

Fact Sheet for **“So Great a Salvation”**  
**Hebrews 1:5-2:4**  
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There is much to encourage us in our own faith and challenge us in this book. But there are also things that can trip us up if we don't consider them carefully. He has written that Christ is greater than the prophets of the OT. He now writes that Jesus Christ is also greater than the angels.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1:5a For to which of the angels did God ever say,**  
**"YOU ARE MY SON,**  
**TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"** (Psalm 2:7)?

<sup>5b</sup> **Or again,**  
**"I WILL BE TO HIM A FATHER, AND HE SHALL BE TO ME A**  
**SON"** (2 Samuel 7:14)?

<sup>6</sup> **And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,**  
**"LET ALL GOD'S ANGELS WORSHIP HIM."** (Psalm 97:7)

In other words, the Son is greater than the angels.

Although Jesus has been described by the author of Hebrews as a Son, and the firstborn who God (*the Father*) brought into the world, that same human author has already described Christ as the One through whom this same world was created. When Jesus was conceived by the virgin Mary and later born in Bethlehem He was still God the Son who existed from all eternity with the Father and the Spirit.

<sup>7</sup> **Of the angels he says,**  
**"HE MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS,**  
**AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE."** (Psalm 104:4.)

The angels are only servants.

<sup>8</sup> **But of the Son he says,**  
**"YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER,**  
**THE SCEPTER OF UPRIGHTNESS IS THE SCEPTER OF YOUR KINGDOM.**  
<sup>9</sup> **YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED WICKEDNESS;**  
**THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU**  
**WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS BEYOND YOUR COMPANIONS."** (Psalm 45:6-7)

God the Father never said anything like this of the angels.

<sup>10</sup> **And,**  
**"YOU, LORD, (JESUS) LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH IN THE BEGINNING,**  
**AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORK OF YOUR HANDS;**  
<sup>11</sup> **THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN;**  
**THEY WILL ALL WEAR OUT LIKE A GARMENT,**  
<sup>12</sup> **LIKE A ROBE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP, LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL BE CHANGED.**  
**BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL HAVE NO END."** (Psalm 102:25-27)

<sup>13</sup> **And to which of the angels has he ever said,**  
**"SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND**  
**UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"** (Psalm 110:1)?

<sup>14</sup> **Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?**

**2:1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.**

Who is the author of Hebrews writing to, and why? What does he mean by drifting away from it? These are three critical questions. And he uses the pronoun “we”, which would even include himself. I’ll come back to this later.

**<sup>2</sup> For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,<sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard,<sup>4</sup> while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.**

This is the first of five warning passages in the book of Hebrews (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; 12:14-29). In the original this is all one sentence. Let’s take it one step at a time.

That message was the Mosaic Law given on Mt. Sinai. Stephen and Paul both mentioned that it was delivered through angels (Acts 7:38; Galatians 3:19). And that Law, even though it was delivered through angels who are lower than Christ, still proved absolutely reliable, dependable, and certain. And it included penalties for sin.

The Mosaic Law specified punishments.

What is this escape from? Judgment for our sins! Eternal death! This great salvation is only to be found in Jesus Christ. How shall we escape if we neglect (*show no interest in, pay no attention to, ignore, disregard*) this great salvation? The answer is, “We won’t!”

This great salvation through faith in Christ wasn’t just declared to us by a mere angel... it was declared to us by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself when He walked among us! If the Law declared by mere angels proved to be absolutely reliable, then how reliable do you think this great salvation will be, which was declared to us by God the Son?

This second witness to the reliability of this great salvation comes from an allusion to Deuteronomy 19:15. It was witness of those who heard, notably the Apostles (see 1 John 1:1-3).

The third witness to the reliability of this great salvation were the miraculous signs. Think of Pentecost Sunday (Acts 2), the healing of the lame man in the temple (Acts 3), Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8), the salvation of the Gentile Cornelius (Acts 10), the raising of Eutychus from the dead (Acts 20), etc.

Who is the author of Hebrews writing to, and why? His readers clearly have a good knowledge of the OT. Most were likely Jewish in background. He was not writing to your average Gentile who did not know much of the OT scriptures. From several things said in the book it is also clear that he is writing to those who have identified themselves at some level with Christians. But why is he writing? Consider what it would have been like for the average Jew to have placed their faith in Christ. It would have been a huge shift in thinking from a works based salvation to a faith based one. Jesus was the long awaited Messiah, but He had been crucified after all. Then there would have been the exceedingly strong push back from friends, relatives, and others who chose not to follow Jesus. Paul ran headlong into this opposition. They wanted to kill him! But Paul remained steadfast and unmoved. However not everyone had that same tenacity of character. And the author of Hebrews also had the same way of knowing that we do whether people had actually been saved by faith in Christ or not. Most true Christians who read these words would have been encouraged in their faith. A few weak Christians still might walk away but all they would find is an empty and problematic teaching of how to be saved through works. Someone who had found their way among Christians but had not yet trusted in Christ would have been challenged to believe in Him. Someone who finally chose not to believe in Christ and decided to walk away would have been warned of the coming judgment for their sin. Today we can say the same things to people who consider themselves to be in the church. Be strong in your faith! Don’t be weak! There is no other way to God. Pay attention to what you believe! Are you still on the fence? Consider placing both of your feet squarely with Christ.