



¹ Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ² For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, ⁴ while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. Hebrews 2:1–4 (ESV)

What happens if we don't keep gas in our car? It won't run because we neglected to provide the fuel it needs.

What happens to a child's pet hamster if they fail to give it food and water? If no one else is paying attention it will die because it needs food and water to stay alive.

And, what happens to a person who has believed in Jesus when they neglect solid Biblical teaching that tells them how wonderful and powerful Jesus is?

That's what the first four verses of Hebrews 2 tell us about:

- *Don't drift away.*
- *When the message delivered by angels was disobeyed it brought retribution.*
- *The message delivered by Jesus must not be neglected.*

Don't neglect to receive God's greatest blessing, eternal life. Pay attention, we all need to be reminded to stay focused on Jesus, the writer of Hebrews is telling us.

Don't drift away

Hebrews 2:1 “Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we **drift away** from it.”

This brings us back to the central concern of the book of Hebrews, that believers who stray from keeping their focus on Jesus will “drift” from their faith. In chapter one we were given spiritual food to sustain us so that we won’t drift away from our faith. It is extremely important that we understand why we must seek daily to be nourished by this spiritual food.

Picture a person who is starving to death being brought to a table filled with wonderful foods. Instead of eating anything, he is convinced that it is all an illusion, that came from his great desire for food. He sits there. He eats nothing.

Can Christians hear the wonderful news about Jesus and not grow deeper in their faith in Him? Unfortunately, this can happen. Believers, starving for spiritual nourishment do sometimes turn away from Jesus. They don't seek Jesus' help when they need it most.

Because Jesus is so much greater than the angels, we need to "pay closer attention." Compared to what? Compared to the way the ancient Hebrew people in the Old Testament heard the word of God and were not moved to great trust and great obedience.

One more thought. The word "drift" refers to a boat that has "drifted off course." The expression "go with the flow" describes this. Those who once trusted Jesus can drift off course by getting carried along by the beliefs and ideas of the people around them. Their lives go off course.

Will you continually keep yourself focused on Jesus? Or will you believe in Him only when it's easy? If you face struggles in your faith, will you be like a boat in raging river drawn off course, and lose all your trust in Jesus? Remember what we read in Hebrews! Jesus is more powerful than the angels. The angels are powerful like the winds and blazing fire. Jesus is more powerful than that. He is able to deliver you but you need to trust Him. He can bring you through whatever you face!

When the message declared by angels was disobeyed it brought retribution

[Hebrews 2:2-3](#) "For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or **disobedience** received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we **neglect** such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard,"

Some Jewish traditions held that the Law given to Moses was delivered by angels. This is based on the following scripture:

[Deuteronomy 33:2](#) "He said, "The Lord came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came from the **ten thousands of holy ones**, with flaming fire at his right hand."

The "ten thousands of holy ones" can be understood as referring to a multitude of angels. This idea that angels delivered the Ten Commandments to Moses is repeated in the New Testament:

[Acts 7:53](#) "you who received **the law as delivered by angels** and did not keep it."

[Galatians 3:19](#) "Why then **the law**? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it **was put in place through angels by an intermediary.**"

This is probably a new idea for you. I know it is for me. The basic idea is that God used angels to deliver the Ten Commandments to Moses. Exactly how this worked is not explained. The idea seems to be that when God used angels to communicate His word their function was something like a telephone. When we talk on a telephone we say we are talking to the person on the other end of the telephone, even when we are talking into a telephone and there is no one else nearby. When God delivers His word through Angels, the Word is God's Word alone. The angels involved didn't diminish His Word from being God's Word.

The argument being made runs like this: God's people couldn't escape from God's judgment when they disobeyed the Law given to Moses delivered by angels. How much greater will people suffer when they neglect the message delivered by Jesus, who is God Himself?

We must not neglect the message declared by Jesus the Lord

[Hebrews 2:2-4](#) "For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was **declared at first by the Lord**, and it was attested to us by **those who heard**, while God also **bore witness** by **signs** and **wonders** and various **miracles** and by **gifts** of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will."

The message "**declared first by the Lord**" is the Gospel message, delivered by Jesus, who is **the Lord**. We must receive His message as our salvation or we will suffer the consequences of our sin. In the Old Testament, God's people received the message of the Law given to Moses. When they disobeyed God's Law they were punished for their disobedience. The writer of Hebrews is pointing out that as great as that Law was, the message delivered directly by Jesus Himself, and not by angels, is a far greater message. The consequences for rejecting it are far greater. In the Old Testament those who disobeyed were often put to death. Those who reject Jesus' salvation will suffer eternity in Hell.

The disciples who followed Jesus were eye-witnesses. They are "**those who heard**" the message of the Gospel. They "**attested**" to it. The writer of Hebrews is telling us that he was not one of the disciples, but he received their testimony as true.

Not only did the disciples **declare** the message of the Gospel that Jesus had told to them, God the Father **bore witness** by **signs** and **wonders, miracles**, and spiritual **gifts**. These are supernatural acts that took place to prove that Jesus was from God. Only God could cause such things to happen. Think of the miracles Jesus performed from turning water into wine to His resurrection from the dead. Then, there are the gifts that the Holy Spirit gave to the first believers. They too could perform miracles. God used the actions of these first Christians to prove that these brand-new Christians were delivering a message that came directly from God.

The message of Jesus is simple enough. Jesus asks us to repent of our sins and to believe in Him. He died on the cross to pay for our sins. He rose again proving that He had victory over death, the punishment for sin. We can trust Him to purify us from our sins.

The writer of Hebrews has helped, and will help, to fill in a lot of the intricate details about this message. But don't miss the main point: Take Jesus and His Gospel to heart. Keep coming back to Him again and again. Receive His gift of life. Live by the power that raised Him from the tomb. Be defined by Jesus, and not by your sin.

Warning Against Neglecting Salvation (Hebrews 2:1–4)

A J U S T P R O V E D S U S
Y T I E N N N N R L E D T D
E A J L N G O O U W V F P D
U F W C Y L I I G F I E F E
B T I A O Y T S T G E J B T
H V A R I O U S R N C F B S
C C D I S O B E D I E N C E
U L U M A T I R E D R T W T
S O J M L A R G R O O H T T
L S W E V N T S A S F S F A
M E S S A G E N L D E I Y E
L R N C T E R A C L R R L R
E L B A I L E R E D E A O G
N W F P O S U T D V H W E B
L H D E N E G L E C T P O H

Therefore we must pay **much closer attention** to what we have **heard**, **lest** we **drift away** from it. For since the **message declared** by **angels proved** to be **reliable**, and **every transgression** or **disobedience received** a **just retribution**, how shall we **escape** if we **neglect such a great salvation**? It was **declared** at **first** by the **Lord**, and it was **attested** to us by those who **heard**, while God **also bore** witness by **signs** and wonders and **various miracles** and by **gifts** of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. ([ESV](#)) Exported from [Logos Bible Software](#)