



הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻם יְהוָה וְכָרְתִי  
אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־בֵּית יְהוּדָה בְּרִית

חֲדָשָׁה: אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵם בְּיוֹם הַחֲזִיקִי בְיָדְם לְהוֹצִיאֵם  
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר־הָמָּה הִפְרוּ

# The Book of Hebrews

יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֲרַי הַיָּמִים הָהֵם נְאֻם־יְהוָה  
נָתַתִּי אֶת־תּוֹרָתִי בְּקֶרֶבְכֶם וְעַל־לִבֶּם  
אֶכְתָּבָנָה וְהֵייתִי לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים וְהָמָּה  
יִהְיוּ־לִי לְעָם: וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד אִישׁ  
אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וְאִישׁ אֶת־אָחִיו לֵאמֹר דַּעוּ  
אֶת־יְהוָה כִּי־כֹלָם יֵדְעוּ אוֹתִי לְמַקְטָנָם  
וְעַד־גְּדוּלָם נְאֻם־יְהוָה כִּי אֶסְלַח לְעוֹנֵם  
וְלִחַטָּאתָם לֹא אֶזְכֹּר־עוֹד: ס

# Outline of Hebrews

- I. We Have a Definitive and Final Revelation in the Son (1:1-4)
- II. Don't Abandon the Son Since He is Greater Than the Angels (1:5-2:18)
  - A. The Son's Nature and Reign Show He Is Greater Than the Angels (1:5-14)
  - B. Warning: Don't Drift Away (2:1-4)
  - C. Jesus, Who is **Superior** to the Angels, Was, for a Little While, Made **Lower** Than the Angels in Order to Bring Many Sons to Glory (2:5-18)
    - 1. The **Big Picture** (2:5-9)
    - 2. The **Details** of Jesus Solidarity with Human Beings (2:10-18)

# The Big Picture (2:5-9)

*5 Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. 6 It has been testified somewhere,*

*“What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? 7 You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, 8 putting everything in subjection under his feet.”  
[Ps. 8:4-6]*

*Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

# The Big Picture (2:5-9)

- After a brief warning to his readers not to drift away (2:1-4), the author now returns to his focus on *Jesus* as the exalted Son of God
- So far in Hebrews the author has focused on the exalted *heavenly* status of the Son of God.
- In *this* section (2:5–9), the focus shifts to Jesus' *incarnation*, a passage designed to move the discussion from the Son's *heavenly* position to his *earthly* ministry.
- The author does this by introducing Psalm 8:4–6 which contains both elements of *exaltation* and *incarnation*, which then sets up his discussion in the *next* section (2:10–18) about the Son's solidarity with humanity.

# The Big Picture (2:5-9)

- In this text, our author presents the following sequence of ideas:
  - Human Destiny (2:5-8a)
  - Human Failure (2:8b)
  - The Solution (2:9)

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

<sup>5</sup> *Now it was not to angels that God subjected **the world to come, of which we are speaking.***

- What is meant by this expression “*the world to come, of which we are speaking*”?
- Where has he been speaking about it?
- It helps to recognize that the Greek word translated “*world*” here is not the common word used for “*world*” in the NT (kosmos).
- It’s the Greek word *oikoumenen* from which we get the word ecumenical. But *oikoumenen* has already been used once in chapter 1, namely in verse 6:
  - *And again, when he brings the firstborn into the **world**, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him’*
- It is possible to read the word “*world*” (*oikoumenen*) in that verse to refer to **this** world. In which case, verse 6 is talking about the **incarnation**. I think a slight majority of commentators actually take it in that way. But I think it’s a mistake.

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

<sup>5</sup> *Now it was not to angels that God subjected **the world to come, of which we are speaking.***

- The term *oikoumenen* simply means “the habitable world” as opposed to arid desert places.
- There are other places in the book of Hebrews where it **does** speak of Jesus’ entrance into the ***kosmos*** – where it is talking about the ***incarnation***. For example in Hebrews 10:5, we read:
  - *Consequently, when Christ came into the **world** [*kosmos*], he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me”*
- But in 1:6, judging by the ***context*** – the reference is not to ***this*** world and Jesus entrance into it at the incarnation, but it is a reference to Jesus’ entrance into the ***heavenly*** world, when he was raised to the right hand of God at his exaltation.

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

- 5 *Now it was not to angels that God subjected **the world to come, of which we are speaking.***
- This has certain implications as to how we interpret 2:5 – “*it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come*” – this is **not** simply referring to **this planet**, but the **heavenlies**, still to come – the whole sweep of the new heaven and the new earth – the heavenly dimension into which we have already begun to enter.
  - That’s why the church is seen as **already gathered** around Christ in the heavenly Jerusalem in Hebrews 12.
  - Christ has gone ahead of us, that’s his domain – all authority is his.



# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

- <sup>5</sup> *Now it was not to **angels** that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking.*
- So, in this verse we see a **further** reason for emphasizing the superiority of Christ to the angels.
  - Ancient Judaism held to the belief that angels had been placed by God over the nations of the world.
  - The basis for this belief went back to an interpretation of Deuteronomy 32:8, which referred to the boundaries of the nations as set according to the number of God's angels.
    - *When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, **he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God [=angels].** (Deut 32:8)*

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

- <sup>5</sup> *Now it was not to **angels** that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking.*
- Later, in Daniel 10:20 and 12:1, we see angels are designated as:
    - The “*prince of Persia*”
    - The “*prince of Greece*”
    - Michael is referred to as “*the great prince*” who watches over God’s people, Israel
  - But in the “*world to come*”, the author tells us, angels will hold **no** position of authority.

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

<sup>6</sup> *It has been testified somewhere,*

*“What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? <sup>7</sup> You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, <sup>8</sup> putting everything in subjection under his feet.” [Ps. 8:4-6]*

- To support his point, the author quotes Psalm 8:4-6 which says that the rule over the world was (ultimately) given to **human beings**, not angels.
- At first glance, the introduction to this verse seems a bit cavalier, “*It has been testified somewhere*”.
- The author is not showing ignorance, as if he doesn’t know what text he cites.
- Rather, the author wants us to pay heed to Old Testament scripture as **testimony**, as the word **spoken by God**, and so the human author remains unnamed, since **ultimately** it is **God** who is speaking.

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

<sup>6</sup> *It has been testified somewhere,*

*“What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him?”<sup>7</sup> You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor,<sup>8</sup> putting everything in subjection under his feet.” [Ps. 8:4-6]*

- The psalm from which these words are taken celebrates the majesty of God and the dignity of human beings.
- The psalmist considers the universe God created, the moon and stars, and reflects on the dignity of mankind.
- Human beings seem so trivial and insignificant in light of the grandeur of the world God has made, and so it causes the Psalmist to ask God: *“What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him?”*

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

- <sup>6</sup> *It has been testified somewhere,*  
“What is *man*, that you are mindful of him, or the *son of man*, that you care for him? <sup>7</sup> You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, <sup>8</sup> putting everything in subjection under his feet.” [Ps. 8:4-6]
- Many people have tried to argue that the expression “*son of man*” in verse 6 is a reference to Jesus since, in the Gospels, “*Son of Man*” is a Christological title.
  - But I think that misses the point. This is a **parallelism** in Greek – “*son of man*” is parallel to “*man*”.
  - Some have pointed to the fact that “*son of man*” is a Christological reference in Dan 7:13-14 – which it is.
  - But don’t forget “*son of man*” is also used 80 times in Ezekiel – when God addresses the prophet.

# Human Destiny (2:5-8a)

<sup>6</sup> *It has been testified somewhere,*

*“What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? <sup>7</sup> You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, <sup>8</sup> putting everything in subjection under his feet.” [Ps. 8:4-6]*

*Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control.*

- The question asked in verse 6 is now answered in 7-8.
- Who and what are human beings? For a limited period of time (“*a little while*”) they are made lower than the angels, but they are **ultimately** destined for “*glory and honor*”.
- Psalm 8 is a meditation on the creation account where human beings are made in the divine image and are summoned to rule the world for God – and that rule was intended to **include** rule over angels (cf. 1 Cor 6:3).

# Human Failure (2:8b)

<sup>8b</sup> *At present, we **do not yet see** everything in subjection to him.*

- The author of Hebrews reads Psalm 8 in light of man's fall into sin.
- Psalm 8 was, of course, written **after** the fall of Adam and Eve, a fall which brought frustration, futility, and death into the world.
- Human beings were **originally** destined **to rule the entire world for God**. Everything was supposed to be under the rule and dominion of human beings, but sin frustrated this rule.
- In verse 9, the author will clarify that **death** (which is due to sin) is what **thwarts** human dominion over the world.
- Therefore the glory designed for human beings has not yet become a reality in human history.
- Instead, human history is littered with the wreckage of destruction and death – a world gone mad.

# The Solution (2:9)

- 9 *But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*
- The destiny for human beings is now realized in the person of the **true** human being – Jesus.
  - Jesus is the “representative” man who has fulfilled the vocation intended for mankind.
  - He was made lower than the angels during his incarnation, but **now** he rules at God’s right hand and is therefore crowned with “*glory and honor.*”
  - The rule he enjoys is **because** of the death that he died, but the death that he died was **not** for himself.
  - Jesus’ death was for the sake of **others**, for he himself did not deserve to die since he was the **sinless one** (4:15; 7:26-27).
  - His death, therefore is a display of the “*grace of God.*”



# The Solution (2:9)

- 9 *But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*
- We are told that by God's grace, Jesus "*might taste death everyone*".
  - The word "*taste*" here means "experienced," signifying that Jesus faced death in its fullness with all its horrors.
  - The subsequent context will clarify that by "*everyone*", the author does not mean everyone **without exception**, but rather everyone **without distinction**.
  - In the next section we are told that Jesus' death frees:
    - The sons brought to glory from futility and the fear of death (2:10)
    - His brothers (2:11-12)
    - The children given to him by God (2:13), i.e., all those who belong to Abraham's family (2:16).

# Class Discussion Time



# \*Class Discussion Time

- One of the themes that the author of the book of Hebrews grapples with is the “not yet, but already” nature of “*the world to come*”. Jesus is seated at the right hand of God, and yet, “*At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.*” Are there times and circumstances in your life where you feel this tension? You face a difficulty in your life and pray for God to give you relief, knowing that God is sovereign. Sometimes he will give the answer for which we pray, but many times the answer seems to be, “not yet.” Tell us about a time you have experienced this and how it was you processed the difficulty you were facing.
- Christians around the world and throughout history have suffered from, in many cases, very intense persecution. We now are beginning to feel the beginnings of Christian persecution in **our** country. Such suffering gives rise to the question, why, at times, does God not answer the cries of these persecuted believers as they are beaten, raped, imprisoned, or killed? Why does he not always answer the prayer for healing, staying the hand of death? Why does he sometimes refuse to respond to our desperate call for help? In light our text today, how would you answer this question?