

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

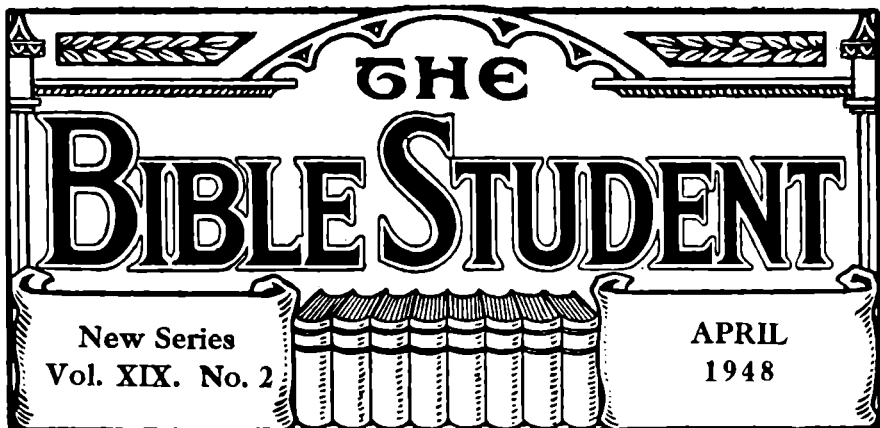
<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Bible Student* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bible-student_01.php



"The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light"

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FROM FUTILITY TO FULNESS	49
NOTES ON HEBREWS	54
TO WHOM DOES PALESTINE BELONG?	60
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH	65
THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS	70
THE WORD OF GOD AND THE MAN OF GOD	78
THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.—2	88
EXEGETICAL STUDY OF COLOSSIANS	92

Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

NOTES ON HEBREWS

BY W. E. VINE, M.A., (Lond.)

A 'Biography' of Christ in Ch. 1

The first chapter of Hebrews provides a wonderful biography of the Son of God, though it is not given, of course, in historical order; that would be foreign to the method of Scripture. The biography extends from eternity in the past to eternity in the future.

(1) In the eternal past the Son of God was "the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance" (v. 3).

(2) By His Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, "He made the worlds (or rather, the ages, that is, the successive periods of time), v. 2. This marks His work at the beginning of time and onward.

(3) He laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of His hands, and He upholds all things by the word of His power (vv. 10 and 3).

(4) The next event in the biography is His Incarnation, and this is what is set forth in the statement "Thou art My Son, This day have I begotten Thee" (v. 5). This does not refer to His Resurrection, but to His Birth, and this is made clear in Acts 13:33, where the A.V. has wrongly added the word "again". That is not in the original. What is mentioned there is that God raised up Jesus in the nation, fulfilling His promise to the fathers, just as He raised up David (v. 22). The addition of the word "again" wrongly suggests His resurrection, whereas that fact is set in contrast in verse 24 to His being raised up by His birth and growth in the nation.

(5) His life on earth in the days of His flesh is described as follows: "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity" (or rather, "lawlessness"), anything contrary to the will of the Father (v. 9).

(6) His Death receives mention in that He "made purification of sins" (v. 3).

(7) Immediately following is the record of His Ascension and Session on the Throne: "He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (v. 3; cp. v. 13).

(8) The next event is His Second Advent. Attention has been drawn above to the correct position of the word "again" as in the R.V. Verse 5 speaks of His First Advent, His Incarnation; verse 6 of His future Advent, when, as the "Firstborn", He is again brought into the world. Then, not "a multitude of the heavenly host", but "all the angels of God" will worship Him.

(9) His formal enthronement as King is pointed out in verse 9: "God, Thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows", *i.e.*, those who have occupied the throne of Judah from David onwards. The anointing is figurative of the ceremony of His enthronement.

(10) Following this will be the establishment of His Millennial Kingdom: "The sceptre of righteousness (or uprightness) is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom" (v. 8).

(11) After the thousand years of His reign the heavens and the earth which now are, will be done away by His power: "As a mantle shalt Thou roll them up, as a garment, and they shall be changed" (v. 12).

(12) Finally, His eternal future is pointed out: "They shall perish; but Thou continuest. . . . Thou are the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (vv. 11, 12).

Chapter 2:1-4. Analysis

Christ's superiority in the Gospel Message, to the part taken by angels in the giving of the Law.

(A) *The Salvation and its greatness.*

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. | The duty to be done. | v.1 |
| 2. | The danger to be averted. | v.1 |
| 3. | The reason,—a contrast. | v.2 |

(i) The recompense for transgressing the Law.

(ii) The recompense for neglecting the salvation.

(B) *The Salvation and its proclamation.*

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Spoken by the Lord. | v.3 |
| 2. | Confirmed by the Apostles. | v.3 |
| 3. | Testified to by God. | v.4 |

- (i) By signs.
- (ii) By wonders.
- (iii) By manifold powers.
- (iv) By gifts of the Holy Spirit.

N.B.—The First Series of Admonitions (vs. 1-4).

Each of the seven series of admonitions is not only based on the doctrine that precedes, but introduces that which follows. The Apostle, as in the first chapter, shows the essential glories of Christ as the Son of God and His supremacy over angels. He has also made clear that a new era has been introduced by the mission and work of the Son of God, and His exaltation at the right hand of the Throne. The former age thus having been brought to a termination, there has been also a change in one respect in regard to the angels. In the former age they occupied an official position. Verse 1 is to be connected with ch. 1:2. The high dignity of the Messenger demands the more earnest heed to the message.

The language of this verse is taken from Deut. 4:9, "take heed to Thyself, and keep Thy soul diligently lest Thou forget. . . ." The warning is forcefully applied here in the metaphor of drifting away from a thing. The same word occurs in Prov. 3:21 (LXX). The Prophet foretold by Moses in Deut. 18:15 had come. He who refused to hear Him would be cut off (Acts 3:23). The nation had rejected Him and judgment was impending. Yet salvation was proclaimed, a "so great salvation"! It was proclaimed by the very One who had been refused and put to death, and was confirmed by His followers, who had listened to His voice, God confirming their ministry "both by signs and wonders and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will".

The Word of the Law, spoken through angels "proved steadfast; and every transgression received a just recompense of reward." How impossible to escape the doom of Divine judgment if "so great salvation" in Christ were neglected!

NOTES

In *verse 1* the "Therefore" looks back to the Deity and glory of the Son of God as mentioned in the preceding chapter, and the fact that through Him God has spoken (1:1). The great dignity of the One who speaks demands the greater heed. The writer includes himself in the warning he gives lest haply we drift away from them. The verb so rendered signifies to be in a state flowing by, or passing by, an object requiring close attention, and so failing to give due heed. The same word is used in the Septuagint of Isaiah 44:4 of running water. There might even be a danger of passing by unconsciously.

In *verse 2* the word spoken through angels was that given at Sinai. See Acts 7:53 and Gal. 3:19. In the former passage Stephen mentions the agency of the angels so as to emphasize the majesty of the Law. The writer here in Hebrews mentions their agency so as to show the *inferiority of Law to the Gospel*, owing to the inferiority of the agents through whom it was administered. In the Pentateuch, the only reference to angels in connection with the giving of the Law is Deut. 33:2, where the Septuagint reads, "His angels with Him on (lit., from) His right hand." See also Ps. 68:17. That word proved steadfast, that is to say, it remained inviolable, receiving witness thereto in the punishments inexorably inflicted when any commandment was broken. That is now brought out in the fact that "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward."

In *verse 3* the question is asked as to how we shall escape, "if we neglect so great a salvation;" that is to say, if instead of making it our own possession we give no heed to it. It is a salvation "so great" because it is offered by God freely as having been procured through the one atoning sacrifice of His Son, whose glorious Being has been described in the opening part of the Epistle. Moreover it first began to be "spoken through the Lord." He was the first Revealer. The preposition *dia*, through, or by means of, is used here of Christ in verse 2. Again, it was proclaimed through the very One who had been refused and put to death by the nation, and was confirmed by His followers who had actually listened to His voice.

Verse 4. God Himself bore witness to their ministry "by signs," that is, supernatural *proofs of the Divine mission of Christ*, "by wonders," *proofs of His Divine agency*; "by manifold powers," *proofs of His almightiness*, and "by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will," *proofs of His Divine control*. Peter had warned of the danger that one who refused to hearken to Him would be utterly destroyed from among the people (Acts 3:23).

Chapter 2:5 to 19

Introductory Note

The Apostle now continues to speak of the Divine arrangements regarding the angels. As just mentioned in verse 2, the angels had an official position in regard to the dispensation of the Law, but that age has been replaced by one in which they are sent forth to do service for those who shall inherit salvation. Now again (*verse 5*), with regard to the age to come, it is not to angels that its future economy is to be entrusted, but to the Son of God and this in view of the fact that he is also Son of Man. As such He is to restore that which He took not away, but He, as Son of Man, is to have dominion over the works of God's hands, the dominion which Adam forfeited through His transgression. Moreover, Christ is to bring His redeemed into association with Himself in this dominion. This is the leading thought in the passage now before us and it is with this in view that the passage speaks of the Incarnation of Christ, and of His identification thereby with man. Angels are set aside in this respect, for, as the Apostle shews, Christ took not hold of angels but of the seed of Abraham. This is the key to the story of redemption, the key also to the coming dominion.

It must be remembered that the Apostle has specially before him in this Epistle the present ministry of Christ as a High Priest, and though the subject of the age to come, in which all things will be in subjection under Him, is incidental, that day has an important place in this second chapter, in which are set forth the combined glories of Christ's deity and humanity. This, however, is in order to lead up to the High Priesthood of Christ (see 2:17).

The One through whom God has now spoken is the Prophet of whom Moses wrote in Deut. 18:15-18. But Moses had told the people that God would raise up this Prophet from among their brethren, and this fact has an important bearing upon what is now set forth. See especially verses 11 to 18.

Chapter ii:5-9. Analysis

Christ's Superiority to Angels in His dominion over Creation

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------|
| 1. | the authority not committed to angels. | v.5 |
| 2. | the authority originally committed to man. | 6 to 8a |
| (A) Man under God: | | |
| | i. remembered. | 6a |
| | ii. visited. | 6b |
| | iii. made lower than the angels for a time. | 7a |
| | iv. crowned with glory and honour. | 7b |
| | v. put in authority. | 7b, 8a |
| 3. | the authority lost by man. | 8b |
| 4. | the authority recovered in Christ. | 9 |
| (B) Christ Jesus, Himself Man: | | |
| | i. His Incarnation. | 9a |
| | ii. His Death. | 9b |
| | iii. His consequent Exaltation. | 9c |
| | iv. The purpose of His Incarnation. | 9d |

(To be continued)

THE UNCHANGING CHRIST

Hebrews 13: 8

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. His Undiminished Power. | 4. His Unlimited Provision. |
| 2. His Unsullied Purity. | 5. His Unending Pathos. |
| 3. His Unerring Promise. | 6. His Unfailing Presence. |
| 7. His Unswerving Purpose. | |

Ponder over and perpetuate each point in preaching it.

—R. D. JOHNSTON.