

Hebrews 2

Last time we went through the first part of Hebrews chapter 2. And in chapter 2 Paul was continuing to discuss the same topic that was his initial focus, the same thing that he started to go into in depth in chapter 1. And that subject was the angels. The angels, and how they relate to the kingdom. And the contrast between them, and the Son, and how he relates to the kingdom.

And so in chapter 1 Paul showed that the angels were called to be ministers, but that it was the Son of God, a man, who was called to reign, called to be the Lord of the whole earth. And in chapter 2 he continued to make that same argument, that it wasn't the angels unto whom the world to come had been put in subjection. But that it was *man* to whom God had given the dominion, that even though man was made a little lower than the angels, it was still him that would be set over the work of God's hands. That indeed God would put all things, including the angels, under his feet.

And Paul acknowledged what is obvious to us, that currently the angels aren't subject to man, all things aren't subject to man. We don't see that. But he pointed out that we do see Jesus, the man, who has been made heir of all things, crowned with glory and honor. And not only that, but we see that he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. And so he became a man, not just so that he could procure the inheritance to himself, but so that he could sanctify his brethren, and bring many sons unto glory, being perfected as the captain of their salvation.

And so Paul quoted some OT passages that showed that throughout Christ's sufferings, throughout his death, burial, and resurrection, his thought was of his brethren. Of those sons that he would bring unto glory, that would get to participate with him in that kingdom.

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

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

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

Verse 14

Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

And so Jesus became flesh and blood, so that he could die, and that through death, he might destroy the one that had the power of death, the devil.

Now, its interesting how he says that. He told us that the angels don't have power over the world to come. But the devil does have power over something. He has the power of death.

You see, if the angels were going to get the kingdom, Christ wouldn't have needed to die. They don't live in fear of death. They aren't condemned to mortality like man is. In fact, it is the devil that had the power of death.

But in order to redeem men, Jesus needed to destroy him that had the power of death.

You know, the devil offers people all kinds of things, but he doesn't control the inheritance, he doesn't have power over the world to come, he can't offer you that. The only thing that he has power over is death. That's the only thing that he can offer you.

And so Paul has been talking about Christ's death here, and up to now he's just been pointing out that Christ was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, and declaring that he tasted death for every man. But he hasn't yet actually given us a specific reason why that was necessary, why Jesus had to taste death for every man. He's related that to many sons being sanctified and brought unto glory, by Jesus becoming one of us and dying, but he hasn't actually gone into the details of why that was necessary. And this is the first verse where he does.

And it isn't what we might expect. We expect him to immediately begin talking about Christ taking away our sins. And he is going to talk about that, he is going to begin talking about the priesthood in just a few verses. But that isn't what he brings up first, that isn't what he says in this verse.

In this verse he said that Christ died, the reason that he gives, is that he might destroy him that had the power of death, the devil.

The first reason Paul gives that Christ had to die to bring many sons unto glory, was so that he could destroy him that had the power of death.

You see, we said that you could say that from the moment that Jesus was conceived he was a worthy heir of all things. That to achieve that, to become an heir of earth, of Israel, of the throne of David, he didn't have to die.

And that's true. But that's not quite the whole story.

Because there was somebody else who had power, that if he wanted to have all power, he had to wrest that power away from them. And that person was the devil. The devil had power that Jesus Christ needed to take away from him, if he was going to deliver his brethren, and if all things were going to be subject unto him.

The devil had the power of death.

And that is something that man certainly didn't have. As it says in

Ecclesiastes 8:8 There is no man that hath **power** over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he **power** in the day of **death**...

And so there is no man that has power in the day of death. So if the power of death didn't belong to us, who did it belong to? It belonged to the devil. Once you were dead you were basically in the devil's hands. And even if you were somebody who God counted righteous, you were still under the custody of who? Who carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom? The angels. And so once a man was dead, his spirit was subject to the devils and the angels. He was ultimately under the dominion of the devil. The devil, who had the power of death.

And so the first reason that Christ had to die, in reference to the kingdom, was so that he could destroy him that had the power of death. So that he could take away the devil's dominion over that.

Colossians 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and **power**:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 And having spoiled principalities and **powers**, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

And so Christ became the head of all principality and power, when he took from the devil the power of death, when after he died on the cross he spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them in it.

Now, the Bible doesn't give us specifics about how that happened, it doesn't give us specifics about how the devil's dominion was operated, about how hell and Abraham's bosom were operated, and how hell is operated to day. Because that's really not relevant. What's important is how to avoid hell.

And so the Bible doesn't give us specifics on this, but when Jesus died, he went to hell, and spoiled the principalities and powers. He stripped the devil of the power of death, so that he now answers to Jesus. So that the power of death is now ultimately subject to man. It is subject to Christ.

Verse 15

Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

And so Jesus died to take the devil's power, and through that, to deliver them who were in bondage through a fear of death.

Now, we know that when Christ spoiled the principalities and powers that he freed the spirits that were in prison. But that's also symbolic of him freeing the living as well. Those that through fear of death were subject to bondage.

Now, when Paul is talking about bondage here, we don't have to guess what he is talking about. He's already talked about bondage in his other epistles, particularly Romans and Galatians. And in those two epistles he uses the term consistently, to refer to the Mosaic law.

Galatians 4:24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to **bondage**, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in **bondage** with her children.

So he makes it very clear in Galatians that the old covenant was a covenant of bondage.

And in Romans 8 he says some very similar things to what he just said here, about relating this bondage to the fear of death.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and **death**.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is **death**; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is **dead** because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, *they are the sons of God*.

15 *For ye have not received the spirit of **bondage** again to **fear***; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, *that we are the children of God*:

17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together*.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with *the glory which shall be revealed in us*.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the **bondage** of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

So do you see how Paul was expounding this there? How there was a spirit of bondage, which caused us to fear; that the law resulted in death; and how through Christ's death and resurrection we've been delivered from that, and made joint-heirs with him.

So when he says here in Hebrews that through his death Christ delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage, that is what he's talking about. He's talking about the number 2 reason that Christ had to die. And once again it isn't to cleanse our sins. Paul still hasn't gotten to that yet. Instead it still has to do with the dominion, and delivering man from being subject to the angels in any way.

And this really encompasses two ways. The way that he's already talked about, that in death we were under the power of devil. And in addition, a second way. That because of a fear of that, because of a fear of death and its consequences, the Hebrews were in bondage to the law. The law that said, "this do, and thou shalt live." The law that they had to do, or else they would die. And so because of a fear of death, they were in bondage under that law. A law that was given by the disposition of angels.

And so do you see how that works in here? In death, man would fall under the power of the devil, but the only way to avoid untimely death was by keeping the law, the word of God spoken by angels. And so man, on both sides of the grave, was subject to the word of angels. They weren't subject to us. We were subject to a power structure, that put them over us. We were in bondage under the law.

And by dying and rising again triumphant, Christ not only made a way to destroy him that had the power of death, the devil, but also delivered the living, his brethren, the saints that are in the earth, from the fear of death, and from the bondage to the law, the word spoken by angels.

Because as he said at the start of this chapter, the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. And so because of a fear of death, they were in bondage to the law, and if they transgressed it they would not escape.

But now the word of the Son has come, which is also sure and steadfast. But what the Son has done is he has overcome the word spoken by angels, and taken it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. He's delivered us from bondage under the law, because he's delivered us from a fear of death. He died, and rose again. So there is no need for his brethren to fear death, because they, like him, will be resurrected. And thus they are no longer in bondage under the word of angels. They are free to follow the word of the Son instead.

Now, once again, Paul doesn't go into the specifics of how that happened here. But he does talk about it in his other epistles. Let's take a look at Colossians chapter 2 again.

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, *which is the head of all principality and power*.

And so he points out how Jesus is the head of all principality and power, just as here he talked about the devil having the power of death, and Jesus destroying him.

And he's going to connect that to delivering us from the law, just as he did here:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

And by circumcision there he is talking about Christ dying.

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 And having *spoiled principalities and powers*, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

And so in death he blotted out the ordinances of the law, and spoiled principalities and powers.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

And so he warns against keeping of holydays, or of worshipping angels. The principalities and powers have been spoiled, the word of the angels blotted out.

20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

And so there he explains why we aren't subject to ordinances, to the word spoken by angels. We aren't subject to them because we, along with Christ, are dead from the rudiments of the world.

The reason why we have no fear of death, is because it is impossible for us to die. We have no fear of death, because we are already dead with Christ, and raised again with him. And so we have no need fear it, it has already happened to us, and Christ has overcome it. And so we're not subject to the law. We're not subject to the law, because the law is only for living people. The law doesn't cover dead people. That's obvious, because the punishment for breaking the law was that you died. It was specifically for people that are alive, and want to stay alive, as manifest by the fact that it said, "this do, and thou shalt live." And so the law has no jurisdiction over dead people. The word of the angels in the law had jurisdiction over living people, but once you were dead, you were no longer subject to it. You were then under the power of death, which was controlled by the devil. There were two separate jurisdictions.

But now, Christ has come, and he's destroyed him that had the power of death, he's spoiled principalities and powers, so that man now has control of the power of death, so that that is now in Jesus's hands. And so angels and devils no longer have jurisdiction there, man has that. And they don't have jurisdiction over the Christian either. Not because the word spoken by angels has been utterly abolished. Paul's point here actually assumes that it is still in full force for those that are living in the world. If you are alive, the law still applies to you. The word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience receives a just recompense of reward. Those that are alive are still in bondage under the law, under the elements of the world. What few of them realize is, that it is no longer the devil that has the power of death. They have a fear of death, but they think that they are just fearing the devil. They're wrong. It isn't ultimately the devil that has the power of death anymore. No, it is much worse than that. It is Jesus, it is the Son, it is the LORD, the brightness of God's glory, the light which no man can approach unto.

But the Hebrews aren't in bondage under the law anymore. They should have no fear of death anymore. Because Jesus delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He took the handwriting of ordinances that was against us out of the way. How? By nailing it to his cross.

Now, what was nailed to Jesus's cross? Was the law nailed to Jesus's cross? No. Jesus was nailed to his cross, right? His body was nailed to the cross. Suffering under the curse of the law. And so he took that out of the way, he took the law out of the way, by his body, under the curse of the law, being hanged on a tree. And yet, in defiance of the law, rising again the third day. He took the law out of the way by no longer living under it. By dying, and getting out from under the law.

And that is the same way that we are free from the law, that the Hebrews are delivered from that bondage. They are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world. They are no longer living in the world, and so they are free from the law, because the law doesn't apply to dead people.

Colossians 2:11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

The Christian has put off the body of the sins of the flesh, just as Christ did. Paul makes it clear throughout his epistles that we are baptized into Christ, made one with him, and made partakers in his experience, so that like him we are dead to sin, dead to the law, but alive unto God.

And we won't go into the mechanics of that in depth right now. You can go through Romans 6, 7, and 8, and other passages in Paul's epistles to learn more about that.

But what Paul does say here is that he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one. That we are Christ's brethren. Remember how he said that Christ died that he might taste death for every man, in verse 9?

And so he has become partaker of flesh and blood, and we become partakers of his death, resurrection, and inheritance. And through that death he destroyed him that had the power of death, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He made it possible for man to be heir of all things, to no longer be subject to the angels, to the word of the angels, or to the power of the devil. He freed us from a fear of death, because he now holds the power of death. And he freed us from bondage to the law, because in him we are already dead to it, and alive unto God, not living in this world in the flesh any longer, but living after the Spirit.

Verse 16

Hebrews 2:16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

So Paul is still talking about angels, still talking about angels and man, and how through Christ man is crowned with glory and honor. That's still been his subject through all of this.

And he's just pointing out once again how Christ did these things for man, how he obtained these things for man, how he is a man that is crowned with glory and honor.

Christ didn't become an angel and take over the ministries that God had given to the angels. He took not on him the nature of angels. Like we said before, if he had, he wouldn't have been heir of all things. To become heir of all things, he needed to take on him the seed of Abraham. And so he did. And in doing so he restored to man the dominion, so that one day all things will be put under his feet. Though we don't see it yet, we do see Jesus, and we see that he's delivered us

from the devil having the power of death, and from bondage to the word of the angels in the law. And so one day we will judge angels, instead of them judging us. We see that Christ has made the way for all things to be put under his feet, that man indeed might be the heir of all things.

Verse 17

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

And so now we've finally gotten to that other, most famous reason that Christ had to die. We finally get to the priesthood. And Paul has saved that for last because that is the one that he's going to go into in depth in the rest of the book. I don't think he's really going to talk much about these other two reasons that he's given that Christ had to die. He's already dealt with them in his other epistles. But the thing that is most significant to the Hebrews, is this thing of the priesthood. So that's what he's going to be focussing on.

And so Paul gives us another reason that Christ had to die, that he had to go through that suffering. In addition to these other reasons, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, it became him, in bringing many sons unto glory, it was needful that he suffer, so that he could be a merciful and faithful high priest. Not just so that he could be heir of all things, not just in relation to the kingdom was it necessary, but also so that he could be a faithful high priest, also in relation to the priesthood.

And of course he points out the obvious, that to be a high priest he needed to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. And he's going to go into that in depth later.

But his focus here is actually not that. His focus here is on him being a high priest that is like his brethren, so that he might be merciful and faithful in things pertaining to God.

Verse 18

Hebrews 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

So Jesus needed to become a man, and a mortal man, a man who could have a fear of death, and experienced suffering and death, so that he could be a merciful and faithful high priest, that could succor them that are tempted, because he himself has suffered temptation.

And we know how the Bible says that he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.

But here when it is talking about temptation, he's not just talking about temptation generally. He's talking about the temptation of Christ's suffering and death. He's talking about the same subject that he started out with here. Remember how he started off chapter 2? He started off by asking the question, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" So there is a temptation for the Hebrews to neglect their salvation. To attempt to avoid suffering persecution and martyrdom. There's a temptation for them to neglect their salvation, to not follow the word of the Son.

And Paul is giving them encouragement, based on the fact that Jesus totally understands that. He went through that same temptation. He was tempted to neglect the word of salvation, he was tempted by suffering and death to not complete the work that the Father had given him. But he did it anyway. He suffered being tempted, and tasted death for every man, so that we don't have

to. He understands what the Hebrews are going through, in terms of persecution. And so he's able to succor them that are tempted.

And to succor somebody, that just means to give them aid, to help them, to strengthen them. It is "to provide assistance and support in times of hardship and distress."

And so Christ has suffered, and he's able to succor them, to comfort and aid them, in their suffering.

And remember, in the first century, the Hebrews were experiencing a great deal of persecution and suffering. And so it would have been tempting, it would have been easy for them to neglect their salvation. To just let these things slip. But Paul encourages them with the thought that Jesus became a man, one among his brethren, who like them has suffered, and is able to succor them in their time of need.

And so Paul has given us three reasons that Christ had to die, three things that he accomplished by that.

First, he had to do it that he might destroy him that had the power of death, the devil. He had to do it so that he could spoil principalities and powers, that they might be subject to him, instead of man being subject to them.

Second, he had to do it to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He had to do it so that his brethren might be freed from the law, and pass from death unto life. No longer in bondage under the word spoken by angels, because they no longer live the rest of their lives in this world, to the will of man, but walk in the Spirit, to the will of God. And finally, he died so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest. So that having tasted suffering and death, having been tempted himself, he might be able to succor them that are tempted. To aid and encourage his brethren in their suffering.

And so it behoved him to be made in all points like unto his brethren, that as he became partakers with us in death, we might be partakers with him in life, and heirs of the inheritance. That man might be given a calling higher than the angels.