

Hebrews

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 December 2016

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 0 0] Well, if you will take your scripture sheet, we are engaging a new chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that is chapter 2. And let me remind you, if I may, that the audience which this is addressed is commonly referred to as the Diaspora or the Diaspora.

And the word D-I-A-S-P-O-R-A simply is a compound word from the Greek, and it means through, like dia, as we get in diameter, the distance through.

Diaspora, the word from which we get the English word spore, S-P-O-R-E. And it literally refers to through spores or through the sowing or the planting or the seeding of spores, such as some are even airborne.

You know how things germinate sometimes from plants floating around in the air, and we call these spores, and they land someplace and germinate. Well, the Jewish people, beginning even in the first century, were part of the Diaspora, those four.

They were scattered. Actually, it even goes back to the Old Testament with the scattering that was experienced under Nebuchadnezzar, and this was in the 6th century B.C.

[1 : 2 8] So, throughout the whole world, and even to this day, that term is commonly used among the Jewish people, and you'll see it surfacing regularly in the Jerusalem Post newspaper, where they are referring to as the Diaspora.

And it simply means Jewish people who were scattered all throughout the world. This epistle to the Hebrews is written to the earlier element of the Diaspora, because they had been scattered, partly because of Roman persecution.

And we see in the book of Acts, how that in different places, like Claudius, I think it's in Romans chapter 18 or 19 or somewhere in that area, where Claudius had banned all the Jews from Rome.

Made them all leave, pack up and leave Rome. And this is the kind of thing that was going on in the first century. And the writer of Hebrews is going to be addressing some of his remarks to Jewish people who are scattered abroad through different parts of the world.

Some are right there in Israel, and some are outside the land, but this document will be carried to them. He's going to be addressing them and encouraging them, particularly in regard to Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah.

[2 : 5 8] And we are satisfied that this has to be, it would seem to me, of a rather early age that it is being written. Because there is so much in this epistle about the Jewish sacrificial system and the priesthood and the temple and everything in connection with that.

And it is, to me, inconceivable that those kind of issues would be addressed as they are in the book of Hebrews, if the Jewish temple, the status of it is completely changed.

So what I'm saying is, this almost surely has to predate 70 A.D. Because in 70 A.D., the Romans besieged Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, the city and everything else, and put an end, literally put an end to Jewish worship in the temple.

But there is no mention of that at all in this epistle to the Hebrews. And I think it is just incomprehensible that that would not have been mentioned by the writer of Hebrews, because so much of what he says in here is virtually passé.

Because it could not be fulfilled. So we're saying that Hebrews was probably written somewhere in the 60s.

[4 : 39] This would put it approximately 30 years after the death of Christ. And there is that 10 or 15 year window there. So keep that in mind, and it becomes even more obvious as we move on through Hebrews.

But it is important to date this, because in this early period, what we have taken place is, and bear in mind, let me dwell on this just a little bit.

It is really, really important to understand that for a number of years after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, for a number of years after that, all of those who believed in Jesus as the Messiah and as the Savior of the world were Jews.

You must really understand that and get a handle on that. We do not find any non-Jews exercising faith in Jesus until you get all the way up to Acts chapter 10.

And this is several years after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. So it is a terrible misnomer to say that all these people were Christians.

[5 : 55] They weren't Christians at all. And the term didn't even exist until like Acts 13. So they were not at all what you would call Christians.

Most you could say about them was they were believing Jews. And of the Jews, the same issue that existed while Christ was here during His earthly ministry, the issue remained the same during the three and a half years that He ministered here on earth and went around performing miracles and teaching and everything.

There was one singular question that consumed the whole population of Israel at that time, and it was this, was Jesus of Nazareth the one spoken of by Moses and the prophets or not?

That was the burning issue. And after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, that had not changed. That still remained the issue. And that was the basis for the apostles' ministry and preaching in the early chapters of the book of Acts.

And they preached the resurrection of Christ from the dead. And they, of course, were confronted by the religious establishment and eventually put in prison and so on.

[7 : 08] And you know the rest of the story, and that's where the persecution began. So, this epistle to the Hebrews is addressing those early Hebrews, some of whom were convinced Christ was the Messiah, some of whom were convinced He was not, and some of whom couldn't make up their mind.

You've got all three classes of Jews, and they're going to be addressed in this epistle. So keep these things in mind, if you will. This is the real issue. And fellas, listen. To this very day, this remains the issue.

Because the consequences of either position taken are absolutely stunning. And by that I mean, if Jesus Christ is the Messiah of the world, the one sent by God Himself to be the Savior of the world, if He is, then He rightfully demands and is entitled to the allegiance and the worship of the entirety of humanity.

Okay? And if He isn't, where does that put Him? He is either a willing deceiver who conned everybody and He knew it, or He was a megalomaniac who really thought He was the Son of God and He wasn't.

So either of those positions have to be taken. Really. And if we accept that He is, then we owe Him our allegiance, our devotion, our everything.

[8 : 47] If He isn't, then we need to dismiss Him as a charlatan and a religious con man, the likes of which the world's never seen. And the point is, there is no middle ground.

This is the law of the excluded middle. There is no middle. There is no third option. He is or He is not. And the consequences that issue forth from both of those positions are really significant.

Because if He is, then all those who refuse His worship and acknowledgement are going to pay a terrible price. And if He is, then those who have given their life in His service and martyred Him, etc., really made a good deal, after all.

So, either way, and it's got to be either way, there is no third alternative. So, this is why, having established the superiority of Christ to the angels, chapter 2 opens with, therefore, in light of that, in light of the superiority and the supremacy of Christ, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard.

And those things that they have heard, of course, focus primarily upon death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That gospel that they preach. Lest at any time we should let them slip.

[10 : 19] That is, at any time we should be willing to surrender that truth. And that is a non-negotiable.

That is something that no Christian so-called has the right to barter away. You cannot give on this. And it is an absolute necessity.

Lest at any time we should let them slip or drift away from them or count them of no consequence or be diverted from them, as Alfred reads, for and because if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape?

In other words, how in the world can we escape? And by the way, I don't know if you recall or not, but if you do and you have something to offer, this would be the time to do it. I shared with you not the last time because I detoured a little bit and went into some personal history that you may recall.

But the time before, I asked you a question to see if you wanted to research the idea of to what degree and exactly how were angels involved in the dispensing of the law of Moses.

[11 : 34] Remember? Because the writer of Hebrews here says that the word spoken by angels was steadfast and Paul refers to that in Galatians also about the word of God having been ordained through angels and I confess to you at the time, I don't have a clue what that means and I wondered if any of you had any insight on it or if anybody's got anything to offer.

When you read the Exodus, it appears on the surface at least that God communicated the law of Moses directly to Moses and I don't see what involvement angels had.

Does anybody have anything to share on that? Well, John? A comment that I read said that there were angels that were messengers that brought the word of God to put that on the prophets and he was most and so we're to believe that that is from the angels as the word of God said.

Like when Jesus went back into heaven and he said it and the man was like a child and I'm assuming those angels and they said my family here is a man and he did it.

Okay. So what they said carries the same weight as what God's word is and it is God and it is God and God and God and God Well, that at least involves angels in it.

[13 : 28] And in the book of Daniel it's quite apparent that the angel Gabriel visits Daniel on a couple of occasions and briefs him fills him in on the plan and program of God.

And what you have shared that may be that may be the extent of it. That may be as good as we're going to do. I don't know. Yeah, Don? I thought along with John, who proclaimed the birth of Jesus and who taught Mary and who talked about that was Gabriel on each occasion it was Gabriel the angel.

Yeah. Dan? How many times in the Bible have you done what the angels spoke to them? Were the angels before them? Well, there's a great deal a number of times.

As a matter of fact, in the Revelation, there's more angelic involvement in the Revelation than there is all the rest of the Bible put together. So, and the angel, angelos, literally means messenger.

That's what the word means in the Greek. It means messenger. So, what good is a messenger without a message? And they deliver plenty of messages.

[14 : 52] There's no question about that. Roger? verse 2. Could that if be a sense? Yes, it is a sense.

It's a first-class conditional clause, and it means, if such is the case, and it is, that's literally what it means, and since the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.

So, he's saying that if the word of angels is as authoritative and as compelling as it is, how much more, the revelation that we have regarding the person and the work of Christ.

And he continues in saying, God also bearing them witness, and here it was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, and if you turn the page to 2b, was made sure by those who heard or by them who heard unto us was confirmed or was confirmed unto us by them that heard it, etc.

In other words, there are multiple sources and repeated confirmation that solidifies the integrity of the message. And he's saying in verse 4, God also bearing them witness, and as if the message was not enough, God bore them witness in addition to that with signs and wonders and with multiple miracles or manifold powers so as to make this content virtually undeniable.

[17 : 04] it is so ironclad that you have no possible justification for rejecting it. And matter of fact, that's the way most believers feel about the word in and of itself, really.

This is what he's saying. What he's doing here is, of course, is establishing the authority behind this whole thing called the gospel of Jesus Christ and the personhood of Christ.

and the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will. For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak?

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man that thou visitest him?

Thou madest him a little lower than the angels. Thou crownest him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of thy hands.

[18 : 17] Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.

And of whom is he speaking here? We're speaking of Christ. There isn't anybody else that even begins to fit the bill for this. But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels.

And how is it that he was made lower than the angels? This is the one who is the son of God. How is he made lower than the angels? It's his humanity here he's talking about.

He was made lower than the angels in that God equipped him with a human body. He placed humanity into the deity of the son of God and in that humanity he was below the angels because we know that angels are superior to human beings in wisdom and in power yet they are not subjects of redemption.

So this beautiful contrast is being set forth here and he is establishing the case all the way through Hebrews for the superiority and the supremacy of Christ.

[19 : 43] everything is hinging on this but we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels and why was he so that he could enter into the suffering of death.

He certainly could not experience that in his deity. He had to have an incarnated human body in order to be available for sacrifice and to die the death that he died on the cross.

That he by the grace of God and here we've run out of our text here I didn't plan on getting through that far should taste death for every man.

And this again signifies to me how that the entirety of humanity was wrapped up in the price that Christ paid and I'm going to turn to my Bible here because I've got other scripture sheets but by the time we get them distributed it'll be too late so here we are in verse 9 that he by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone and this in my estimation refers to the to the scope of redemption and we've made this distinction in the past by saying that the death of Christ secured the redemption of every member of the human race and the important distinction to be made between that redemption and salvation is this it did not secure the salvation of every human being but it did make every human being savable and the contrast is established in 2nd

Corinthians 5 and also in Romans chapter chapter 6 chapter 5 and 6 how that the scope or the range or the efficaciousness which is simply a big word that means that means that it was effective to that degree the death of Christ was as efficacious and as broad and as all encompassing as what as was the spiritual death of Adam that was imposed upon all humanity you follow me here okay we're saying that in Adam all died so in Christ all are made alive and this is the in my estimation this is the required meaning of the word world for God so loved the world who every living single individual in it who ever had life that's the world and

[22 : 56] Christ died for the world to that extent there is no human being who ever lived for whom Christ did not die that does not mean of course that they are regenerate or saved because only those who believe in Christ are but when Christ died for the sins of the world he made every human being savable no one is beyond the grace of God Roger oh I think so I think I think everything because creation fell wasn't just humanity that fell Adam Adam was installed as the federal head of all creation and everything was put under Adam's authority the entirety of the animal kingdom was placed under

Adam's authority and I don't want to get too far afield here but the fact that Adam named the animals in the biblical setting the giving of a name of an entity or of a person means a great deal more than it does to us when we give names in the bible when someone exercised the authority over another entity so as to be able to name it it indicated a kind of ownership or authority over that remember remember when God changed Abram's name from Abram to Abraham and Sarai to Sarah it was then that he entered into a new kind of relationship with them and remember the three Hebrew children

Shadrach Meshach and Abednego when they were taken prisoners and went into Babylonia Nebuchadnezzar changed all three of their names and he gave them Babylonian names and that was in effect saying you're no longer servants of the God you served back in Israel now you are my servants you are under my authority I own you that was what he was saying I own you and that's tied up with the biblical concept and the culture of naming someone and there are places when Jesus named Peter Cephas and called him Peter he was in effect changing his name and he was saying Peter you've got a new relationship with me now I own you Peter and that's the concept that is conveyed in the scriptures

John absolutely and there's real significance to that it indicated it indicated change of ownership you will not find you will not find Saul of Tarsus talking about being a bond slave of Jesus Christ but you will find Paul the apostle talking that way because that was a new relationship that he had that he didn't have a Saul of Tarsus but now he says this this Jesus of Nazareth owns me I am his willing bond slave and it really comes into play there yeah Roger okay oh

I think he did I think he did and in John I think it's John 11 or 12 where Christ made a statement that was really kind of kind of enigmatic and wasn't picked up on by too many and he said and I if I be lifted up from the world if I be lifted up I will draw the whole world unto me well what what does that mean I think it means exactly what it says that in his death when he's talked about being lifted up he's talking about physically being lifted up on the cross and it's in this same context when he talks about if a corn of wheat abides alone it doesn't come to anything but if it's planted it bears much fruit and he's likening himself to that grain of wheat that is going to be planted out of his death like the death of a kernel of wheat or corn out of the death of that in the soil there emerges new life that is multiplied many times over and that is exactly what

[28 : 14] Christ is referring to when he says if I be lifted up from the cross I will draw all men unto me and he did that I think through the redemptive act on that cross whereby he atoned for the sins of the entire world and this is borne out in a number of places in scripture one of which is Christ reconciling the world unto himself and has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation and then a verse later he says I pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled unto God and there is an effort to make the personal application of the universal redemption so we attest to universal redemption but personal salvation is that clear that's a really important distinction ok ok let's continue on in verse 10 verse 9 talks about tasting death for everyone for it was fitting for him or appropriate for him for whom are all things and through whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory to perfect or to bring to maturity the author of their salvation through sufferings for both he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified and that word sanctified literally means set apart or made special who are sanctified are all from one father for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren saying

I will proclaim thy name and this of course is a quote if you've got a new American standard Bible you'll see that this is all in capital letters indicating that it is a quote from the Old Testament and this is taken from Psalm 22 and verse 22 where he is speaking messianically I will proclaim thy name to my brethren in the midst of the congregation or the assembly I will sing thy praise and again I will put my trust in him and again behold I and the children whom God has given me since then the children share in flesh and blood he himself likewise that is Christ likewise also partook of the same that through death he Christ might render powerless him who had the power of death that is the devil

Satan he is he is the purveyor of death God is the giver of life and Satan is the taker of life and this is a dichotomy that is set up all throughout scripture and the time is coming when death will be described as the last enemy that will be destroyed and I think it was the Puritan John Owen in the 1600s that preached the message the title of which was the death of death in the death of Christ the beautiful concept and because he lives we too shall live and Christ has gotten the victory over death and he is our surety that we too will live even as he does questions or comments about this yes he demoted him in his humanity sure it does and the reason he did that was because it was the human race that was standing in need of redemption and were subjects of redemption was not angels it was humanity so he became one of us if you will he took upon himself the form of a servant made in the likeness of human flesh the man humbled himself became obedient unto death even the death of a cross as far as we know angels do not have the ability to die angels are a created order that are radically different from humanity and angels angels are subject to incarceration and they are going to be and some are now some are now incarcerated in the abyss and they will be released during the tribulation period but that's something else and yet there is no indication that angels ever experience death there's no indication that angels ever experience birth so far as we know angels were simply created by the power of

God and they were in all likelihood created as entire entities no indication that they were born little angels and had to grow up to be big angels they seemed to be an entirely different order altogether from us humans and by the way let me just throw this in too while we're talking about angels probably one of the greatest misunderstandings in all of Christendom and I use the word Christendom very loosely is that when when good people die they go to heaven and become angels and they pluck on their hearts and they sit on clouds and what not that is such complete nonsense I don't know where in the world the idea ever came from but there is not one shred of evidence to give any indication at all that any human being ever becomes an angel so we are quite content to be as the Lord has created us and I suspect that angels are too anything else before we terminate this the food is here any other thoughts anyone

Cheryl thank you again for the great service you provide for us I appreciate you putting up with it week after week I'll just say this I'll just thank you we appreciate this yeah we appreciate you going to thank you you