first Corinthians 15, verse 27 also quotes this, this verse in Psalm eight, six, Psalm eight, six, as you've put all things under his feet, the writer of Hebrews quotes that about man, Paul quotes it too.

In first Corinthians 15, 27, he says for, and he quotes that verse. He has put all things under his feet, quote unquote. Then, then Paul says, but when he says all things are put under his feet, it is evident that he who put all things under him is accepted.

So all things are put under man's feet, except God who put them under our feet. We'll never be above God or even on his level, but under God, we have had all things put under our feet. Now, Paul in first Corinthians 15 is actually referring to Christ, but you see what David's words apply to Christ and to man, because Christ is a man.

He's just the model man. He's the pioneer of a new humanity. He's part of the old humanity because he came through the human line.

That's why it was necessary for Jesus to be born in the old Testament. Christ appeared in theophanies sometimes, you know, wrestling with Jacob and in those kinds of situations where he kind of appeared for a little while and then went away. But in those cases, he never became a man.

He looked like a man. He took on a human like appearance, but he didn't come through the family history of man. He was not a son of Adam in those stories.

He was just come down from God with an appearance like a human, but he didn't have the history of a human. He does now because when Jesus came to earth incarnate, the whole history of the human race, Adam's DNA was in Christ. Noah's DNA was in Christ, just like it's in us.

You know, Judah's DNA, David's DNA was in Christ. Jesus tapped into the family tree and became part of the human race because he came to bring the human race back to what it was before it fell to restore the world into the world to come. And, uh, and he's a way ahead of us.

We don't see it yet that all things are under man, but we do see all things under one man. And he's the first man who's blazing the trail for the rest. And someday all the world to come, we'll be under our feet and we'll be under Jesus.

Of course. Now, verse 10 says, for it was fitting for him for whom are all things and by whom are all things and bringing many sons to glory to make the author of their salvation. Perfect through sufferings.

That is, he became a perfect author of salvation. He was perfect in other respects, obviously, but when we use the word perfect, of course, I mean, complete. Was Jesus perfect when he was born? Well, not exactly.

He couldn't walk. He had to grow and learn how to walk like most babies do. Could he talk? No, not perfect yet.

He was ideal. You know, an apple that's green in the early season, it's just appears on the tree is a perfect apple for that season, but it's not yet what you want it to be when you want to eat it. It still has to mature.

It's not imperfect. It's just incomplete. It's, it's, it's maybe as good as an apple at that time of year can be, but it still has some growing to do.

Jesus was born as good as a baby can be sinless, wonderful, but he had to grow up and growing up means suffering. And in his case, it meant becoming a savior. He was not a perfect savior.

He was, he wasn't complete until he had played a saving role. He, through the things that he was made perfect as a savior, as the author of salvation through sufferings. Now, a couple of important things about this verse.

One is it mentions in verse 10 that God wanted to bring many sons to glory. This thought is spoken in somewhat different words. In Romans chapter eight, Romans eight and

verse 29 says, for whom he did for whom he foreknew.

He also predestinated to be conformed into the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn of many brethren. Now God wanted to bring many sons to glory. He wanted Jesus to be the firstborn of many brethren.

God wanted a big family, wants a lot of kids. This is affirmed in these two places. Now what's interesting, these are parallel thoughts in Hebrews two, 10 and Romans eight, 29.

But what's interesting is what they're coming to. In Hebrews two, 10, it says he's bringing many sons to glory, but what is glory? And what's that look like in Paul's words? It's conforming them into the image of his son coming into glory means coming into the likeness of Christ. That's what glory is.

Paul said that Christ in you is the hope of glory. The glory of God that we are hoping in is that we will share in his glory and be like Jesus. In fact, a little earlier in Romans chapter eight, in verse 18, Romans eight, 18 Paul said, I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us.

The glory is the likeness of Christ will be revealed in us. In second Corinthians three, 18 Paul said, we with unveiled faces are beholding as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. We're being changed from glory to glory into that image.

He's using the word glory as a synonym for the image. In fact, that's kind of how it is in Hebrews one, three, where he says that Jesus is the express image of his person and the bright shining of his glory. The term glory and image used more or less as synonyms or at least very connected ideas.

So Paul says that God wanted Jesus to be the firstborn of a big family of many brethren. And therefore he's predestined that there'll be conformed to the image of his son. Hebrews two 10 says the same thing in bringing many sons to glory.

That's the image of Christ. God is bringing us into the image of Christ and it's taking place in our lives from glory to glory. As we are transformed from glory to glory into the same image of Christ.

That's God's goal. God's goal is not just to get heaven full of people. His goal is to get the world full of people who are like Jesus.

And therefore we're the ones who are becoming, we're the becomers we're becoming like Jesus. And that's his goal. But he had to make Christ go through the sufferings he did in order that he might perfectly provide the kind of salvation we needed, which required an atoning sacrifice, which will become the topic of later chapters.

Verse 11 for both he who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified as Christ and us are all of one. That is where of one nature, human nature. We're all humans.

He was not an angel. He was a man. He is sanctifying us.

And the one who's doing the sanctifying has is of the same nature as we are. He's a human. Christ is not an angel.

He's a man. For which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Why? Because he's one of us.

He's not ashamed to call you brother. Now this is an interesting claim that he's not ashamed to call us brethren. And the way the author defends this is by quoting three verses from the old Testament.

One of them is from Psalm 22. Now, you know, Psalm 22 is one of the most graphic messianic prophecies in the old Testament. That's the one about they pierced my hands and feet.

And that's the one that starts with my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? It's a Psalm about Christ. All the new Testament writers recognize Psalm 22 as being about Christ and quoted from it. Even Jesus obviously did because he quoted verse one from the cross.

And the writer here assumes that the speaker, although if you read Psalm 22, it might seem like the speaker is David. The writer of Hebrews assumes that the speaker is Jesus. And then the next two verses he quotes in verse 13 are quoted from Isaiah chapter eight, verses 17 and 18.

Now, if you read those verses in Isaiah eight, you'd think the speaker was Isaiah in the context of Isaiah eight. Isaiah is talking about himself and his children in Psalm 22. David appears to be talking about himself, but the author of Hebrews thinks that both verses are Jesus talking.

Now, this is something that we need to just take stock of. The new Testament writers do this a lot, especially with the Psalms, not as often with Isaiah, but they believe that many people in the old Testament were types of Christ. David, especially David is probably the most significant type of Christ in the old Testament, which is why the Psalms of David are quoted more in the new Testament than any other old Testament passages are.

When the old, the new Testament writers quoted from a vast number of old Testament books, but they quoted from the Psalms more than any other. And usually what they quoted was David talking about himself, but the new Testament is quoted as if it's Jesus talking about himself, very common phenomenon in the new Testament as here. Obviously the writer of Hebrews extends this to Isaiah.

Also, he apparently sees Isaiah as a type of Christ and therefore what Isaiah says about himself, he assumes Christ says about himself and these are the verses. What's he trying to establish? He's trying to establish that Jesus has deigned to come down and become one of us. He's not even ashamed to be put himself as it were as much on our level as to call us his brethren, rather than his subjects or some other term or slaves, though those terms are applicable to in other contexts.

The idea here is that he's, he speaks to us and of us as if he's down at our level, which he became by becoming a man. The Psalm 22 verse 22 says, and this is supposed to be Jesus speaking. I will declare your name to my brethren in the midst of the congregation.

I will sing praise to you. Now, if this is really Jesus speaking and I take it on the authority of the writer of Hebrews that it is, Jesus is then calling God's people, his brothers. He has become a son of God and the other sons of God and daughters of God are his brothers and sisters.

And that's what the writer of Hebrews is marveling about. That God would come down and become a brother to the human race. And he calls us brothers in that.

Another interesting thing that the writer of Hebrews does not bring out is the implications of the body of Christ. In the midst of the congregation, I will sing praise to you. Jesus says when the congregation is gathered, it's the body of Christ gathered and Christ is there as we're singing hymns as a gathered body.

Christ is in our midst singing hymns to God too, because our mouth is his mouth. Our hands are his hands, our feet are his feet. We are the body of Christ.

He is in our midst where two or more gathered. There is he in the midst. So he says in the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise from the congregation singing.

And so is Jesus singing and worshipping his father among us. Then he quotes Isaiah two successive verses, Isaiah eight 17 and Isaiah eight 18. One is I will put my trust in him.

If that's Jesus talking as the writer of Hebrews suggests, then Jesus has put himself in a level where he has to trust God too. Prior to his incarnation, he was the one that people had to trust. Now he becomes vulnerable like a man.

He becomes one who has to live by faith in his father, just like we do. That's him becoming one of our brothers. And then he also quotes Isaiah here.

Am I and the children whom God has given me now very clearly in chapter eight of Isaiah. Isaiah is talking about himself and his children. That's the topic of the chapter, but this is Jesus talking and we are referred to as the children that God has given him.

So this is not quite the same thing as calling us brothers. Now the writer wasn't able to

find very many old Testament passages where he could say Jesus called his brothers. He found one, but he came to another.

It's kind of close. Well, we're his children. That's kind of still part of the same race, still part of the same family.

And so he quotes these verses to emphasize that Jesus became a man, not an angel because the angels aren't our children. And we're not the children of angels, nor are they our brothers. They're different.

Okay. Now verse 14, and as much then as the children, he means the children alluded to in the previous verse, the children that God has given me, us have partaken of flesh and blood, which is another way of saying that we're human. The children that he wants to be brothers with are human.

He himself likewise shared in the same. That is, he also became human. He partook of flesh and blood so that he'd be the brother of those children who are flesh and blood.

He became a human. He took on human nature. Why? So that through death, he might destroy him who had the power of death.

That is the devil. So through death, Jesus destroyed Satan. Now the word destroy, *Katergaio* in the Greek K-A-T-A-R *Katergaio*.

G-E-O, *Katergaio*. The word is used quite a bit in the New Testament and translated a variety of ways, but it's lexical meaning is to reduce to inactivity. To reduce to inactivity is the meaning of *Katergaio*.

So through death, Jesus reduced the devil to inactivity, which is no doubt the same idea that Jesus talked about when he had bound the strong man and was plundering his house in Matthew 12. Or in Revelation, where the dragon is seen as bound with a chain and thrown into a pit. Reduced to inactivity.

Obviously, the writer of Hebrews does not want us to believe that the devil is completely inactive. Devil still is doing stuff. And therefore, there's some limited sense in which this is true.

What activity did Jesus reduce Satan from doing? Well, it's implied in verse 15. That through death, Jesus might reduce the devil to inactivity. And through death, Jesus might release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In plundering the strong man's house, he's taking his prisoners away from him who were held captive through the devil's exploitation of the fear of death. Remember, that's how the devil thinks about people. He thinks that he can control anyone with the fear of death.

When Job's property was taken from him, and God boasted that Job had remained faithful, the devil said to God, skin for skin, all that a man has, will he give in exchange for his life? In other words, a man will cave in if you threaten his life. The fear of death is the universal motivation to get people to do anything. The devil thinks.

And he had found it to be true for most people. Not Job. Not Jesus.

Hopefully not us. Because Jesus died to remove any basis for a fear of death. We're not afraid of death now.

And if we can't be afraid of death, or don't have to be, then we can't be in bondage. The bondage that the fear of death brings. If you're in bondage, it means you're a slave.

The devil can make you do anything. As long as he says, you do this or I'll kill you. You say, well, do your worst.

I'm not going to deny Christ. I'm not going to say Caesar is Lord. I'm not going to give up my faith at gunpoint.

Do your worst. You can't make me do what you want. I'm not your slave anymore.

I can't be in bondage if there's no fear of death in me. And that's what Christ delivers from. The activity of Satan in controlling people through the fear of death has been eliminated for those who are followers of Christ.

The devil can't do that anymore. He has been reduced to inactivity in that particular activity. Now, so Christ releases.

Verse 16 says, For indeed, he does not give aid to angels, but he does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Now, the aid he's talking about is the special aid that Christ brought to the human race by becoming one of us. He came to rescue us, to grab us.

The word give aid in the Greek is a word that means to take hold of. It might be seen as someone who's fallen into a pit, and you're above the pit, and you take hold of their hand and pull them out. Jesus coming to earth is like reaching down into the pit.

We're in to grab us and pull us out of the pit. That's the giving of aid. He didn't do that for angels.

For one thing, well, there were some angels fallen, but he didn't do that for them. But he does it for us. We're part of his family.

The angels are his servants, ministering spirits, but we are his kids. And he gives aid to his kids. He has become the savior of the seed of Abraham.

But, of course, the seed of Abraham, according to Galatians, is everyone who's in Christ.

But the last two verses of this chapter, and I'm not going to talk about them much because they anticipate a longer section, which comes up in chapter 4 and 5. He's kind of anticipating something here that he breaks away from and comes back to. In verses 17 and 18, he says, Therefore, in all things, he had to be made like his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to give aid to those who are tempted. Now, this idea of Christ becoming one of us so that he could experience our suffering and difficulties and so forth, so that he could be a compassionate high priest, this is the first appearance in Hebrews of the idea that Jesus is a high priest. He hints at it here, but he moves away from it.

In the next verses, he'll come back to it in chapter 4, verse 14. And actually, chapter 4, 14 through chapter 5, verse 2, makes the same point as these two verses, but he gets into it a little more. Just like in chapter 5, he mentions Jesus as a high priest after the order of Melchizedek, but he moves away from it and comes back to it with a vengeance in chapter 7. The writer sometimes starts to get ahead of himself.

He's got a plan to unfold his thesis, but he knows at the beginning what he wants to get into later. He sometimes can't help himself then to just kind of throw in a little of that, say, wait, wait, I'm getting ahead of myself here. Verses 17 and 18, he's getting ahead of himself a little bit, so he backs away from it until a more opportune time, and that more opportune time is going to be about a chapter and a half from now.

He'll get back to it. So we won't talk about this now as important as it is. I guess we can come back to it and reference it when we see that he's actually spending his time on that point.

And so at this point, we'll finish.