

# 'Hebrews' Monday - Part 2 (Keswick Convention 2003)

by Charles Price

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*In this sermon, Charles Price emphasizes the superiority of Christ over the Old Covenant priests, angels, and Moses, highlighting that Christ himself is the ultimate message and truth of God's revelation.*

**Duration:** 20:08

**Scripture:** John 5:39, Hebrews 2:2-10

**Topics:** "Keswick Convention"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the limitations of the Old Testament law and its inability to bring about true salvation. He explains that the law was like a shadow, pointing to the good things that were to come, but not the substance itself. The speaker also highlights the significance of angelic visitations in Scripture, stating that their messages were binding and disobedience was punished. Ultimately, the speaker emphasizes that Jesus Christ, who became a man and then returned to his rightful place, is the fulfillment of God's revelation and the means of salvation.

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## Transcript

The priest of the Old Covenant never sat down. And so the priest had a vital role to play, but at the end of every sacrifice, at the end of every day, down at the tabernacle, or later down at the temple, the priest will go home, sit down, scratch his head, and say, something is missing. Something isn't right here.

We'll have the message of the priests. They were ordained by God, but I'll tell you in a moment why Christ is superior to the priest. The third area, category, to which Christ is superior is to the angels.

And this runs from verse 4 of chapter 1 through to the end of chapter 2, verse 18. It says in verse 4, He became as much superior to the angels as the name He has inherited is superior to theirs. And He quotes various Old Testament passages which address where the Father addresses the Son in a way He never addressed the angels.

Let me read you verse 5 and 6. For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my Son? Today I become your Father. Or again, I'll be His Father and He'll be my Son. Never has the writer that God ever says such things to angels that He says to Christ.

It's in verse 7 and 8. And speaking of His 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 forever and ever. And righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

By the way, that's a good verse to have when folks come knocking on your door representing various cults who deny the deity of Christ. Because in verse 8, you have God the Father addressing the Son as God. But about the Son, He says, Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever.

The point is He never said that to any angel. And in verse 13, He says, To which of the angels did God ever say, Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies a footstool for my feet? Now, remember the context of these statements is that He's talking about God speaking. And the word angel literally means messenger.

By definition, angels, if you like, are message boys. That's their job, waiting for God to give them instructions to carry messages. In fact, verse 14 calls them ministering spirits.

Honorable angels, ministering spirits inherit salvation. They appear at various times in Scripture, 17 times. In the Old Testament, there are angelic visitations to other individuals or to couples or on one occasion to the whole nation of Israel and the wilderness.

In the New Testament, there are seven occasions they make visitations, again, to individuals or on one occasion to the shepherds in Bethlehem at the time of the birth of Jesus. 24 times angels make appearances in Scripture. And the message they brought was binding, it tells us.

In chapter two, verse two, for if the message spoken by angels was binding and every violation and disobedience received is just punishment. It's honestly how much, how should we escape if we ignore such a great salvation now announced by the Lord. But the point is He's saying angels' message was binding.

Every violation was punished. Now, it goes on in chapter two and verse five, to the end of that chapter, to talk about how that Jesus Christ becoming a man made Himself a little lower than the angels. That is true as a man, He was a little lower than the angels, but He says, but now He's crowned with glory and honor.

He's back in His rightful place. We won't talk about that particularly this morning. The point of this whole section is that God has spoken through angels and we love the ministry of angels, but it was not enough.

I'll tell you in a moment why Christ is superior to the angels. Fourthly, He is superior to Moses in chapter three and verse one to six. Let me read you just part of this.

Verse three says, Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of the house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Moses was faithful as a servant of God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future, but Christ is faithful as a son over God's house.

He makes that distinction there that Moses was the servant, Christ was the son. Anyway, he singles out Moses for special mention because Moses held a unique place in the revelation that God gave to the Hebrew people. We're told next to 33 in verse 11, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to a friend.

And it was to Moses that God revealed his law and the law of Moses becomes the plumb line, the chief legal authority in the history of the nation of Israel. Hebrews 10, 28 reminds us, anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. And yet Moses being given the law by God, which reveals the mind, the character, the holiness of God.

And Moses condemned the man to him with the tops of stone in his hand and gave them to the people of Israel. He went back to his tent that night, sat down, scratched his head and said, this isn't enough, there's something missing. Now I'll tell you in a moment why Christ is superior to Moses.

Well, why is Christ superior to the prophets, to the priests, to the angels, to Moses? Is it because Jesus Christ was a better preacher than they were? Is it because Jesus Christ had a better message than they did? Of course, in one sense that may be true, but that is actually not the issue being addressed here. Is it because he was more trustworthy than these other messengers? Well, no, we're told the prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit and their word was as authoritative as any word that came from the lips of Jesus as they spoke under the movement and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. That's why we trust our Old Testament.

They're men who spoke from God. So why is Christ superior? I'll tell you why. Christ is superior not because he was a better preacher, not because he had a better message, not because he was more reliable, but because he himself is the message.

He himself is the truth. Let me explain this, I want you to listen carefully. The message that came through the prophets, through the priests, through the angels, and through Moses was all true, but it was not the truth.

What do I mean? Remember Jesus in the upper room said, I am the truth. John 14, verse six, I am the way and the truth. What do I mean when I say that these messengers right through the Old Testament spoke what was true, but their message was not the truth? I don't know if any of you traveled here by train, you can't travel here by train, but you can travel to Penrith by train and get a bus or a taxi from Penrith down to Keswick.

Some of you may have done that, you may be planning to return home the same way. And you may have a timetable which tells you that a train will leave Penrith station at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning and arrive in, let's say, Euston station, London, at 2.15 on Saturday afternoon. And that may be true.

And if you're planning to catch that train, you hope it is true. But the timetable, although it's true, is not the truth. The timetable bears witness to the truth.

What is the truth? The truth is the train. You see, a timetable won't get you anywhere. You can sit in your hotel room, guesthouse room, and you can read the timetable, underline it, memorize it, sing it.

It won't get you anywhere. It's true. But it's true only in the sense it bears witness to the truth, which is the train.

That's the truth. That's what the timetable is talking about. And you see, God's revelation through the prophets, through the priests, through angels, through Moses, is true.

But it's like the timetable, which is pointing to a train. I could paraphrase Hebrews 1, verse 1. In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the timetables at many times and in various ways. But in these last

days, He's given us the train.

Does that make sense? Everything that went before pointed to Christ. It didn't take you anywhere. That's why the priest, day after day, first for his own sins, then for the sins of the people, day after day, of all the furniture in the temple, there was no seat, because there was no train.

Just pointers. They could tell the people there was somewhere to go one day, but they could not take them because the message of the Old Testament is, one day, the train is going to put into the station. But the problem is, when the train came, they did not receive Him, did not catch the train.

Let me read you what the writer says in Hebrews, chapter 10, in verse 1. The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the realities themselves. Nothing wrong with the law at all, but it's only a shadow, it's not the substance. It's the timetable, it's not the train.

It won't get you anywhere. It might wrap you up in legalism. It won't get you anywhere.

He goes on to say in that verse, it was 10, verse 1, for this reason, it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly, year after year, make perfect those who draw near. Was it a waste of time? No, it wasn't a waste of time. It's preparing people for what was coming.

Day after day, every priest, chapter 10, verse 11 says, stands and performs his religious duties again and again. He offers the same sacrifice, but it can never take away sin. So why does he go on doing it? Because this is the timetable that foreshadows and explains the train.

One day the train will come. Jesus Christ is himself the truth. That's why the teaching of Jesus sets him apart from every other religious leader who ever lived, because his teaching was centered on himself.

He was self-centered in his teaching. You see, other religious leaders have said things like this, I will show you the way. What did Jesus say? I am the way.

It's a very big difference. Others said, I will teach you the truth. He said, I am the truth.

Others said, I will give you the life. He said, I am the life. Others said, I will feed you the bread.

He said, I am the bread of life. Others have said, I will give you shepherds. He said, I am the good shepherd.

Others said, I will open the door for you. Jesus said, I am the door. Others have said, I will switch on the light.

Jesus said, I am the light. Others have said, go to Mecca. Go to the Ganges.

Meet you next year in Jerusalem. What did Jesus say? Come to me. In fact, there are two key invitations in the Gospels.

If you get these right, you get the Christian life right. If you get these wrong, you get the Christian life wrong. The two invitations are these.

First of all, come to me. It's Matthew 11, 28. If you're weary, you're heavy laden, come to me.

Second invitation, abide in me. John 15 and verse 5. And we know what it means to come to me, come to Christ. What it means to abide in me, to abide in Christ.

The rest of the Christian life pretty well looks after itself. It's the outworking of Christ himself. Working for us and in us.

What happens if you get Christ wrong? And I'll tell you, you get everything else wrong. It's not just you won't understand God, you won't understand the universe. You won't understand life.

That's why a weak Christology always leads to a weak Christianity. And this letter of the Hebrews has been written to a group of Hebrew believers in a particular historical, cultural setting where we understand how they have become so wrapped up in the timetable in all the true things God had revealed through his agents in the past in many ways at various times, but they've missed the truth to which it all pointed and which it all centered, Christ himself. You see, the popular view today is that there is no truth.

And when there is no truth, there are only opinions. And if there are only opinions, your opinion is as valid as mine and mine is no more valid than yours. And you find that most discussions you may have with other folks about Christ will simply be a discussion of one opinion against another.

The idea there's truth is alien to much of our thinking. You measure the benefit of any religion by the good it does for its followers, not whether it's true or not. I heard a minister say about 50 miles away from where we are this morning, several years ago, he said, Jesus Christ is the Christian's truth.

He is our truth. But we dare not say he is the only truth. That he is not Jerusalem's truth, he said.

And afterwards, I said to him, I was interested in your comments today. I said, do you think Jesus knew what he was talking about? He said, well, what's behind your question? I said, well, do you think Jesus, you know, knew what he was talking about? What's behind your question? I said, Jesus said, I am the truth. No one comes to the Father.

I am the way, I am the truth, the light. No one comes to the Father but by me. I said, do you think the apostles were trustworthy? Peter said in Acts 4 verse 12, salvation is found in no one else.

There is no other name under heaven given to men by which you must be saved. And that's why Jesus Christ is superior to all that preceded him, not because what he said was better, not because what he said was more complete though it was, but it's far more fundamental than that. It's because Christ himself is the message.

And that he himself is absolutely an unmatched supreme in God's revelation. That's why fix your thoughts on Jesus. Fix your eyes on Jesus.

Because you decapitate truth when you sever it from Christ. You see, you detach the scripture from Christ and actually the scripture becomes a dead book. It's still inspired but it's a dead book.

I was on a flight one day going from London to Los Angeles and as we left London, I was sitting next to a man about his mid-twenties and next to him was a young lady who turned out to be his fiancée. And at one point I pulled my Bible out and began to read it and this young man turned to me and said, it's nice to see somebody reading their Bible. And I said, well it's nice to meet somebody who thinks it's nice to see somebody reading their Bible.

So I said the obvious thing to him, are you a Christian? He said, I would say I am but you probably would say I'm not. I said, really, why is that? He said, because I'm a Christadelphian. Many of you know the Christadelphian sect.

So I said, you're right. I would say you're not a Christian on these grounds. No one comes to the Father but through me, but by me.

You don't have Christ right. He got up and pulled out his briefcase from the compartment above, got out of it an old King James Version, authorized version of the Bible. It had been his grandfather's.

His grandfather had died and left this Bible to his grandson. He opened his Bible. It had pen marks and colors on every page.

And this young man impressively knew his Bible. And I had my Bible in my hand, he had his Bible in his hand. And we ran around our various Bibles and he knew his way around.

He'd jump into Hebrews, find a rabbit hole, disappear, reappear in Leviticus. Go into Deuteronomy, find another one, reappear in Revelation. He was back forth with markings on every page.

But the tragedy was, it was a dead book in his hand. It was still the inspired Word of God in its origin but it was dead in his hand. Why? It was severed from Christ.

Detached Scripture from Christ is a dead book. That's exactly what the Jews did. That's why Jesus actually criticized the Jews for studying the Bible.

You ever notice that in John Chapter 5 and Verse 39? Let me read you what Jesus said there. John Chapter 5 and Verse 39. He said, You diligently study the Scriptures.

That sounds good, doesn't it? You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. But these are the Scriptures that testify about me. Yet you refuse to come to me.

But you won't have life. So you study the Scriptures. You think that in them you have eternal life.

You think that they are the key. You think they are the secret. And what does it do? It makes you Pharisees.

It gives you a Book of Laws through which you can hit everybody over the head. And box them in. What you don't understand is that it's a timetable.

And it points to the train. And you refuse to get on the train. You don't come to me.

It's true.

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