There will be peace in the valley for me, dear Lord I pray
There'll be no sadness, no sorrow
No trouble, trouble I see
There will be peace in the valley for me.
Thomas Dorsey

Prayer Study #512

HEBREWS CHAPTER 2

First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, GA USA

Hebrews 2 Amplified Bible (AMP)

Give Heed

2 *For this reason [that is, because of God's final revelation in His Son Jesus and because of Jesus' superiority to the angels] we must pay much closer attention than ever to the things that we have heard, so that we do not [in any way] drift away from truth.* **2** *For if the message given through angels [the Law given to Moses] was authentic and unalterable, and every violation and disobedient act received an appropriate penalty,* **3** *how will we escape [the penalty] if we ignore such a great salvation [the gospel, the new covenant]? For it was spoken at first by the Lord, and it was confirmed to us and proved authentic by those who personally heard [Him speak],* **4** *[and besides this evidence] God also testifying with them [confirming the message of salvation], both by signs and wonders and by various*

miracles [carried out by Jesus and the apostles] and by [granting to believers the] gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

This first verse is one that portrays the message that is so heavy on my mind and in my heart. We must heed the words of Jesus, i.e. the Gospel message and not stray away from what the Word says. The Word is absolute truth, and there is no room for situational ethics. Regardless of what the society dictates, we must stand on Biblical principles. Under the Old Covenant or the Law given to Moses, judgment always came from disobedience, sometimes promptly and sometimes slowly, but it always came. We too will not escape punishment if we ignore what Jesus taught for we are under the New Covenant, which has the witness of both Jesus in His humanity and the witness of those who personally heard Him speak.

When we accepted Christ, we came into covenant relationship with God the Son. Here would be a good place to talk about our covenant making God:

The Covenant Making God

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation….

Exodus 19:5

<u>What is a Covenant?</u> (Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin, *The Covenants)*

A covenant is an interpersonal arrangement made by one person for or with another. God originates covenants with men which man may accept or reject but cannot alter. Man does not come to God with a proposal seeking God's approval, rather God comes to man declaring His will and seeking man's adherence and obedience to that will. The purpose of a covenant is to provide a binding sense of commitment to an interpersonal relationship.

<u>Difference between a Contract and a Covenant</u> (Bill Gothard, *The True Significance of the Wedding Covenant)*

1. A covenant is based on trust between parties. A contract is based on distrust.
2. A covenant is based on unlimited responsibility. A contract involves limited liability.
3. A covenant cannot be broken if new circumstances occur. A contract can be voided by mutual consent.

<u>Ratification of a Covenant</u>

Because a covenant involved a life and death commitment, it was ratified in Biblical times by the shedding of blood. The blood represents life and was used to symbolize a life commitment to those entering the covenant. There had to be a sacrifice to obtain this blood. We see this in Genesis 15:7-17 when God passed between the pieces to "cut the

covenant" with Abraham. In Genesis 22 God called for the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham's only son, but provided a substitute, a ram, at the last minute. This foreshadowed the act of incredible love that our Father later did when He gave His only son for the sacrifice so that we could legally enter into covenant relationship with Him.

The teachings of the Jews stated In Deuteronomy 18:15 (and elsewhere) that in the mouth of two or three witnesses a matter is established. Not only did God send His Son and followers of His Son to be that witness, but He also confirmed the message of salvation with sign and wonders and by granting the gifts of the Holy Spirit to Spirit-baptized believers.

Earth Subject to Man

5 *It was not to angels that God subjected the [inhabited] world of the future [when Christ reigns], about which we are speaking.* ***6*** *But one has [solemnly] testified somewhere [in Scripture], saying,*
"What is man, that You are mindful of him,
Or the son of man, that You graciously care for him?
7 *"You have made him for a little while lower [in status] than the angels;*
You have crowned him with glory and honor,
And set him over the works of Your hands;
8 *You have put all things in subjection under his feet [confirming his supremacy]."*

Now in putting all things in subjection to man, He left nothing outside his control. But at present we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

In this section the writer of Hebrews is quoting Psalm 8. Mankind has been crowned with glory and honor and has been given dominion over the creation or all the works of God's hands. We are not yet walking in the fullness of that dimension because we have not fully crucified the sinful nature, but one day we will walk in that supremacy. The Psalmist wrote that the Lord had made man a little lower than the angels. This seems to contradict 1st Corinthians 6:2-3, which says, "*Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know you not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?*" There are two ways of looking at verse 7. As the Amplified reads, man will be a little lower in status than the angels only for a little while but will be promoted above the angels in the Kingdom age. Or the word translated in most versions of the Bible as *angels* could also be translated as Godhead, meaning man has been created a little lower than the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus Briefly Humbled

9 *But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while [by taking on the limitations of humanity], crowned with glory and honor because of His suffering of death, so that by the grace of God [extended to sinners] He might experience death for [the sins of] everyone.*
10 *For it was fitting for God [that is, an act worthy of His divine nature] that He, for whose sake are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the author and founder of their salvation perfect through suffering [bringing to maturity the human experience necessary for Him to be perfectly equipped for His office as High Priest].* ***11*** *Both Jesus who sanctifies and those who are sanctified [that is, spiritually transformed, made holy, and set apart for God's purpose] are all from one Father; for this reason He is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,* ***12*** *saying,*
"I will declare Your (the Father's) name to My brethren (believers),
In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise."
13 *And again [He says],*
"My trust and confident hope will be placed in Him."

And again,
“Here I am, I and the children whom God has given Me.”
14 *Therefore, since [these His] children share in flesh and blood [the physical nature of mankind], He Himself in a similar manner also shared in the same [physical nature, but without sin], so that through [experiencing] death He might make powerless (ineffective, impotent) him who had the power of death—that is, the devil—* ***15*** *and [that He] might free all those who through [the haunting] fear of death were held in slavery throughout their lives.* ***16*** *For, as we all know, He (Christ) does not take hold of [the fallen] angels [to give them a helping hand], but He does take hold of [the fallen] descendants of Abraham [extending to them His hand of deliverance].* ***17*** *Therefore, it was essential that He had to be made like His brothers (mankind) in every respect, so that He might [by experience] become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things related to God, to make atonement (propitiation) for the people’s sins [thereby wiping away the sin, satisfying divine justice, and providing a way of reconciliation between God and mankind].* ***18*** *Because He Himself [in His humanity] has suffered in being tempted, He is able to help and provide immediate assistance to those who are being tempted and*

exposed to suffering.

This is an exciting passage of scripture. What the writer is saying here is Jesus, as our substitutionary sacrifice, came as a Man with the limitations of being human, but through His sacrificial death has paid for the sins of everyone and has been restored to His rightful position as God the Son, seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. Thus in Jesus everything is restored. The first Adam sinned and that sin opened the earth and mankind to a curse. The second Adam, Jesus, did not sin and broke the curse and the sting of death from mankind. He offered salvation from the curse to whosoever would come and receive.

The sufferings of Jesus were *fitting* because it allowed Jesus to know human life not only in its joys but also in its pain and sorrows, temptations and trials. No one can say that our God does not understand these things because He Himself, as a fleshly man, experienced them.

Jesus' sufferings were *fruitful.* Because of His substitionary death and sacrifice on the cross, men and women and boys and girls may come to Jesus and be saved from the wrath to come. These are the ones who will be in Heaven or in the Kingdom of God permanently forever and ever. They are the family of God. Heaven is a

place prepared for a prepared people, the many *sons to glory.* John Phillips in *Exploring Hebrews* says this: *"The Lord's finished work on Golgotha prepared the people; in glory today He is preparing the place."*

Jesus' sufferings were fundamentally necessary. Jesus was morally perfect and sinless, but He had to suffer as a man of flesh to walk in completion as a minister or High Priest. His sufferings are the foundation upon which all of His present ministry rest.

The Lord wants us to have relationship with Him as a family. We are sons and daughters of One Father, and Jesus is our elder brother. Furthermore, when God sees us through the Blood of Jesus as perfect as Jesus is. Our state may be one that causes us great shame. But our standing with God is perfect, making it possible for Jesus to bring us into the presence of a Holy Father God and to say to the Father, "These are my brothers and sisters."

Jesus put on flesh and blood so that He could experience death and thus rescued us from the power of death and from he (Satan) who legally held the power of death over mankind. Again I quote John Phillips: *"Satan is a defeated and disarmed foe. His sword, 'the power of death,' has been torn from his grasp."* That thought ought to bring a "Praise the Lord!" or "Hallelujah!" to your mind.

Charles Spurgeon reminded his flock that death is "the last enemy." (1st Corinthians 15:26: *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*) When the time comes for us to die, I know that the Lord will give us grace to make our exodus, and we can pass over to our heavenly home with peace. In fact, I have been in the room of several people through the years that have just passed away. I am always awed by the sense of peace in the room. I encourage anyone who fears death to ask for ministry so that that spirit of fear's power will be broken.

The last verses of this chapter again remind us of the great love that Jesus, God the Son unlimited by time and space, had for us in coming to earth and dwelling in a human body. He could have come as an angel with all the power of an angel, but He chose to come as a man, and specifically as a Hebrew man, part of the seed of Abraham. He came to reconcile us to God. Our relationship with God had been broken through sin. He came as a man so that He could understand and be to us all that we need. He was tempted, just as we ourselves are tempted, and He knows what it is like. Phillips writes of this section of scripture: *"Here then, is the first major section of Hebrews. The Lord Jesus is superior to all others in His Person. As the Son of God He*

places His hand upon deity; as the Son of Man He places His hand upon humanity. He stands unique in all of space and time as the one Person in the universe who can satisfy God's claim and man's need."

His Eye Is on the Sparrow
C.D. Martin & Charles Hutchison Gabriel

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free,
For His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.