

and hast appointed him over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.” - Psalm 8:4-6. This is one of the most often memorized of all of the psalms, as it relates God’s greatness to His love for His people.

Hebrews 2:12 “I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will sing thy praise.” - Psalm 22:22 This is a psalm of David, written during the his persecution by King Saul.

Hebrews 2:13 “I will put my trust in him.” ... “Behold, I and the children whom God has given me.” - Isaiah 8:17-18

Bibliography

Additions

Keil, C.F., and Delitzsch, Franz Julius, *Psalms*, Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, Eerdmans, 1980 (reprint of the 1871 edition).

“So Great a Salvation”

Lesson 2, for Sunday February 25, 2001

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son...” Hebrews 1:1-2a, NAS

“For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away *from it*. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” Hebrews 2:1-3a, NAS

The Outline

A. The Finality of Christianity (1:1 - 2:18)

1. God’s final revelation in His Son (1:1-4).
2. Christ better than the angels (1:5-14).
3. First admonition: Gospel vs. Law (2:1-4).
4. Humiliation and glory of the Son of Man (2:5-9).
5. The Son of Man, the Savior and High Priest of His people (2:10-18).

The Argument

God spoke in various ways to our fathers through the prophets, but now he has spoken his final word to us in his Son, his perfect representative. The Son of God is greater than any prophet; He is greater even than the angels, as the ancient scriptures abundantly testify. It was through angels that Moses’ law was communicated, and its sanctions were severe enough; how much more perilous must it be to ignore the saving message brought by no angel, but by Jesus, the Son of God!

Jesus, the Son of God, is the one to whom the dominion of the world has been committed for all time to come. As the eighth psalm teaches us, God has put everything under the dominion of man, and it was the nature

of man - *our* nature - that the Son of God took upon himself in order to win back this dominion. To do this, He had to conquer the devil who had usurped it, and rescue those whom the devil had held in bondage. He conquered the devil when in death He invaded the realm of death. It is because Jesus is truly man, moreover, that he qualifies to serve as High Priest on His people's behalf. He knows all their trials from His own experiences and therefore can give them the timely help they need.

The Key Words

ἄγγελος -- We transliterate this as "Angel." But if we translate it instead, we see that it means one sent to bring or tell a message, i.e. an envoy. An envoy stands in for, or represents, someone of higher authority.

υἱός -- Son, i.e. an immediate male offspring, if used in the normal sense. In this case, the second *person* of the Trinity. This refers to our Lord Jesus Christ.

ἀρχιερέως -- High Priest, i.e. chief, principal, and most important intermediary between God and man. Jesus Christ is our High Priest.

The Quotations

The writer's extensive use of the Old Testament to back up his argument would seem to indicate that the readers he intended to persuade would have been expected to revere and trust the Old Testament as both correct and authoritative. This points toward an audience of Jews who had become Christians, rather than gentile converts.

Note that the series of quotations is from the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, rather than directly from the Hebrew Old Testament itself. Greek was the trade language of the Roman Empire at this time, and thus the Septuagint was as useful in that day as an English translation is to us.

Hebrews 1:5a "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten Thee" - Psalm 2:7. This is a prophetic psalm, with both near-term and far-term fulfillment in mind. In the near term it speaks of David and his descendants, but in the far term it speaks of Messiah. It is thought that Psalm 2 was used in coronation ceremonies of the kings of Judah.

Hebrews 1:5b "I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to me" - II Samuel 7:14. These words are those given in a vision to Nathan the Prophet, in response to David's wanting to build a temple for the Lord. See II Samuel 7:1-17 for the background, and then 7:18-29 for David's response of faith.

Hebrews 1:6 "And let all the angels of God worship Him." - Psalm 97:7 A psalm of God's power and dominion.

Hebrews 1:7 "Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire." - Psalm 104:4. Wind and fire are ephemeral things, i.e. transient and not permanent.

Hebrews 1:8-9 "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy companions." - Psalm 45:6 ff. Note the *permanence*, in contrast to the previous quotation. According to Keil, this psalm was considered by the Jews to refer to Messiah. Once again, as in much of prophesy, there is both a near-term fulfillment (i.e. a marriage hymn written for a specific king, who was of the family of David, and thus the earthly family of Jesus) and a far-term fulfillment (i.e. speaking of the promised Messiah).

Hebrews 1:10-12 "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands; they will perish, but Thou remainest; and they all will become old as a garment, and as a mantle Thou wilt roll them up; as a garment they will also be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end." - Psalm 102:26-28. Once again, note the *permanence* as opposed to the transitory nature of even the earth itself.

Hebrews 1:13 "Sit at my right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet." - Psalm 110:1. Note that Jesus quoted this exact text to the Pharisees in Matthew 22:41-46. He applied the text to Himself. This psalm was understood for centuries before the time of Christ to refer to Messiah. It links Jesus Christ's role as both High Priest and King.

Hebrews 2:6-8 "What is man, that thou rememberest him? Or the son of man, that thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little

while lower than the angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honor,