

Hebrews

Jesus is Superior to the Angels

The clear implication of this fact

Chapter 2:1-18

The impact of Jesus's superiority to angels

- Implication for paying attention to what He expects from men (especially Jews), 2:1-4
 - Jesus' superiority to angels is not contradicted by His humanity, 2:5-9
 - Jesus' superiority to angels is not contradicted by the fact of His suffering, 2:10-18

- **Heb 2:1** Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away *from them*.
- **Heb 2:2** For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;
- **Heb 2:3** how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard;
- **Heb 2:4** God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.

- **Heb 2:1** **Therefore** we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest we drift away *from them*.
- **Heb 2:2** For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? which having a beginning and an end, was confirmed by the Lord, was confirmed by angels, by the voice of the Lord, by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.
- **Heb 2:3** how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? which having a beginning and an end, was confirmed by the Lord, was confirmed by angels, by the voice of the Lord, by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.
- **Heb 2:4** God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.

“Therefore...”

- The implication that follows flows from ch.1
- The implication is in the form of a conditional (“if/then”) statement

Logic rule for analyzing a conditional statement

A conditional statement is a statement that can be written in the form “If P then Q,” where P and Q are sentences. For this conditional statement, P is called the hypothesis and Q is called the conclusion.

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Intuitively, “If P then Q” means that Q must be true *whenever* P is true.

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Conditional statement #1

P The “word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.” (2:2)

Q You must give heed to what is said. (implied)

The “word spoken through angels” [as God’s agents -- SDC] is the Law given by Moses

- The writer does not prove this point, it would be acknowledged by any Jew, and was used as evidence of Jews having “let it slip” by Stephen in Acts 7:22-53, esp. 37-38 and 53
- Moses himself testified to the angelic influence in the giving of his Law, Deuteronomy 33:1-2 (LXX adds “...at His right were angels with Him...”)
- Notice an oblique reference In Psalms 68:17
- It is a point made by Paul in Galatians 3:19

“Drifting away” from or “not giving heed” to this resulted in sure consequences

- **Transgression** is from *parabasis* referencing a deliberate act as in Numbers 15:32-36
- **Disobedience** is from *parakoe* referencing an act which results from a failure to pay attention as in Deuteronomy 17:12; 27:26
- ***All Jewish history testifies to the truthfulness of this conclusion***

“If P then Q” means that **Q must be true whenever P is true.**

Conditional statement #2

P Jesus is **greater than the angels**, (chapter 1) and has expressed His expectations.

Q You must give the **more earnest heed** to the things that were heard [that came from Jesus -- SDC], lest haply we drift away *from them*.(2:1)

Implication of Conditional Statement #2

- [From God] **“first spoken by the Lord”** (the one greater than the angels),
 - Confirmed to have been spoken by the Lord by those who heard Him
 - Apostolic re-statement confirmed by God through:
 - Signs
 - Wonders
 - Manifold powers
 - Gifts of the Holy Spirit

“Drifting away” from or “not giving **more heed” to this will result in surer consequences**

“The aorist tense verb “neglect” speaks of a completed action, a finished act. It does not say one sin causes a saved man to be lost. In the light of the rest of Hebrews, it does say that one who quits Jesus finally and completely will be lost. If the state of mankind was such that only the Son of God could save them, then what hope can there be for any who neglect the salvation which He offers?”

Garreth L. Reese

“If P then Q” means that **Q must be true**
whenever P is true.

***Jewish argument #1 to show that P is not true and
therefore we don't need to give heed to His words***

Jesus' humanity proves that He is not
greater than angels

The question is whether Jesus' humanity contradicts P

Heb 2:5 For not unto angels did he subject the world to come, whereof we speak.

Heb 2:6 But one hath somewhere testified, saying, *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him?*

Heb 2:7 *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honor, And didst set him over the works of thy hands:*

Heb 2:8 *Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet.* For in that he subjected all things unto him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we see not yet all things subjected to him.

Heb 2:9 But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, *even* Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every *man*.

Jesus Remains Superior to Angels Since His Humanity was Only Temporary

- Jesus did, in reality, lay aside his position and become a man (2:7a), an honorable position since man is "over the works of thy [God's] hands (2:7b)
- As a man, Jesus is not superior to the angels (this is His observable position when Hebrews is written, 2:8)
- But God did "subject the world to come" to Jesus and this is the position of which we speak (2:5)
- Jesus' humanity allowed Him to taste (and defeat) death (2:9)

“If P then Q” means that **Q must be true**
whenever P is true.

***Jewish argument #2 to show that P is not true and
therefore we don't need to give heed to His words***

Jesus' suffering proves that He is not
greater than angels

The question is whether Jesus' suffering contradicts P

Heb 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to **make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**

Heb 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Heb 2:12 saying, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, In the midst of the congregation will I sing thy praise.*

Heb 2:13 And again, *I will put my trust in him.* And again, *Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me.*

Heb 2:14 Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

Heb 2:15 and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Heb 2:16 For verily not to angels doth he give help, but he giveth help to the seed of Abraham.

Heb 2:17 Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Heb 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, **he is able to succor them that are tempted.**

Jesus' Suffering was for the Purpose of Freeing Man from Death

- Jesus did die, not to be conquered by death, but rather to destroy death (2:14)
- Angels were never captive to death (2:16) and thus did not need help – the “seed of Abraham” did.
- No angel ever freed man from death as a “propitiation for the sins of the people” (2:17)

Jesus' Suffering was for the Purpose of Freeing Man from Death

- No angel could “succor those that are tempted” (2:17-18)
- Having destroyed death, **Jesus remains superior to the angels**