

# THE STAND

## PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE HEBREWS CHAPTER 2



### Chapter 2 Commentary

You've probably heard the phrase, "Like father, like son." This phrase could easily describe the nation of Israel in Jesus' day. God had established the nation of Israel to be His chosen people in the world, but they always seemed to stray from His way. Throughout history, each generation seemed to fall into the footsteps of their forefathers, falling a little farther away from God.

The writer is well aware of Jewish history and warns them that history has a tendency to repeat itself. Hebrews 2:1 says, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it." He's making it very clear that they have fallen away from God in the past and urges them to pay close attention to this final revelation of God. They are reminded that if the law is true, every sin must be atoned for or receive a just punishment. Any good Jew would know this punishment would be death. The salvation Christ offered was their only escape. For these people drifting away meant going back under the Jewish law and the sacrificial system instead of following Christ and accepting Him as their ultimate sacrifice.

Tales and fables were common in the 1st century world; how could the people know the message of Jesus was true? To begin, Jesus delivered the message Himself and some of the audience may have even seen Jesus first-hand. As well, others in their community testified through the power of signs, wonders and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit among them was an unmistakable testimony to Jesus Christ.

To help these people understand the message of Christ, the writer reminds his audience of God's original plan for man. Genesis 1:27-31 says that from the beginning God put everything on earth under the subjection of man. This authority and privilege was not given to the angels the Jews held in such high esteem, but to man who God created in His own image. To help explain, the author recounts a Psalm David wrote about this very

subject. Upon first reading, it is easy to assume the Psalm is written about the future Messiah. After closer study we find David's subject is actually man.

#### Understanding Man's Place

God put everything on earth under man's subjection. Hebrews 2:8 suggests there are things that we do not yet see that will be subject to man. Understanding this concept is essential if we are to really understand the message of Hebrews and see Jesus as the perfect Man.

In Genesis, after God had given all things in the world over to man, He said it was good. In fact, God said it was VERY good. (Gen. 1:31) The world became VERY good in God's eyes when man took his rightful place in creation. However, it was no surprise to this former Jewish audience that man was not in this place of authority described in Genesis. Since the fall and exile from the garden, things had changed.

For years, God spoke of redemption and restoration of His people. The prophets announced that a Messiah would one day come to rule and restore God's people. The Jews of the day expected this Messiah to be a strong military leader that would overthrow the oppressive Roman government. They did not expect a Messiah that waged war with compassion and love. However, Jesus did just that. He did not come to abolish sinful man from the world, He came to offer salvation for all men, even the evil dictators. It would take a perfect man to reclaim the world for mankind. It took Jesus.

### W Drift Away Hebrews 2:1

Hebrews 2:1 is the first of five occurrences in Hebrews where language of drifting away from God is used. Understanding the language, context, and Scripture itself, will allow us to interpret these verses correctly.

While Hebrews was written to encourage the new Jewish believers of the day, we must not assume the entire audience already believed in Christ. There were likely seekers eager to learn more about Jesus and needed some answers before completely submitting to Christ.

This was a call for these people to pay closer attention to Jesus' message and the Scriptures (indicated in v2), which have actually pointed to Christ all along.

The writer is urging those who have not accepted the message of Christ not to drift away from the reality of God's final revelation. We should not assume by the context or the word usage that the term "drifting away" is ever questioning eternal security.

### Psalm 8



Take time to read through Psalm 8. Notice the Messianic symbolism used in the Psalm that is written about man.

So, Jesus, being fully Man, was made for a little while lower than the angels, just as mankind was in the beginning. He came to live the perfect life and reclaim the world for mankind. Christ was now crowned with the glory and honor David described in Psalm 8.

It was fitting, the writer says, that Jesus be perfected through suffering. Jesus had to share in the suffering of this fallen world to become this perfect sacrifice. He could not have been our sacrifice had He not become a man Himself. An angel could have never been this sacrifice; they were created with a different purpose.

The exciting news for these new Christians and for us today is found in verse 11. We see that both the one who makes men holy (Jesus) and those who are made holy (sinful men) are in the same family, and those made holy are considered brothers with Christ. This is where everything started to make sense for these new Christians. This Jesus was not just the Messiah, but He was a brother in flesh to all mankind. These Jews had a deeper understanding of brotherhood than many of us today. They realized that as a brother you were also an heir to the father's inheritance.

The writer quotes another Psalm as proof of their new family status. Psalm 22 is actually a lament from one of David's times of struggle, but it has Messianic foreshadowing throughout. In fact, the opening words of this Psalm are even quoted by Jesus in His last moments alive. David's cry is to declare the name of God to all his brothers even after times of struggle. Jesus' claim is the same. After times of struggle and restoration, He will declare those who believe in Him as His brothers in front of the Father.

Christ shared in our humanity, defeated Satan, and restored the relationship between man and God that has not existed since the fall. He became our representative before God and made atonement for our sins that no man or law could provide.

Many of us have never understood why Christ had to come and die as He did. We accept that Jesus' sacrifice was what God intended. The reality of the restoration of mankind often gets lost in our 21st century understanding of Christ. This reality should actually excite us and propel us to a new understanding in our relationship with God. We are given a higher calling than the angels. As brothers and sisters, we share in the inheritance of Christ.

While, for now, we live in a fallen world, we no longer fear death because Jesus has defeated it and has established a Kingdom that is not of this current world. Revelation says when the new heaven and new earth are created, Christ will come down from Heaven to be with His people. God loves us so much that even before the fall He has been working to restore the relationship He desires to have with mankind. This is love.

## How to Study

As you read and prepare for this week's lesson, take time to realize the vast connection between the Old and New Testaments. Don't simply look at the Old Testament as history, but the initial revelation of God. From the very beginning, God has been revealing Himself and pointing us to Jesus.

It may seem like this connection between the Old and New Testament is not important today as non-Jewish Christians, but it is. Understanding the full revelation of God will make you fall more in love with God. Seeing God's great plan from the beginning expands the picture we have of His love and allows us a greater understanding of Christ. Your faith in Christ will increase as you understand the depth of God's purpose for your life.

## Using Scripture

Committing the Word of God to memory has great benefits. Having the Word committed to mind and heart will strengthen us and allow us to find peace in God during uncertain times. This week, work to commit Hebrew 2:18 to memory. Next time you are tempted, you can remember to take rest in Christ.

*Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.* -Hebrews 2:18



## Psalm 22

Read Psalm 22 and notice the Messianic similarities between David and Christ.

God gave His people a picture of redemption to come.

David was a great man and his kingship modeled the Kingdom to come, but he was not a perfect man and his earthly kingdom failed.

This is a reminder of our imperfection and magnifies our need for Christ's perfection.



# Personal Study Questions

The purpose of these study questions is to help you get into God's Word. We hope that through a personal encounter with God's Word, He will reveal His Truth and allow you to understand His story first hand.

1. In Hebrews 2:3-4 what actions do we see that confirm the salvation of Christ?

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2. Take time to read Genesis 1:27-31, Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2:5-8. These passages give us a picture of man's place in God's created order. What new realities surface when reading these three passages?

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3. The Jewish nation continually drifted away from God. Read Exodus 15:22-27 and Exodus 16:1-21. What were some circumstance that may have caused them to drift away. Did God ever abandon them?

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4. Read Psalm 22. David wrote this Psalm in response to his own struggles and his reconciliation with God. However, the Psalm is full of foreshadowing of Christ. Write down the verse numbers of Psalm 22 where you see this foreshadowing of Christ. To start, Psalm 22:22 is directly quoted in Hebrews 2:12-13.

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5. Throughout chapter 2, how do you see Jesus experience life as Man? Where do you see Jesus succeed where normal men have failed?

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