PAY ATTENTION

Hebrews 2:1-4
1/17/2021

Introduction: v.1a -
If people faced serious consequences for neglecting messages delivered by angels , how will any of us escape if we neglect the message of Jesus Christ?

**** Be very careful to pay close attention to everything Jesus Christ has said!***

Failure to do so results in two dangerous consequences:

When you don't pay attention to what Jesus has said,
I. You face the danger of DRIFTING from His Word (v.1b)

When you don't pay attention to what Jesus has said,
II. You face the danger of BEING JUDGED by His Word (v.2-4)

We had better listen, because...
A. When the Lord speaks, HE DOES WHAT HE SAYS (v.2-3a)

We had better listen, because...
B. When the Lord speaks, HE BACKS UP WHAT HE SAYS (v.3b-4)

1. God's great salvation plan was first spoken by Jesus Christ (v.3b)

2. God's great salvation plan was then confirmed by the Apostles (v.3c)

3. God's great salvation plan was authenticated by God's miraculous power (v.4)

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If people faced serious consequences for neglecting messages delivered by angels , how will any of us escape if we neglect the message of Jesus Christ?

"Therefore" - Whenever you see the word "therefore," you must back up in the context and see what the "therefore" is there for.

In chapter 1 God showed the superiority of Christ over angels.

**Realize how great Jesus Christ really is!*
(He is infinitely superior to even Angels!)
See what God the Father said about His Son, Jesus Christ in comparison to Angels...

Jesus Christ is superior to Angels...

I. **In NAME, He is my "SON": Honor Him! (v.4-5)**

Jesus Christ is superior to Angels...

II. **In NATURE, He is GOD: Worship Him! (v.6-9)**

Jesus Christ is superior to Angels...

III. **In WORK, He is CREATOR: *Thank Him!* (v.10)**

Jesus Christ is superior to Angels...

IV. **In EXISTENCE, He is ETERNAL: *Trust Him!* (v.11-12)**

Jesus Christ is superior to Angels...

V. **In POSITION, He is RULER: *Submit to Him!* (v.13-14)**

In the previous context, God demonstrated the superiority of Christ over angels for a reason. He now gives that reason.

"We ought" - It is necessary; it is binding; it behooves us; we must! (not a mere suggestion to pay attention to Christ).

"Heed" - Careful attention. The word was commonly used in describing the care and cautious attention by those who would carefully watch where they were going as they would bring a ship to land (Rienecker, p. 666).

Paying "close attention" to Christ's Word implies four things:
Hearing it intently
Believing it willingly
Submitting to it wholeheartedly
Obeying it consistently

"The more earnest heed" - If people paid attention to messages delivered by prophets (v. 1) and angels, we must give even more attention to the messages delivered by Jesus Christ.

"The things" - The Gospel message and the description of life for the New Testament believer as given by Christ.

"Which we have heard" - Not everyone had a Bible, so they would hear it orally read or its message preached.
(How much more accountable are we who have plenty of available Bibles)

**** Be very careful to pay close attention to everything Jesus Christ has said!***
Failure to do so results in two dangerous consequences:

When you don't pay attention to what Jesus has said,

I. You face the danger of DRIFTING from His Word (v.1b)

"Slip" - To flow away; as a river would carry objects away from one's reach.
The word was used of something slipping from one's memory or of a ring slipping from one's finger or of a ship drifting away from its moorings (Reinecker, p. 666).

The word *"slip"* is passive, implying that there are forces outside of ourselves which may wrench the Word from our hearts if we are not serious about it.

If God's Word does not penetrate the heart of one who hearts it, the devil (like a hungry vulture) will pick away that seed which was sown into the heart of the hard-hearted unbeliever (Mt. 13:19 - *"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.")*

What things do you pay attention to, so you don't lose them? (jewelry; boyfriend or girlfriend; your car in NYC, etc.)

Do we even think of giving as much heed to retaining last week's Sunday sermon, or yesterday's devotional reading? We are too casual about our Christianity.

If you don't hold on to it, you may lose it!

Can you imagine accidentally dropping a diamond ring off of a boat in the middle of the ocean, or having an expensive hat blow off your head from the top of the Empire State Building, or having your boat drift away down river and off the falls?

In this context of professing Christian Hebrew believers, some professed, but did not possess the truth. Hence the opportunity of mentally losing God's salvation plan was a real danger.

To let something pass by which deserved our greatest attention is the height of folly.

"Use it or Lose it" applies to spiritual exercise as well as physical.
"It is easy to drift with the current, but it is difficult to return against the stream" (Wiersbe, p. 27).

When you don't pay attention to what Jesus has said,

II. You face the danger of <u>BEING JUDGED</u> by His Word (v.2-4)

V. 2

When did "<u>angels</u>" speak?

God announced the birth of John the Baptist & Jesus via angels.

God gave the Law to Moses via angels (Acts 7:53 - *"Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it"*; Ps. 68:17 - *"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord ia among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place"*; Cp. Deut. 33:2)

God spoke to Abraham about the impending judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah via angels (Gen. 18).

We had better listen, because...

A. When the Lord speaks, <u>HE DOES WHAT HE SAYS</u> (v.2-3a)

V. 2

"Steadfast" - Firm, dependable, guaranteed to be fulfilled.

"Transgression" - (lit. to "step beside"); to ignore by stepping over God's boundaries

"Disobedience" - (lit. to "hear beside"); to ignore by refusing to listen.

"A just recompense of reward" - A fair and righteous pay back or punishment

V. 3

"How shall we escape?" - How can we flee from, avoid, or get away out from payment for ignoring God's Word.

We often deceive ourselves into thinking we are exceptions. "Yeah, I see what happened to others who went down the wrong path, but that won't happen to me; I'm different; God and I have this deal worked out. . ."

No one avoids the unalterable principle of sowing and reaping!

"Neglect" - to be unconcerned about something.

"Neglect" - many don't view neglect as so serious. Some would justify their neglect by saying:

"After all, I don't <u>hate</u> God's great salvation."
"After all, I don't <u>oppose</u> God's great salvation."

"Hell is undoubtedly full of people who were never actively opposed to Jesus Christ, but who simply neglected the Gospel." (MacArthur, p. 39).

"So great salvation" - God's salvation, of all subjects, must not be ignored. It is the "greatest" subject, planned by the greatest Mind (God's), provided by the greatest Person (Jesus Christ), preached by the greatest Teacher (the Holy Spirit), promising the greatest benefits (eternal life and abundant life).

We had better listen, because...

B. When the Lord speaks, <u>HE BACKS UP WHAT HE SAYS</u> (v.3b-4)

1. God's great salvation plan was first <u>spoken by Jesus Christ</u> (v.3b)

"At the first" - at the beginning of the New Testament era

"By the Lord" - Jesus Christ in the flesh on earth

It was Jesus who said: John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:37; 10:27-30; 14:6, etc.)
It was Jesus who said:
"I am the living water"
"I am the true vine"
"I am the door"
"I am the good Shepherd"
"I am the bread of life"
"I am the light of the world"
"I am the resurrection and the life"

[Note: The Ultradispensationalists don't believe Christ's message of salvation applies to us. We should consult Paul, they would say (implying two different Gospels). The writer of Hebrews would strongly disagree with them.]

2. God's great salvation plan was then <u>confirmed by the Apostles</u> (v.3c)

"Confirmed" - to guarantee something by showing how valid and secure it is.
God had eye and ear witnesses of Christ's life, death, resurrection, ascension, messages, etc.

3. God's great salvation plan was <u>authenticated by God's miraculous power</u> (v.4)

"Witness" - God gave additional testimony to the world of the truthfulness and faithfulness of the Apostolic message and messengers

God always vindicated or authenticated His messengers.

Exod. 4:28-30 - *"And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people."*

Exod. 14:31 - *"And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and his servant Moses."*

Elijah; Daniel; Paul; Peter, etc.

Rom. 15:19 - *"Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

II Cor. 12:13 - *"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."*

Note: The participle ***"bearing"*** describes the <u>past</u> tense Aorist verb *"confirmed"* (v. 3). The past tense verb indicates that God is <u>not</u> now presently confirming the Gospel with miracles, but that He did in the <u>past</u>!

Mark 16:20 - *"And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."*

"Signs" - An experiential indication of supernatural power, showing that god is speaking, working, moving, etc. (all signs point to God as He pours out new

revelation or steps into history to begin a new work).

"Wonders" - something which causes amazement.

"Miracles" - dynamic, supernatural powers

"Gifts" - i.e. sign gifts, such as healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation of tongues

"According to His will" - Not the will of man, but God. He sovereignly sent signs and miracles as He wished and desired; not because people wanted to exercise such gifts (I Cor. 12:4 - *"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit")*

The church has been built on the foundation of the Apostles and New Testament prophets (Eph. 2:20). Such foundation layers do not exist today.

Faith Healers (message by Dan Labieniec)

Not only did God breath life into the early Church (Acts 2), but He also gave gifts to men (Eph. 4).

Sign gifts = to validate God's messengers.

"Believe Me for My work's sake"
"We know that You are a teacher come from God..." (how did they know?)
"The works that I do bear witness"
"And truly many other signs did Jesus"

Men may have denied His words, but they could never deny His works.

*The validation (mark) of a God-ordained ministry today is not sign gifts, but a lining up with the complete Word of God. The sign gifts were to the Apostles and their associates (II Cor. 12:12).

Signs would serve as big billboards to advertize a new message.

Are the sign gifts still around today? To answer this ask, "Are the Apostles still around today?" Or: "Is God still pouring out new revelation today?"

They ceased by the time Hebrews was written (*"was confirmed" unto us by them* [apostles]" -- past tense).

Phil. 2:25 - Epaphroditis was sick unto death.
II Tim. 4:20 - Trophimus have I left ...sick
II Cor. 12:7 - thorn in the flesh (Paul couldn't even heal himself)
James - Is any afflicted? Let him pray.

"Take a little wine [medicine] for thy stomach's sake"

To give the early Church a "jumpstart" God gave sign gifts.

If sign gifts did pass away, what is all of this "hocus pocus" going on today?

Much of the so-called healing and healers are:

1.Fraudulent claims by greedy charlatans

--pre-planned
--mind manipulation
--75% of people with physical problems today are psychosomatic. They feel healed through a serge of adrenalin until they leave the healing service.

2.Satan and his demons can perform signs and wonders

Mk. 13:22 - "shall show signs and wonders"
Mt. 7:22 - "cast out demons in Thy name"

How do witch doctors validate their message? Black magic, voodoo

II Cor. 11 - "Satan, an angel of light"
"Believe not every spirit"

Even if sign miracles were done today, they would have to be done according to the Scriptural pattern:

Healings were most always used on <u>unbelievers</u>.
Healings were most always used <u>wherever they went</u>.
It would be fishy if only believers were being healed.

Realize how great Jesus Christ really is!
(He is infinitely superior to even Angels!)

See what God the Father said about His Son, Jesus Christ in comparison to Angels...

Jesus Christ is superior to Angels...
I.In <u>NAME</u>, He is my <u>"SON"</u>: Honor Him! (v.4-5)

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