

Jesus is better than the angels

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning and welcome to this pre-recorded meeting for Calvary Evangelical Church on! the 12th of July 2020. Still just emerging from the coronavirus and more things to sort out before we! can meet together in the way we used to and we'll keep people updated on that. If you're a stranger to us, I can explain we're a church of people who live in the area of Brighton, Sussex, UK, south coast of England. We're believers in Jesus Christ. There's normally 70, 80 of us meeting together on Sunday mornings on normal times and we're a group of people from different backgrounds and different nations who have put our trust in Jesus Christ and we believe that God has brought us together to love him and serve him and we'll do our best to express that in all the things that we do this morning.

What Christians believe is summarised by one of the first Christian leaders and missionaries. He was called an apostle, a representative of Jesus Christ. His name was Paul and he said, Now brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures and that he appeared to Peter, then to the twelve, and after that he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers at once. And he writes that to the church at Corinth. And that fact of the resurrection is something we'll be thinking of later.

So let me introduce myself. I'm one of the team of elders here at Calvary. My name's Philip Wells and I'll be leading this morning. There are other relevant notices which will have gone out by email. And I just welcome you again if you've dropped in. We're going to do the things that Christians do when they meet together. It's on the screen behind me there. We're going to sing and pray and read the Bible and have a talk on the Bible as it applies to us. We believe the Bible is a totally relevant book and speaks to each one of us because it's God speaking. So the plan there is on the screen. And this morning we're continuing a set of studies and meditations based on a book in the New Testament called The Letter to the Hebrews. More of that later. But the first part of our time we're going to spend hearing, singing and meditating upon some of the ancient songs in the Bible called the Psalms.

[2 : 56] And it'd be great if you could follow along with them in your Bible or download a Bible app. I've got one called Tecata on my phone. That seems to work really well. I'm sure others are available.

Songs in the Bible. The fact that the Bible contains songs is really worth noting. I should say that the Bible doesn't have the tunes, but it does have the poetry of the words. And as Christians, one of the things we really, really miss is singing together. It's not quite the same hearing it on tape, but actually singing. Singing is more than reading. It combines the physical act of singing, mental and thinking act of the words, but also feeling and emotion. There's something deeply human about singing.

And P.S. my understanding of the Bible is that angels don't sing. Only people sing. Only human beings. And God is interested then in many things. Not just where we put our bodies, like whether we go to church, although that matters. And not just how we think. Although what we think in our hearts is a very deep thing. But singing combines more than that. The very essence of our heart and soul.

That's what God's interested in. And that's why singing is so important. So I've got a little bit out of step with my plan, but let me now pray. Lord, whoever we are and wherever we are, we ask, as we have done before, that we may be found drawing near to you and you drawing near to us. May this be a time of living contact with you, the living God, by your word and spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

So Julia's going to read Psalm 2. Today I'm reading Psalm 2. Why do the nations conspire and the people plot in vain?

The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers bound together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.

[12:35] The one enthroned in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.

I will proclaim the Lord's decree. He said to me, You are my son. Today I have become your father. Ask me and I will make the nations your inheritance and the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron and you will dash them to pieces like pottery. Therefore, you kings, be wise. Be warned, you rulers of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. Kiss his son or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction. For his wrath can flare up in a moment.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him. The psalm ends up by saying that the only safe and sane thing to do is to take refuge in the personal protection of this same king, who is, of course, none other than the risen Jesus Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, risen from the dead.

[13:59] Well, our next psalm is Psalm 45. And it's a psalm for the wedding day of the king. For the director of music to the tune of Lilies, of the sons of Korah, a masculine, a wedding song.

It is written by the official court poet. I think that's the idea of it. And he's commissioned to write a really good poem.

And so he begins, My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king. My tongue is the pen of a skillful writer. He says this is good stuff and a great theme, a lofty theme to write about.

And in it, he describes the beauty and nobility and adorability of the king. You are the most excellent of men. Your lips have been anointed with grace since God has blessed you forever. And it talks about his power. Gird your sword upon your side, O mighty one. Clothe yourself with splendour and majesty. These are all the kingly things that a king should be. And the bride is reminded not to look back at the family she's left, but to look to her new husband.

[15:20] Listen, O daughter, consider and give ear. Forget your people and your father's house. The king is enthralled by your beauty. Honour him, for he is your lord.

So she's reminded to look to her new husband and to love him above all. So I won't read the whole thing, but we'll sing Psalm 45.

Psalm 45 Whose love, rich gifts bestowing, has blessed the human race.

Whose lips are overflowing with words of truth and grace. In majesty transcendent, put on your concrete sword.

In righteousness resplendent, write on in quiet word. Ride on, O King Messiah, to glory and renown.

[16:58] Lifted by your shots of fire, each lobe being overthrown. So reign, O God, in heaven, eternally the same.

And endless praise be given to your almighty name. Gloat in your dazzling brightness.

Your church on earth behold. In robes of purest whiteness. In garments worked in gold.

Let every tribe and nation come gladly in the throng. To share her great salvation and join her grateful song.

Then shall no note of sadness. Awake the trembling stream. One song of joy and gladness.

[18:18] The ransomed world shall sing. So let us look to the bridegroom and not look back.

And did you notice verse 6 said to this bridegroom, your throne, O God, will last forever and ever. That gets quoted later.

The final psalm we'll look at is Psalm 110. And this psalm, again, is quite unusual.

It belongs to King David. David. That's what it says at the top of it. And it looks into the misty distance.

David looks into the misty distant future and sees there a fantastically powerful king. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

[19:23] The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion. You will rule in the midst of your enemies. Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty from the womb of the dawn, you will receive the dew of your youth.

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. The Lord is at your right hand.

He will crush kings on the day of his wrath. He will judge nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the heads of the whole earth. He will drink from a brook beside the way.

Therefore, will he lift up his head. It's looking into the misty distance. A king who crushes other kings. Verse 5. The Lord will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

The king who sits down next to God himself. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. It's one who has the foes crushed beneath his feet, as it says in that verse 1.

[20 : 34] It sees this king being revived by dew. You will receive the dew of your youth. Verse 3. And drinking from a brook.

He will drink from a brook beside the way. Therefore, will he lift up his head. It also sees him function as a priest, not in the style of the normal Jewish priests who were hereditary.

They had their job because they inherited it. But this priest is a one-off in the style of Melchizedek. Now Melchizedek was a king stroke priest, a king and priest, way back in the time of Abraham. And this is what David foresees. So I read it and commented on it.

Let's now sing Psalm 110. The Lord said to my Lord, sit here at my right hand.

[21 : 50] Until your foes before you fall at my command. From Zion's throne he gave you power to rule the land.

And when the day of battle comes, your troops will fight.

And you in holy majesty from day's first light. With you theointed as with dew will rise in might.

The Lord himself hath swore and not his oath can shape.

That you forever in his name should Christ would take. Subseeding in the light of peace, Melchizedek.

[23 : 22] O Christ, beside your Father now you take your seat.

Till all the powers of earth lie crush beneath your feet. Renown and glory crown your head.

Your work complete. And Psalm 110 also does not find its fulfillment with David.

It is about David's Lord, as David himself says. And who can this possibly be? Well, I think you know the answer to that. So I hope you've been able to enter into these songs, body, mind and soul, and enjoyed doing so.

And part of the reason for singing them is that they're all quoted in our Bible passage for today. I don't need that as an excuse because it's great to sing them anyway. But they are quoted in our Bible passage for today.

[24 : 40] And Ray is going to read the Bible passage as he did last week. I've tacked on a couple of extra verses at the end. Because our thoughts can go a little bit further.

So thank you, Ray, for reading to us Hebrews chapter 1 and on into chapter 2. The reading is Hebrews chapter 1 verse 1 through to chapter 2 verse 5.

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven, so that he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

[25 : 48] For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my Son, today I have become your Father? Or again, I will be his Father, and he will be my Son.

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, Let all God's angels worship him. In speaking of the angels, he says, He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire.

But about the Son, he says, Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

Therefore, God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. He also says, In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

They will perish, but you remain. They will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe. Like a garment, they will be changed.

[27 : 04] But you remain the same, and your years will never end. To which of the angels did God ever say, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?

Are not all angels ministering spirits, sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape, if we ignore such a great salvation?

This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders, and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified, What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

[28 : 29] You made him a little lower than the angels. You crowned him with glory and honour, and put everything under his feet. In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him.

Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour, because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Thank you, Ray. Let us pray. Lord, we come to think about you today. We confess our sins and ask you to forgive us.

We bow before you in adoration as we are singing. You are a great God, greatly to be praised. We bring our world to you with all its needs.

May you have mercy on all around us. But in particular, we thank you for these psalms. They engage our hearts and minds in who you are and how we are to praise you and how grateful we should be towards you.

[29 : 44] Thank you for the one of whom they speak, Jesus, our Saviour. We bow before his utter greatness, confess our sins and our rebellion, and pray that we may be brought to be better servants of this wonderful King and Husband and Saviour.

may you please, may we be more consistent and more constant in our obedience. May we be more appreciative in our gratitude.

May we be more devoted in our love and may we be more heartfelt in all our motives and all that we do. May our lives be lived for you and may we speak your praise every day.

So as we come to listen to your word, please change us to be more the people that you deserve us to be, that you want us to be, and that we ought to be. So we pray these things by your grace and we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen. And now we'll have our talk. Some of you know that I grew up on the Isle of Wight and you get to the Isle of Wight by the Isle of Wight ferry.

[31 : 10] It's a new version of the Isle of Wight ferry which I've yet to travel on. When you get on to the Isle of Wight ferry, a very chirpy lady says this, would all passengers kindly listen to the following safety announcement?

In the unlikely event of an accident, would all passengers and crew assemble at the muster stations? And she goes on to give various other pieces of information.

A muster station is depicted by a green symbol showing a family group. There's the muster station. And I think she says other things as well. But it's usually drowned out by the noise of all the other people not paying any attention, getting their sandwiches out, getting their sandwiches out, queuing up for coffee, and not listening to the following safety announcement.

And my question is, well, we smile at it, but if we fail to listen, seriously, it may cost us our lives if people don't know how to escape a sinking ship.

I know it's unlikely, but if they don't know how, how will they escape? And that, of course, is the very point that the writers of the Hebrews is making in the passage that we're looking at today.

[32 : 27] So, we're looking at Hebrews, some things about the letter that we noticed last time. It was written to Christians or people who say they're Christians, professing Christians, and they were from a Jewish background.

They had believed in Jesus. 10.32 talks about the early days of their faith. They'd actually suffered for their faith, insult and persecution.

But as time has gone on, they've somehow managed to lose their way. They've started going back to the synagogue and to the temple. And chapter 2, verse 1, talks about drifting.

And chapter 6, verse 12, talks about people being lazy and sluggish. And he wants to say this is not on. We have the same phenomenon nowadays in our English situation.

People who've drifted lost the plot. There are people who used to be Christians. And there are places that used to be churches. And somehow or another, they're not any longer.

[33 : 33] And the writer of the Hebrews warns people not to go down that route. So the letter contains promises and warnings. And the Reverend Dick Lucas, I heard him very helpfully say this, the mark of the elect is that they believe the promises and heed the warnings.

If we are God's people, truly, we will believe his promises and we will be worried by and tremble at the warnings. And the relevance of this is to keep us walking with the Lord.

And there's no Christian who can say, I'm so secure, I'm so graced out, I'm so Calvinistic, or whatever, that I don't need any warnings. And that includes ministers and some that I have known personally.

Warnings and promises. So last time, you may remember the writer blasted off in verses 1 to 4 with his description of the Son.

In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son.

[34 : 42] En Yos or En Yor, I think, in his Son. Son-wise, in his Son, that's how he's spoken to us.

So he's not trying to persuade non-believers about the stature of Jesus, but to remind believers just how great Jesus is, incomparably great. And to say to these believers how stupid it would be to leave Jesus, to go back to Moses and the prophets.

How stupid it would be to leave the assembly of Christ to go back to the temple with its sacrifices and rituals and food regulations. How stupid it would be to try to get the benefit of Christ in any other way than through faith in him and the work that he did on the cross.

He, having provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven. So in the verses that we're going to look at, we're going to look at from verse 4 through into chapter 2, he quotes actually a number of Psalms and the theme is comparing Jesus to angels.

Jesus the Son to angels. Now let me just tell you a little bit about C.S. Lewis, the man who wrote the Narnia stories. There's an advertising picture of him from the Amazon website.

[36 : 13] He had a thing to say about sonship. It's quite stark. It works like this. The son of a dog is a dog. The son of a cat is a cat.

The son of God is God. Now, you need to weigh that up carefully. it has tweaks on it. But it is essentially the same argument that Jesus was involved with when in John chapter 5, verse 18, he called God his father and his Jewish opponents were disgusted and alarmed by this because they said you are making yourself equal with God.

To call himself the son and to call God his father was to make himself equal with God. And if you look in John chapter 5, Jesus didn't deny it.

He explained how it worked but he didn't deny it. And let's have that in our minds as we think about what's said here about the son. So why all these songs and why all this stuff about angels?

Well, let's try and unpack this a little bit. It's to show the superiority of the son. If you just cast your eyes over the things that are said, verse 4, he became better than the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

[37 : 50] So he has a superior name and Jesus is better than or superior to angels. So the writer makes these contrasts. Verse 5, For to which of the angels did God ever say, you are my son?

And verse 6, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, let all God's angels worship him. But about the angels, he says, in verse 7, you are servants, but about the son, he says, your throne, O God, will last forever and ever.

And then in verse 10, in the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundation of the earth. These will all perish, but you remain. You will roll them up like a robe, like a garment, they will be changed, but you remain the same.

Your years will never end. something unchangeable about the uncreated son. And then again in verse 13, to which of the angels did God ever say, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?

No, he says, the angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation. And he winds up by saying, we must pay more careful attention to what we have heard, for if the message spoken by angels was binding, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?

[39 : 24] So that's what we're going to unpack, and let's look at the angels. So number one thing to say, there are such things as angels. They're created by God.

I always find it rather amusing that Nasser, the American Space Agency, spend billions and billions of dollars wondering whether there's life on other planets and going to Mars and putting down Mars rovers and so on and so on, and asking the question, are we alone in the universe?

Well, do you know, if they read their Bibles, they get an answer to that. The Bible says we're not alone. There is Almighty God himself, and he has made other personal beings such as angels.

So that's a very simple answer. You don't have to spend millions of dollars to find that. Now, when we say angels, this is not another way of saying human beings.

This is a different class of created being, intelligent, personal, powerful, but not like us, not with the same bodies as us.

[40 : 34] And these beings are made to serve God. world. So, straight away, we can see that the idea of a world in which the only things that are real are the things that science can see and measure, that idea is false.

There are things on earth not things on earth not in your earth not in your philosophy or whatever it was that Shakespeare said. We do live in a supernatural world.

Trouble is, our eyes get close to this, don't we? We live in a world of things that are, as we would say, natural and supernatural. And let's just point out that angels are not eternal, they're made, and they're not objects of worship.

To worship angels is a terrible mistake. The angels worship him, verse 6, let all God's angels worship him. And there's a clear difference between angels and the uncreated creator, creator, a clear blue water between angels and God.

Or as the writer's going to say here, clear blue water between angels and the sun. So let's say a few things about angels. Well we can say first of all that they're messengers, I'll say first of all, point number two.

[41 : 58] The Greek word angelos means messenger and the Old Testament word for angel, one of the Old Testament words is malach, which means messenger, it's the main word for angel.

But clearly these are not just people who work for FedEx, they're not just human messengers. So there are a few examples and I won't stop to itemise them all, but for example in the book of Daniel, he has visions and an angelic being brings him messages messages and information and this being is called Gabriel.

He's said to be a man, but it's just, I think the word man there is used in the sense of a person, because Gabriel is certainly an angel.

He introduces himself much later on in history around the time of the birth of Jesus, who says, I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God. So here is one angel at least who acts as a messenger. And I want to say there's a clear difference between the originator of a message and the conveyor of a message. The conveyor of a message is relatively uninvolved with the message.

[43 : 19] So if the postman brings you a love letter from your dear separated loved one and you read it and go all weak at the knees, you don't rush out to the postman and put your arms around him, give him a rose and a big slobbery kiss.

Because he brought the message, but the message comes from him, if you see what I mean.

There's a big difference between the conveyor of the message and the originator of the message.

And angels bring messages, but if you see what I mean, they don't come from the angel. But it says God speaks to us in his son.

That is him speaking in person. And what the son says is only in exactly what the father says. Yeah, we can kiss the son. We can bring him our devotion because he's not an angel.

Point three. Angels, now they are sometimes called sons of God. So let's be honest about this in the plural, sons. You get that in Job chapter 2 verse one. One day the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan also came with them.

[44 : 30] So a little bit of a window into the fact that Satan is a heavenly being, a created heavenly being, maybe a fallen angel or something like that. But these are called sons of God.

And in my opinion, and it's a bit controversial, I think Genesis 6 verse 2 is also about angelic beings. The sons of God saw the daughters of men were beautiful and took any of them they chose. But you can disagree about that. Different commentators have different views. Now the idea of a son can be on a higher or lower level and you need to look at the context.

When it says sons of God, clearly the sons, plural, means they're not unique. And I would say that the angels are not begotten but they are created, so they're sort of like sons, like adopted sons. In Exodus 4.22 Israel is spoken of as my firstborn son. Let my son go that he may worship me. Now here, son here doesn't mean sort of genetic son, does it?

[45 : 40] It means son in the sense of belonging, beloved, my firstborn son, let my son go, the inheritor of God's promises and blessings, a sort of adopted son, but not an uncreated son.

It's used in a lower relative sense. And here we have the quote from Psalm 2, today you are my son, today I have begotten you, or today I have fathered you, brought you forth.

And that's said about the Davidic king. But the Hebrew's writer is saying there is a minimum meaning and a maximum meaning.

And in a minimum meaning it can just say the Davidic king or the king who follows on from King David has a special relationship to God, a sort of delegated relationship, a closeness like father and son, and that that can be used.

And that's a sort of minimal meaning of it, the king who reigns with God's blessing. But says the writer, scripture isn't just stick to minimal meanings, there's a thing of fulfilment, there's taking something and filling it with all the meaning which it's capable of having.

[47 : 01] And the writer is saying that psalm is capable of being filled with meaning with a king who truly is God's son in the fullest possible sense, who's God himself in a C.S.

Lewis sense, the son of God is God. That's the king. Let's move on to another point here.

Angels don't do family. Angels don't do family. In other ways, they don't get married and reproduce. They don't go to an angelic wedding.

angels don't have wedding anniversaries. Jesus tells us this. He says, at the resurrection, people will neither marry nor be given in marriage.

They will be like the angels in heaven. That's what angels in heaven are like. They don't do marrying, giving in marriage. They don't do having babies. And one could speculate that maybe angels are clones.

[48 : 04] I hesitate to refer to Star Wars as a contemporary cultural reference, but you might remember the clone army that was in Star Wars.

Or you might have no idea what I'm talking about. Or angels could be made as one-offs. They're all completely different. Well, I don't know, that's just speculation, but we do know that they don't do family.

But the sun has a plan to produce family. You can see it in chapter 2, verse 10. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

And in verse 12, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. I will declare your name to my brothers. And in verse 13, here I am and the children God has given me.

So there's actually a big thing about family. the son does family. It's all about family. And there's something deeply moving about salvation through the son and being part of his family.

[49 : 17] And the believer enters this mystery the moment that he or she says the same word to God that Jesus used. The son calls God father, Abba father.

And the believer in Jesus Christ can amazingly say to God, Abba, father, family, brothers and sisters, Jesus as our elder brother and God as our loving heavenly father.

But angels don't do family. What do angels do? Number four, they do act for God in human affairs. So we've got examples of angels doing things like in Genesis 18 verse 2, Abraham met three men and if you may remember he leapt up and made a meal for them.

In the later chapter of these three, two of them went off to Sodom, the evil place, to find out if it was really as bad as they'd heard.

So they went off as fact finders. But two of those men were angels and one remaining man was someone else.

[50 : 31] Come to that later. Hebrews actually refers to this saying we should be equally hospitable to entertain strangers because some have entertained angels without knowing it.

So here are some angels acting for God in human affairs. angels. Jesus had a relationship with angels in the sense that angels did things for him.

And in the Garden of Gethsemane Luke records that an angel strengthened him in his moment of anguished prayer. At his arrest Jesus said don't you think I couldn't call on my father and he'd immediately send 12 legions of angels.

And at his resurrection an angel of the Lord came down and sat on that stone that had been rolled away. Looked like a man in blinding white clothing able to speak frightening but an angel acting for God in human affairs.

Now notice that angels here are servants. They further God's plan of salvation. Verse 14 are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation.

[51 : 52] They're servants. They do God's will. They're servants in the house. They're not members of the household. We've been watching the Crown TV programme.

We watched the one about the investiture of the Prince of Wales. Wondered how much of it was made up and how much of it was real. But in the TV version, the Prince of Wales does submit to his mum, the Queen, but in a different way to the royal servants.

He is a member of the royal family and as such he is a son in the house, not a skivvy, not a servant. And the son, Jesus, yeah, he serves his father, he does his father's will, but not as skivvy, he has the title God.

About the son he says, your throne, O God, will last forever. He has the title Lord. In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth.

[52 : 58] There's clear blue water between the angel servant and the son. So there's just one exception to this, which I'll stop on for a moment, is when in the Old Testament we have the angel of the Lord.

So not an angel or not angels, but the angel of the Lord. And that's a curious and mysterious thing. You get this in Exodus 3, 2, when the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses as flames of fire from within a bush.

And then a sentence or so later, it says, God called to him from the bush. Now this, the angel of the Lord, is very closely allied to God himself.

They're almost indistinguishable. Seems to be an expression of the Lord himself. And Christians would look on that and say, well, this is the same thing as Jesus the Son, who existed before all things and before he took human nature.

So here, perhaps, in the angel of the Lord, is a pre-incarnate instance of the working and involvement of the Son of God, who later took flesh and became Jesus.

[54 : 20] And that is similarly the probability, really, of the third angel who spoke to Abraham when he made that meal for them.

Anyway, that particular point there about the angel of the Lord. So we've looked at angels here and the difference between the angels and the Son.

And what's the point of that? I mean, it's all very interesting, isn't it, about angels? But there is a point to this, and the point is listen up. Angels, yes, brilliant, wonderful, amazing, messengers, intermediaries, and the Jewish readers would have pricked up their ears, angels, yes, we know about angels, because the law of Moses was given through angels.

That's what he's meaning in chapter 2, verse 2. The message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment. That's a message that was spoken through angels.

Paul says the same thing in Galatians. The law of Moses was put into effect through angels by a mediator. And in Acts 7, verse 5, Stephen says, you received the law that was put into effect through angels, but you haven't obeyed it.

[55 : 46] That's what he says to the leaders in Jerusalem just before he was martyred. So the law of Moses was brought supernaturally.

Angels were involved. Surely this argues for the status and stature of the law of Moses, and the writer would say, yes, it does. Angels are brilliant, and they were involved with the law of Moses. But, now, that message was binding, he says. That message was really important, the law of Moses. Every violation and disobedience received its just punishment.

that message, because of the people who brought it, was so important. But how will we escape, he says, if we neglect, if we ignore, such a great salvation.

In other words, the things that the Son has brought, and the Son has said. If you go back in history, when people disobeyed, neglected the law of Moses, well, what were they?

[56 : 50] They were stoned to death, like Acham, who appears through with a spear, like what's his name? Phinehas did. The earth opened and swallowed people up, like the rebels in the camp of Moses.

Cities were devastated. Jerusalem, in the end, was destroyed. Zion was destroyed because people disobeyed the word that came through Moses.

They disobeyed the law. That was truly serious. And the point being, if this great Moses message via angels is eclipsed by the message of Jesus, how much more should we listen to the message of Jesus?

And if you've got any other angel messages, they're not going to be as great as the message through Moses. So how much less do you want to put them ahead of the word, the gospel, the salvation that comes through the Son?

So the conclusion is listen up. This is what it says. We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

[58 : 03] How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? So if we ignore what was said through the Son, and what was said through the Son is now written down for us in Scripture, in the New Testament of the Bible, shall we choose that, or should we choose other messages?

Oh, there's all sorts of other messages, all sorts of voices, aren't there? All sorts of supernatural voices, yeah, angels, all sorts of things through angels, weird messages that come, preachers that preach things with great power and great enthusiasm and nothing to do with the Bible, all the sort of occult things like horoscopes and rune stones which try to have power and touch with the supernatural without the Son, and people who have dreams and spirit messengers and all these sorts of things, and the writer says, put those to one side.

How shall we escape if we ignore the message given to us through the Son? we must pay more careful attention therefore to what we have heard.

Now, as you can see on the screen, there's a picture of Beachy Head and a little close up of some young people sitting right on the edge of the cliff, and I think it's from the Daily Mail actually, and they helpfully say there's a 300-foot drop from the top of Beachy Head or wherever it is around there, to the hard reality of the stones underneath.

There is a message that saves our lives. Now, that message says, keep away from the edge, keep away from the edge at Berlin Gap and Beachy Head. People are so stupid, aren't they?

[60 : 00] They sit right on the edge there, risking their very lives. There's a sign there which says, keep away from the edge. Why do they take any notice of it? Why on earth don't they pay attention? But when you get on the airplane or when you get on the Isle of White Ferry, please listen to the following safety announcement.

Your life might depend on it. And you think, why are people eating their sandwiches and just fiddling about and not listening? We must pay more careful attention therefore to what we have heard so that we do not drift away.

How will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? And I wonder, why do we have whole Christian groups who have somehow taught themselves to attempt to attain salvation without submitting to the Bible?

Why do some Christians sit in judgment on the Bible, picking and choosing, majoring on minors, minimizing the majors, without listening to what Christ says and what he says is important?

How shall we escape? Why do people seek the mind of Christ in dreams and visions and weird things instead of actually listening to what he said and here it is in black and white?

[61 : 19] Why do professing Christians find it's actually fairly easy to go day by day without opening their Bibles, without hearing God speak from the Bible?

He says we must pay more careful attention so that we do not drift away. And how is it that people manage to hear what God is saying and then put it in the pending tray?

If you look behind me you can see all the things I put in the pending tray and haven't filed away properly. Don't put what God says in the pending tray, put it in the action tray.

Don't say, oh well one day I'll make up my mind on this. You know, one day will be too late. One day I'll get to the point of yielding myself to what he actually says.

One day will be too late. Jesus talked about the man who built his house on the rock. He heard and did what Jesus said. Oh, hearing.

[62 : 20] Yeah, you can hear it. Put it in the pending tray, like Jesus says, as the man who built his house on the sand, he heard it, but he didn't do anything about it. We must pay careful attention to what we have heard, that we do not drift away.

How will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? Well, there it is. Please listen carefully to the safety announcement.

Otherwise, how will we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? The writer to the Hebrews tells us that God has spoken to us by his son.

And this message is so arresting, so significant, so unique, so important, that we ignore it at our peril. The son is the height and apex of God reaching out to us and communicating to us, condescending in his grace to reach out a hand to us, as it were.

Therefore, let us listen to him. Among the clash of creeds, the many voices. Into these final days, our God has spoken by sending his only son.

[63 : 46] That's song 667. We'll sing it and then I'll do the closing prayer. above the clash of creeds, the many voices that call on so many names.

Into these final days, our God has spoken by sending his only son.

There is no other way by which we must be saved. His name is Jesus, the only Savior, no other sinless life, no other sacrifice, in all creation, no other way.

before we called he came to earth from heaven, the maker became a man.

When no one else could play, he bought a freedom, exchanging his life for us.

[66 : 06] There is no other way by which we must be saved. His name is Jesus, the only Savior, no other sinless life, no other sacrifice, in all creation, no other way.

in all the cross of Christ, let earth fall silent in all this mystery.

And let this song arise, and filled the nations, in him will come unto thee.

there is no other way by which we must be saved.

His name is Jesus, the only Savior, no other sinless life, no other sacrifice, in all creation, upon the way.

[68 : 06] We've sung, and let me close in prayer. May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant, brought back from the dead, our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Amen. Amen. I look forward to seeing you soon. That's it from me. Bye-bye for now.

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