

Sermon Notes: Oct 6, 2024

Focus: Hebrews reading

[Lectionary](#)

I don't spend time thinking about Hebrews usually, but the end of the today's passage caught my eye. (We will pray with St. Francis and celebrate his memory, but I don't have a lot of gas to preach about him right now.)

For this reason, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

Growing up, I thought Jesus loved me but wasn't sure if he liked me. I believed Jesus 'pity loved' me. Which is not surprising, as I kept hearing about how sinful we were. Jesus came along to save us the basket of deplorables. But, I really like how Hebrews is an antidote to that poison- Jesus celebrates and proclaims us.

I don't need Jesus to help my favorite football team win, but Hebrews might encourage spiritual micromanagement. It describes a resurrection savior that is very enmeshed in all aspects of human experience. Hebrews has a very 'high eschatology' which means:

Jesus is in the weeds. God is always directly intervening in human history and will continue after the return of Christ and final judgment.

Bodily resurrection of the dead and the transformation of the physical world. I really like this, but my faith would not be destroyed if I don't get my 24-year-old body back after death. But, I won't complain if that happens either.

New Creation and New Heaven. This part of Hebrews I feel in my bones. I deeply hope for the marriage of a new Heaven and new Earth. I don't believe good people will be teleported away from this sinful world to an eternal Jesus party. I *must* believe that God is in the business of reconciling earth and heaven. I *must* believe that earth and heaven will become one (that idea is dominant in the end of the Book of Revelation).

High Level themes in Hebrews

Jewish Roots: Hebrews is super dense and presumes a deep knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures and Jewish traditions. It is hard to read Hebrews without knowing the context of other scriptures and the prevailing culture of the day.

Roman Persecution: Christ's suffering is a necessary path to glory. This would have provided encouragement to endure hardship because Hebrews is oddly pastoral.

Messianic Expectation: The Messiah had to suffer and die. This opposed the common sense of Messiah being a victorious political ruler.

Angelology: Angels and other divine beings were integral to the worldview of the ancient people. Hebrews *demotes* angelic veneration so common to the Ancient Near East.

On page 2, I will share some verse-by-verse details. Take look, if that appeals.
Have a great Sunday. **Todd**

Hebrews 1:1-4 (Jesus is better than...)

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets – in the Old Covenant, God communicates through prophets. In the New Covenant, God communicates through his Son.

but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son The writer absolutely believes we are near the end of the world as we know it.

heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. Jesus has always been around and always takes an active role in creation

He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being. The language of Christ being the "exact imprint" highlights early Christian claims of Christ's divinity. The word "imprint" (Greek: *charaktēr*) is metaphor for a coin or a royal seal embodying God's nature.

When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high This is linked to royal enthronement psalms (e.g., Psalm 110:1). Jesus' sacrifice accomplishes a final purification for sin.

having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. Angels were often seen as intermediaries between God and humanity. The assertion that Jesus is superior to angels elevates his status above all celestial beings.

Hebrews 2:5-12 (Angels got nothing on Jesus)

Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. Jewish views gave angels authority in the present age. The writer counters that angels are not given dominion over the current or new age; rather, it is humanity via Christ who rules.

Psalms 8 Reference (v. 6-8): Though humans seem insignificant ("a little lower than the angels"), they are destined for glory in Jesus.

we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death Hebrews underscores Jesus' path to glory in suffering and death. His suffering was not a sign of weakness but a means to bring redemption.

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. The term "pioneer" (*archēgos*) means leader or trailblazer, indicating that Jesus opens the way for others to follow.

I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you. By calling us "brothers and sisters," Jesus affirms the close relationship between himself and we who are being sanctified. He likes us and I like that punchline!

Thanks for reading the details. **Todd**