

Although the information presented would be invaluable in leading an unbeliever to Christ, the letter was written to Christians. To become a Christian they had to believe Jesus was divine and that he was the payment for their sin. However they were weak in the faith, not understanding fully all of the ramifications of these great truths and how they related to the old system. (Heb. 5:12-13) The author presented the basic truths in chapter 1 as a foundation upon which he will build the truths that will show that all that is needed is Jesus Christ.

These weak believers were present in the Roman church. In Romans 14 Paul's task was to instruct the weak and strong on how to treat one another, knowing that the weak would grow if the strong exercised patience and love. The situation in Hebrews is different in that the entire church is weak and must be instructed and exhorted to growth.

**2:1 - "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."**

Based on the information given in chapter 1, especially that the Son whom is spoken of is eternally supreme, the readers are exhorted to pay careful attention to the gospel message and the resulting teachings. The things they have heard should be taken to heart. They should be looked into, examined, and studied. All of the ramifications of the gospel message should be known, for the communication of God is of the utmost importance.

*"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

II Tim. 2:15

*"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."*

Acts 17:10-11

By not growing in knowledge, they may drift back into the old system, thus compromising the great truth and freedom given by the gospel.

*"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Receive ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"*

Gal. 3:1-3

**2:2 - "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;"**

God stood firm behind his communication to man in the old testament which represented the period of promise. God deals with sin. Sometimes directly as in the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah, sometimes indirectly through pre-ordained consequences of sin.

*"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"* Rom. 1:18

*"Because sentence against an evil is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God."* Eccl. 8:11-13

Under the old testament many of the laws, if broken, carried the death penalty. The commandments of God are not to be taken lightly. (Num 15:31-41)

*"Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him."* Num. 15:30

**2:3 - "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;"**

Being familiar with the demands of the old system a believer cannot be ignorant of the facts concerning the new system. The believer possesses the full revelation as well as the indwelling Holy Spirit. Those of the fulfillment have greater accountability than those of the promise.

*"And that servant, which knew the lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."* Luke 12:47-48

The believer cannot take God's mercy for granted. There is responsibility. The believer is commanded to grow in knowledge and grace.

*"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."* Phil. 2:12

*"And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* II Peter 1:5-11

Ignorance and disobedience will cost the believer in this life as well as in the next.

*"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"* I Peter 1:17

*"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood hay stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."* I Cor. 3:11-15

The greatness of our salvation is seen in that the Lord himself came to proclaim it.

*"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears."* Luke 4:16-21

John the Baptist, through prophesy, proclaimed both this message and his coming.

*"He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by*

*measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."*  
John 3:30-36

The author, as well as his readers, had not seen Christ, but relied upon the accounts of those who had.

*"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."*  
Luke 1:1-4

*"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."*  
John 20:29

### **2:4 - "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"**

Most importantly, the message preached by Christ and also by those that were eyewitnesses was confirmed by God. The signs and wonders performed by Christ were confirmation of his word by God.

*"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe me not, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."*  
John 10:36-38

*"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."*  
John 21:25

God directly confirmed the work of the Son on at least three occasions.

*"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."*  
Luke 3:21-22

*"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that*

*stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."*

John 12:27-30

*"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;hear ye him."*

Matt. 17:5

God also performed miracles by the hands of the apostles through the Holy Ghost. God confirmed the message of these eyewitnesses who were commissioned to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

*"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with him into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God.*

Acts 3:6-8

*"But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord."*

Acts 9:40-42

The confirming gifts of the apostolic era were healings, miracles, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. The book of Acts gives an account of this era.

### **2:5 - "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak"**

In 1:14 it was explained that angels are not only in subjection to the Son, but minister to the heirs of salvation. Believers of the Son are the inheritors of salvation (2:1-4). Therefore, angels will not rule the world to come when believers come into their inheritance. The fact that angels are of a higher order than man is a temporary situation. Angels play some role at present in the rule of the earth.

*"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."*

John 12:31

*"Where in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the*

*prince of power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."*  
Eph. 2:2

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the spiritual wickedness in high places."*  
Eph. 6:12

**2:6-8 - "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; and crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 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. But now we see not yet all things put under him."**

The Father-Son relationship has been presented as well as the relationship between the Son and the angels. Going to the Old Testament scriptures it is shown that man's relationship to the Son, the angels, and to creation itself has undergone a change. Man was created to rule the earth. All of creation was for man, and God communed with man.

*"And God said. Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be meat." Gen. 1:26-29*

Even though man was created immortal, he was still created a physical being while the angels were spiritual. Man was confined to the earth while angels dwelt in the heavens. The position once held by man was forfeited because of sin. All things are not now ruled perfectly by man. Plants, animals, and nature all work against man. Man has no rule over death.

*"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:17-19*

These verses not only describe the position once held by man but also describes man's destiny. When Psalm 8 was written by David man had already fallen. After the old world had been destroyed, Noah was given the same authority as Adam.

*"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."*

Gen. 3:1-3

Man will be crowned with honor and glory. The situation or position he now has is temporary. Man is ordained by God to be heirs and to judge angels.

*"Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"*

I Cor. 6:3

**2:9 - "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."**

Man's destiny is realized in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment of the message of Psalm 8. Putting aside the glory which he had from eternity, Jesus Christ became man (the Word became flesh). Even though in his human form he was Son and thus appointed heir, he was lower than the angels in that he came to suffer death. Conquering death by his resurrection, Christ was restored to his former glory, all things being put under his feet.

*"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*

John 17:5

*"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church."*

Eph. 1:20-22

Through Jesus Christ, by the goodness of God, the destiny of man to rule is restored. Man will regain his God ordained position of authority.

*"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For*

*since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." I Cor. 15:20-26*

**2:10 - "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."**

Christ is the author (captain) of salvation through whom believers will achieve their glorious destiny. Man's fall from glory was because of sin. It was an obstacle which man could never overcome and so could never fulfill his purpose. Christ as our captain or the pioneer, removed the obstacle of sin. He who knew no sin became sin for us. It was this suffering and death which dealt with the sin that was put upon him, so through his sufferings sin was removed. Therefore Christ became perfect through sufferings.

*"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor. 5:21*

The accomplishment of salvation, through the cross, was consistent with God's character, wisdom, holiness, power, love, and mercy. It was the perfect plan. It was fitting for God to do. (The description of God in this verse is similar to that given by Paul in Romans 11:36 and by John in Revelation 1:8)

**2:11 - "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."**

Those who believe are made holy in God's sight, the perfection of Christ being applied to the believers account. The believer shares in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The believer becomes one with Christ.

*"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:21*

*"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life." Rom. 6:3-4*

The restoration of man through the death of Christ was prophesied long ago (Isaiah 53:4-14) and confirmed in the new testament (Hebrews 10:10,14). It is Christ who accomplished or authored salvation. Believers are a product of this perfect work. The believer is an adopted son, an heir, and thus a brother of Christ.

*"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."*  
Gal. 4:5-7

**2:12-13 - "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me."**

That men will be restored and share in the glory of God being called brothers, is proved with old testament scripture. Christ is shown to be the speaker of Psalm 22. The brothers of Christ are identified as believers by the reference to the church.

*"I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee."*  
Psalm 22:22

*"And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion."* Isaiah 8:17-18

The significance of the above verses from Isaiah is that we are the brothers of Christ through our mutual trust and faith in the Father. Within the context of Isaiah a parallel is drawn. Isaiah was given 'children' who represented the few faithful of Israel. They were a sign and a symbol to the unbelieving world. The brothers of Christ form the faithful which is the church. The church is a light to an unbelieving world.

**2:14 - "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"**

Christ became a man in order to destroy Satan who held the power of death. Mankind being under the curse of death, Christ had to take on the nature of man in order to redeem man. He had to overcome sin by being sinless and shed his innocent blood. (Heb 4:15, Heb 9:22)

Man was created to rule over creation as a physical being. When Satan, knowing the wages of sin is death, got man to sin, the destiny on mankind could not be fulfilled. God's pronounced judgment of death was Satan's weapon against mankind.

With the resurrection of Christ the finality of death was destroyed. Death became but a step in the fulfillment of man's destiny and Satan's weapon was useless. He could no longer prevent mankind from fulfilling God's purpose.

*"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."*

Phil. 3:21

*"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."*

Rev. 1:18

### **2:15 - "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."**

Death is still inevitable, but through the resurrection of Christ it need no longer be feared. The believer must see death as a result of his sin, but also through the grace of God and the work of Jesus Christ as a step in his glorious destiny.

*"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall chose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:"*

Phil. 1:21-23

The fear of death was present in some of the early churches. They believed those alive at the coming of Christ, still being in physical form, would have an advantage over those who had died.

*"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*

I Thes. 4:13-18

2:16-18 - "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

The glorious Christ is not now a distant, unapproachable God, but the bond which he created with man is personal and eternal. He did not take on the nature of angels, therefore hanging on to some superiority, but gave it all up and became a man. (v 16)

*"But he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:"* Phil. 2:7

He was a man in all ways except without sin. He experienced human emotions and knew the frailty of our fallen natures. He had to take on our nature to reconcile God and man. He was faithful to God upholding his justice and honor and still merciful to man in his fallen nature. God's justice and God's mercy are manifested and reconciled in Christ. (v 17)

God, in Jesus Christ knows what it is like to be man. The believer can know Christ sympathizes with us in our time of need. Christ overcame all temptation and can therefore supply all the grace we need. (v 18)