
Words of Truth

Hebrews 2:1

By: Brian A. Yeager

While considering the authority of Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-14), the people to whom this letter was written were told this: *“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”* (Hebrews 2:1). Later in this epistle we will read these statements: *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God... But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire”* (Hebrews 10:23-31 and Hebrews 12:22-29).

As saints, they knew as well as we do that the words of Christ are the standard we live by and will be judged by (John 12:48). Those who had been followers of God under the Law of Moses knew the importance of carefully following the things they were commanded (Deuteronomy 4:1-14 and Deuteronomy 12:1-32). They needed to shift their thinking now.

They needed to realize that they were no longer accountable to the Law of Moses. They were now under the Law of Christ.

The phrase “we ought to give the more earnest heed” is key in this context going forward. The Greek “περισσοτέρως” that appears here as “more earnest” means: “more superabundantly: — more abundant(-ly), x the more earnest, (more) exceedingly, more frequent, much more, the rather...” (Strong’s #4056). In this epistle that same word will be translated as “rather” (Hebrews 13:19). So, rather than obeying the things aforesaid you need to obey the things of Christ. The word heed “προσέχω” means: “(figuratively) to hold the mind (h3563 implied) towards, i.e. pay attention to, be cautious about, apply oneself to, adhere to: — (give) attend(-ance, -ance at, -ance to, unto), beware, be given to, give (take) heed (to unto); have regard...” (Strong’s #4337). These statements together are a warning. This is a caution, be aware statement. If you don’t obey Jesus there will literally be Hell to pay for it (Matthew 25:31-46, John 5:24-29, Romans 2:1-11, and II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

The Hebrew writer then draws their attention to not letting the things they had been taught to slip away. James speaks of not being forgetful hearers (James 1:19-27). When studying through the history of the children of Israel, they had multiple times “forgot” God and His works (Psalms 78:1-72 and Psalms 106:1-48). When God spoke of Israel as His bride, He spoke of how they went after their lovers [idols] and forgot Him (Hosea 2:1-13).

God forewarned Israel about forgetting Him and how that could occur. He had Moses teach them this: *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage”* (Deuteronomy 6:4-12).

Like times of old, the Lord is telling His people not to let the things they’ve learned be forgotten. We need to learn from that. It is easy to learn, obey, and then become spiritually complacent. Israel of old did that (Amos 6:1 and Zephaniah 1:12). We have to be diligent in our work to be faithfully ready to meet our Lord (I Corinthians 15:50-58). Therefore, let’s be people of remembrance who hold fast (Revelation 3:1-6) rather than forgetfully lost.