

The wonderful exalting narrative focusing upon the Son is interrupted here. We are earnestly warned to pay earnest heed to what we have been given to learn of Him, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is danger of slipping away from the wonderful revelations to which we have been treated. The supremacy of the Son, God the Son, the “out-flash” of the glory of God, the Creator of all things is real. Yet He, being eternal God, has become a Man, Son of Man. This Man is superior in rank and honor to all created beings including the angels. And He is the One chosen by God to provide for salvation to be offered to all men down through the ages on the basis of faith. Though we have been brought nearer to God than any other creatures in history, we are still likely to slip away from the Revelation given and turn to our own musings and rationalizing. Even some truly born again believers tend to go about supplanting the inspired word of God with human reasonings and speculations. This in the face of that given us so freely by the Holy Spirit who, through it, guides us into all truth.

But the warning here given is primarily directed to those who are not truly believers but have made a profession of Christ without true repentance. Calls like this are repeated throughout the epistle. God wants to see true hearted souls, not simply those attracted by the signs and wonders or the loving atmosphere abounding among the believers. These are like a non-swimmer teenaged cousin years ago. While enjoying the water holding on to the stern of a boat, he slipped away. He drowned. If he had been in the boat he would have been safe. He wasn't. I believe he personally was truly a believer, but the story illustrates the point of Hebrews 2:1. Some having made a profession will slip away, still in their sins, lost. Solemn faithful warnings are needed from time to time in local assemblies and throughout professing Christendom. So many are being lulled into a false security of some sort.

A well known part of the inspired word was given Israel through angels. When? In the wilderness three months journey from the slavery of Egypt. Mount Sinai was swarming with angels and the voice of the Angel of Jehovah spoke ten commandments directly to the people from the skies above them at Sinai.

Hebrews 12:25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: 26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

They heard and trembling they immediately desired a mediator. No more of this direct talk from God for them, thank you! (On the other hand, how foolish are the souls we occasionally hear of who defiantly challenge Him to speak to them from heaven or they will not believe in Him.)

The word Israel heard was steadfast. No wiggle room.

“Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.” Unswerving justice for every slip. No escape? No escape! But, yes, escape is available for any and all who avail themselves of the salvation provided for them to freely take. Judgement awaits those who dare defy God. And judgement awaits those who simply neglect the free offer. God grants free escape for the taking and free reminders for procrastinators up to the point of death (or rapture ;-). What grace! What a great salvation. Salvation from great consequences for a great load of sins provided through a great payment, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, to make it available to all. Take and live

This salvation was first made known to us by Jesus Himself while here on earth. There were some that heard Him, heard and heeded. They spoke to others, their families, relatives, neighbors. Then He went out preaching and sent them out too. God bore witness to the validity and truth of their message though “signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.” These were given to authenticate their message, a message full of mercy, grace and truth. We have ample validation recorded in the four gospels, the Acts and the epistles. (Note also that verse 2 seems to describe something then already past.) Why would some today feel they need to see more (or work more) signs? Won't they believe the record already preserved and presented in the inspired scriptures? Abraham says:

Luke 16 29-31 If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

We believers read and rejoice greatly in these wonderful signs and wonders recorded for our edification. The unsaved can marvel too and by faith accept the words of grace directed to their hearts. God graciously gave the signs according to His will, not to be called down at the whim of men for entertainment or admiration. If He gives signs it is not to those of religious Christendom. We and they have the inspired word of God in hand.

According to Strong's Concordance:

Signs: an indication or sign of Divine authority; especially ceremonially or supernaturally: — miracle, sign, token, wonder.

Wonders: a prodigy or omen:—wonder.

Miracles: force (literally or figuratively); specially, miraculous power (usually by implication, a miracle itself): — ability, abundance, meaning, might(-ily, -y, -y deed), (worker of) miracle(-s), power, strength, violence, mighty (wonderful) work.

According to Vines' Dictionary, a sign is intended to appeal to the understanding, a "wonder" appeals to the imagination, a power (dunamis, *dynamo*) indicates its source as supernatural.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit, see 1Corinthians 12:7-11.

Next we are taken forward in our thoughts to the world to come (or age to come) that has been already spoken of in chapter one. This age has already been subjected to a person, specifically to a Man, not any of the angels. This is prophetically declared in the Old Testament and should not be a surprise to the Jews. David prophesies clearly in Psalm 8 it will be man. Who? Adam? Abraham? No. Moses? No. David? One of the prophets? No. The passage quoted here clearly depicts a man. A little lower than the angels. Angels, as we have seen, are superior in rank and power to frail, mortal man. But in the original six days creation mankind was originally made, not greatly lower, but a little lower than the angels. Who was this? Adam and his descendants. Genesis 1 documents God endowing Adam with that authority and headship over all creation. He was indeed given authority over all the works of God's hands including men, but not angels at that time.

Genesis 1:26-28 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Other passages written later, after the fall of the first man,

speak again of that original man but look forward to a future man as well.

Job 7:17 What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?

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

Psalm 144:3 LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

Psalm 8 cited here speaks of this exalted position mankind has been given above the other beings and works of God's hands on earth and throughout creation. This is Adam and his descendants.

But now we see not yet all things put under him.

Not yet. What man had in name he forfeited to Satan when he listened to him and obeyed him instead of God. Now we, mankind, die. There is the Second Adam who has been born to a virgin, the promised Seed of the woman, Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23,25; Luke 1:31,34-35; Galatians 4:4. He has been crucified for the redemption and salvation of the descendants of the first Adam. He rose from the dead and ascended to God's right hand. He is now awaiting the go ahead from the Father to take up His reign over all. Adam was made a little lower than the angels and made susceptible and liable to death if he sinned. Through His disobedience he brought death upon all mankind, Romans 5:12. God's Son was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death so He could redeem all. Kneel!

By Ron Canner, November 19, 2008