
Into Thy Word Bible Study in Hebrews

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Hebrews 2:12-18: "Jesus our Compassionate God!"

General idea: Jesus Christ is our Creator, LORD; He calls us His brothers and sisters and asks us to trust Him. He is our Redeemer and High Priest and is the One who makes us holy. He goes from the Suffering Messiah to the Deliverer. He shows and bestows compassion beyond measure. We are in a family relationship, totally functional and blessed as we share the same Father God Almighty, the Maker of the Heavens and earth, and He is not ashamed of us. Jesus declares the wonders and glory of His Name and shows us how to praise God among the peoples. It is all about our trust in Him, demonstrated by Jesus as He became one of us, flesh and blood, taking in humanity to be our Savior and example. He broke the power of death and the devil and gave us life eternal and a life worth living. He is our Deliverer so we are no longer slaves to sin or too meaningless; we have no fear of the devil or fear of death. He is our Help and our Hope that no mere angel could ever give. In His humanity, He was able to identify with us and show us authentic mercy and an example of faith. Since He has gone through it all, including great suffering, He is far more able to be a help in our trials and temptations.

Contexts and Background:

This passage introduces a major theme in Hebrews: Christ as our High Priest. Jesus is the Righteous Sufferer who goes to the cross to pay our sins. The Jews did not understand this nor did they comprehend His divinity or His humanity; they thought it contradicted the Scripture's teaching of One God (Deut. 6). So, they declared Him to be an angel or one whose role was to help angels so the angels could help us. He is not just superhuman or an angel, He is God who cleanses sin.

This passage is a thesis of Psalm 22, mainly verse 22, as it proves the Person and role of Christ while presenting us a picture of the hope and world to come. We have sin but now we also have Him to cover us. We have Christ now; we have received His work and now it is up to us to see Him so we can apply His work to our daily lives. The eternity that awaits us is a hope that we can trust and look forward to. This helps us live for today as our trust is in Christ as Lord. We entered into sin by one man; all the world was deemed sinful, but now our sin is paid for by One man- God, Christ! Because Christ has defeated death and received its threat and consequences for us, we are free in Him. From His victory we have victory; He is the Glory and in Him we share that glory now and for eternity to come.

Commentary, Word, and Phrase Meanings:

- *I will declare/ tell your name:* A quote from Psalm 22:22, this describes the anguish and trials a righteous servant of God may face while God triumphs through them.

Also, it points to Jesus' role as the Righteous sufferer who became man and went to the cross to die in order to pay for our sins (Psalm 22:22).

- *My brothers:* This is a call of comfort from the lips of the ever loving God as the victorious Messiah.
- *Congregation / church:* This refers to the gathering of God's elect and/or the congregation of Israel as used in the quotes from the *Septuagint*, the Jewish Old Testament translated in Greek, and popular in Jesus' time (Acts 19:31, 39-41).
- *I will put my trust in him:* This is a confession of faith, a response to the call of God with trust in Him through times of danger and fear. This is a depiction of a righteous person's proper dependence upon Jesus as He is exemplified. He is our Sanctuary; He is the Eternal God whom we can rely on and not only give our life to, but to live our life for. Isaiah 8:17-18 portrays Christ as being the ultimate Righteousness, yet those who do not know Him or who refuse Him will not understand Him (2 Sam. 2:3; Isa. 8:17; Psalm 118:22; Isa. 8:14-18; 28:16)
- *Here am I:* This is an image of Immanuel, the incarnate Son who condescends to humanity as He calls us to live by faith. He is with us, the founder and protector of the Faith (Isa. 7:14-16; 8:1-4; 12:2).
- *Behold, I:* This is a statement that proclaims Christ as even greater than the prophets (Heb. 1:1-2; 3:3-6)
- *The children God has given me:* This is a quote from Isaiah 8:18 where God declares us His Children! Children were a sign in Isaiah and in Jewish culture of God's faithfulness. The children of Israel pointed to the Messiah in their lineage and He pointed them to God by prophecy. In addition, Jesus becomes a part of humanity as an identification, representing us and paying for our sins as he took our place for sin's punishment (Deut. 32: 19; Isa. 8:18; Hos. 11:1; John 17:6; Heb 2:11).
- *Flesh and blood:* This is an idiom meaning human or corporal nature, the limitations we face, and our need for a Redeemer (Matt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 15:15; Gal. 1:16; Eph. 6:12).
- *Shared in their humanity/partook in the same things:* This is another image of Immanuel as He completes His mission and is triumphant as He endures God's judgment on our behalf, and is victorious over sin. Jesus becomes one of us as the New Adam; Adam represented all of humanity for the Fall into Sin and Jesus represents the payment for that sin for all whom He calls and that we are to respond (Psalm 8:4-6).
- *Might destroy:* Christ is portrayed as the Warrior Messiah who does not kick out the Romans as expected by the Jews; but what is far more formable and foreboding and

needed, He defeats our ancient oppressor and by mercy sets us free. This is also an image that He helps us out in times of need and trials.

- *Power of death:* Death is a universal terror through which the Fall, sin, and the devil are all linked in Judaism. Satan's power can only deceive us; those in Christ, whose focus is on Him have no worry. Here, Death refers to the penalty of sin, not the physical end of our corporal bodies. Here, Christ is the liberator of this death to sin to give us new life. He transcends sin and death so we no longer need to fear it, but we must not seek it. By Christ's death, death has no power over us (Isa. 26:19-21; 44:24-26; Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 5:12; 6:23; Col. 2:14-15).
- *The devil:* God is the deliverer while Satan is portrayed as the angel of death who is the "accuser" and who seeks to lead God's children away from Him and into sin by temptations. In contrast, Jesus is the "champion" (to use Greek heroic language) who frees the captives from the imprisonment of the beast. This does not mean Satan is destroyed; he still reigns in the world, but he can't do anything to us outside God's will; God also gives us the tools to fend off his attacks and make the right moral choices (1 Cor. 15:56; Rev. 12:10).
- *It is not angels he helps:* A principle theme in Hebrews, we no longer fear God (as scared of Him); rather, we fear Him as in reverence.
- *Abraham's descendants/seed:* God works through time, history, and people to bring about His plan of redemption. In context, this also refers to Christ as the forerunner who works hard for us but not for angels. The Jewish Christians saw Jesus as having an angelic nature; here, Hebrews clarifies that He is God who took on a human nature as an offspring of Abraham, the main Jewish Patriarch (Isa.41:8-13; Rom. 4:11-18; 9:7; Gal. 3:29; Heb. 6:15-17; 11:9).
- *For this reason:* Jews placed their faith in their destiny and how grand that would be, but God has something grander for them that many have missed. Their destiny is not in a future, earthly kingdom, but in a Heavenly Kingdom where they can participate in building now. Christ paves that way (John 1:14).
- *Made like his brothers:* This is another aspect of Christ's incarnation. Only the Great High Priest could go before God as a reflection of the high priest of Israel who took an unblemished lamb to sacrifice to God. Jesus is the ultimate Priest, without sin, who has been tested and still is merciful to us who are undeserving of His atonement (Heb. 4:15; 5:2; 9:14).
- *Merciful and faithful high priest:* The reason why Christ did as He did in becoming a man and dying for us; He had to become us and pay our price for atonement as a sacrifice. Jesus, the High Priest, became His own offering, our "substitute" and the only payment that could appease God and pay for us (Lev 16:20-22; 17:11; 1 Sam. 2:25; Heb. 3:6; 5:2).

- *Make atonement/propitiation/reconciliation:* This means God is merciful as the “expiatory sacrifice” for our sins. We are sinners before a just and angry God, but Christ the “Mediator” paid that penalty, broke the curse of sin, and thus appeased the wrath of God (Luke 18:13; Rom. 2:23-26; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:5).
- *To help those/helps:* This means to “take on,” to “hold” those He wants saved, as there is nothing reported in Scripture of a plan to save the fallen angels. Perhaps because they had more information, knowledge, and access to God than us, so they had no reasonable doubt of an excuse. Greek and Jewish aristocrats often gave benevolences to the poor and needy, but they were small or with strings attached or just meant to temporarily pacify them. Here, Jesus is the Ultimate benefactor who gives all, who gives Himself and continues to help us with faith and to make the right decisions in life (Heb. 3:2-5; 2 John 7)!

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

This passage gives us the importance of knowing God, as we are an indication of His work by our devotion and obedience. We, as faithful Christians, have an obligation to know and apply as much as possible of His Word to our lives. His call is simple but we are so often averse to it. The call is to make Him known in us so He is made known through us. We must carefully take what He gives and grow from it. The message of God must reach us, and it must take hold of us so it is permeating and penetrating us through and through. Do not waste what our Lord has for you. If you do, you will miss vital opportunities. Our lives becomes a waste and we live with regret all for missing what was in front of us and what could have been within us.

This passage is a picture of hope with a call to trust in Christ as LORD. He is our confidence and conviction over all, including our daily struggles of life. When we trust Him, we receive His help and we are on our way to glory. We have a call to recognize who Jesus is and what He has done so we can be impacted by faith and be an impact for Him. The Jews believed that the new age, which the Christians were proclaiming is with Christ, would be ruled by Michael the Arc Angel and be a kingdom dominated by angels. Here is a carefully penned argument to show to the Jews, with as little offence as possible, the truth, using Old Testament sources to convince them of the veracity of Christ so they would not worship angels or turn back to Judaism.

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?

7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. What is a picture of hope that motivates you? How does the surety of the world to come give you hope?
2. When have you made a confession of faith? How does this help you in responding to the call of God and then trusting Him in times of danger and fear?
3. Because Jesus understands us and the ways and opportunities and obstacles of being a person in a fallen world, how are you helped to focus on Him?
4. What is God calling you to do? How much of that are you willing to do?
5. What causes the “disconnect” of listening to God and doing as He says? What can be better of what we want versus what He wants?
6. Can you describe the joys and blessings you have in Christ? How would you describe the Holiness of Jesus?
7. How do our speculations and fantasies, through misguided, and faulty desires or wants cause us to miss out on Him? Why would a Christian desire to change a truth for a lie that can do nothing for him or her?
8. How do you feel that He calls you His child? Read Psalm 8; how can you marvel at the holiness and high dignity of God? How can this build your faith?
9. Christ is our Creator and LORD; how do you feel that He calls you His brother or sister? How can this help you to trust in Him More?
10. What can you do better because you know that Jesus is the Eternal God in Whom we can rely and give your life too?
11. Since Jesus has gone through it all, including great suffering, how is He able to help you in your trials and temptations?
12. Because Jesus bestows compassion to you beyond measure, how does this help you do so to others too? What can you do to show more authentic mercy and the example of faith to others?