

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 177

Hebrews 2

September 16, 2017

Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MH)

Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

In Hebrews 2 the writer continues to focus on the supremacy of Christ to the Law (Torah) and angels. Christ is superior for many reasons, but chiefly because only he, through his sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection could provide the eternal sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins and bring humans back to right relationship with God. As Hebrews 2:14-15 say God became a man in Jesus Christ so that, “through death he [Jesus] might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.” This statement is followed by another one whose significance is overlooked by many, especially those who mistakenly believe that the offer of salvation through Christ is extended to fallen angels: “For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect.” This episode of the podcast focuses on the necessity of the incarnation not only to the superiority of Christ, but to the problematic idea that fallen angels can be forgiven.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 177: Hebrews chapter 2. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike, how are you?

MH: Pretty good, pretty good. Busy, as usual, but I can't complain as much as I probably want to.

TS: I hear ya. You can always complain about something... Speaking of which, would you like to inform everybody of what happened?

MH: Yeah, we both won. We both won our games.

TS: And again, who is currently number one?

MH: You are. [unintelligible]

TS: I'm still on top. Out of the gates. Feels good. It's early. We've got a long way to go, but...

MH: I'll say it's early! It's *one game*. [laughter]

TS: Again, you've got to capitalize on it while you can! I have nowhere to go but down, so I've got to enjoy it while it's up.

MH: Who do you play this week? Do you remember?

TS: No, I don't.

MH: I know we don't play each other. The Naked Bible Fantasy Baseball League... this is a playoff week and I was leading until yesterday. It's not looking real good. It's the first round of the playoffs. My mind is drifting to football, anyway. The Grumpy Cats are kind of fading. I don't know if they'll pull it out or not.

TS: I hear ya. Well, hey... Do you want to give us an update on your Fort Worth visit?

MH: Yeah, Fort Worth was fun. I'd say there were 100 people, or something close to that. It was kind of interesting, actually. There were several pastors there who were really into the content and had been making efforts to teach the content in their church—to small groups or even from the pulpit—people who were quite obviously pretty invested in it. That was good to see. It was an Assemblies of God church. I think that's the first one of those that I've been in. But Pastor Doug Martin really did a good job of organizing things and promoting it. It matters when you do that. It was a good time. Nine hours' worth of it!

TS: Whoa—awesome! I'll bet everybody was mentally fatigued by the time they left.

MH: I know I was! [laughs] It was a long day, but most of the people stuck around for the whole thing. So it was a good day.

TS: Awesome. Well, I'm ready for chapter 2 if you are!

MH: Yeah, chapter 2 of Hebrews. Here we go.

This is sort of a pivotal chapter. I'm sure it's one of the chapters that people had in mind when they voted for what we were going to do next. There is some of this that I talk about in *Unseen Realm*, so I'm not necessarily going to repeat what's in *Unseen Realm*. I'll make reference to it. I can tell you today that we're going to

get into the issue of whether fallen angels can be redeemed. That's probably the other reason why this chapter is noteworthy. So we've got the Divine Council scene in this chapter and we've got the question of whether salvation is extended to angels—is it offered to angels?—and that sort of thing. Of course, I've blogged about that before. We're going to get into that question mostly in this chapter. I'm going to be quoting some excerpts from the first chapter of the new book that I've been working on for Lexham Press. I'm supposed to turn in the manuscript by the end of this month, so in a couple weeks. This will be new content, and hopefully it will get people interested in the new thing that we're doing. At the very least, it's certainly relevant to Hebrews 2. The new book itself is about angels—the good guys, really, not dealing with demonology. That'll be a follow-up book. Again, I'm going to quote some fairly lengthy excerpts from the first draft in this episode.

Let's jump in by reading the first four verses of Hebrews 2. That'll get us started off. Reading from the ESV:

5:00

Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ²For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³how 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, ⁴while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

Those are the first four verses of Hebrews 2. Just a couple comments. The very first verses hits a theme that we're going to see later in the book, and I'll save most of what I'm going to say for later. Next week we're going to be doing chapter 3 and we'll get into this a little bit more, on up through chapter 6. That is this notion of drifting away from the faith—drifting away from the content of the knowledge... Really, it could go back to Hebrews 1 and drifting away from the new superior revelation that God has given to people through Christ. There's this whole issue of hearing that and then believing and embracing it—assigning validity and importance to it and then drifting away from it. That's a recurring theme in the book of Hebrews. He throws it in here in this chapter, so it's pretty early. He mentioned that God has spoken to us by various means in times past in Chapter 1, but now today—more recently—he has spoken to us by Jesus Christ. And, of course, Hebrews 1 establishes the superiority of Christ to Torah and the superiority of Christ to angels. Now here we get this idea that we need to pay close attention to that stuff that we heard, lest we drift away from it. We're going to come back to this theme in successive episodes in Hebrews because it's really part of the reason why the book was written. We'll say a little bit more about it in this episode, as well, but that's where we start. We get to verse 2 and he's sort of elaborating on that.

²For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable...

Well, what's that message? That's actually a reference to the law. I discuss this in *Unseen Realm* on pages 164-169. It's the whole issue of the law being dispensed or delivered (whatever terminology you like) by angels. There are several references to this in the New Testament. I'm not going to read those four pages of *Unseen Realm*, obviously, but I focus there on the fact that this idea probably comes from (most securely anyway) Deuteronomy 33:1-4 in the Septuagint. If you read that passage in the Septuagint (and I have the Septuagint translation in *Unseen Realm*), that passage links angels and Sinai and the giving of the law. Specifically, part of the translation reads:

The Lord has come from Sinai, and he appeared to us from Seir; he made haste from Mount Paran with ten thousands of Kadesh, at his right, his angels with him.

You get this idea, and then you keep reading on there and there's this whole thing about them being present at the giving of the law. Probably the basis for this comment in Hebrews 2 ("the message declared by angels")... Acts 7:52-53 is another one. This is part of Stephen's speech before he's martyred. He says:

⁵²Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, ⁵³you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.

We also get a reference in Galatians 3:19:

¹⁹Why 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.

Of course, in *Unseen Realm*, I talk about who that intermediary was—at least in my view. I think it was the angel of the Lord—the anthropomorphic Yahweh on Sinai. This is what's behind this association of the angelic group (the heavenly host) with the giving of the law. I don't want to elaborate too much on that because people can go back and refresh their memories if they read those pages in *Unseen Realm*. The point for our purposes here is that the writer is saying, "Hey look, God took the law seriously... no kidding. Every transgression and disobedience was met with punishment or retribution." That's going to be obviously familiar to anybody who's a Jew who's reading this letter. It's also going to be familiar to anybody who has a rudimentary knowledge of the Old

10:00 Testament. If you remember in our introduction that we talked about Gentiles who would have been reading the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) and how they would have had a good familiarity with the Old Testament. This point is hard to miss. Of course God considered the law important. And the Old Testament is just littered with examples of people who transgressed the law and paid a certain price for it—there was judgment from God. His point is to establish something obvious first, and then he moves on from that obvious point to the next point in verse 3:

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...

The reference to, "Hey, we learned this from people who heard about it" is a reference to newer revelation. It's a reference to people that they had heard in their lifetime. So what he's talking about in verse 3 is the revelation of Christ and the incarnation and the gospel—that idea. He goes from verse 2, where he said, "God took the law seriously, but now we have this even better thing. We have this thing that God more recently gave us (a reference back to Hebrews 1) and this material is superior to the Torah. The stuff that's superior to the law/Torah (that God took so seriously)... we might want to think about the fact that we shouldn't neglect it. And going back to verse 1, we shouldn't drift away from it." His point is that God takes this even *more* seriously. It's sort of a rhetorical statement using the law/Torah—something that would have been really familiar—and then taking people's minds back to the idea that we have something superior now and God isn't going to treat this lightly. He's going to treat it more seriously.

The term "neglect" here ("how shall we escape")... We're not going to escape retribution if we are dismissive toward this greater revelation.

³...how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

"Neglect" there is a Greek term that really speaks of dismissing something, having disregard for something—that kind of mentality. Guthrie, in his short Hebrews commentary makes a little bit of a comment on it. He says:

Amelesantes, the word rendered "ignore," ["neglect" in the ESV] . . . means to neglect through apathy or not to care enough about something (1 Tim. 4:14).

¹⁴Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

It's the same term. Back to Guthrie's point, it really speaks of apathy or not caring enough about something that really ought to be cared about. The "something" in the context is the gospel—the superior revelation from God to people about salvation in Christ. Guthrie adds:

The word could be used of a doctor or government official who, having made a public commitment, defaulted on that commitment. Thus, those who care so little about the word of salvation that they neglect it will find no escape from the punishment they deserve.

To the Jewish believer, this is going to make sense. It's a no-brainer that God took the law seriously. We need to treat THIs seriously—this new revelation. Anyone familiar with the Old Testament if they were Gentiles will find this to be an easy lesson to comprehend. Going back to verse 3, we'll just read that again and continue:

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.

The Lord here (because this is a newer revelation transmitted to the writer by those who heard) is Jesus. This new message was declared first by Jesus. This is really a reference to Jesus' teaching about himself and what he was on earth to do. Luke 19:10:

¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

We've got John 3:16, of course:

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

15:00

Again, this is the message that was first declared by the Lord. And that message was superior to the Torah, and the Torah had been given by angels. Do you see the logic? Why does Hebrews 1 start by declaring Christ a superior revelation? "In times past and in various ways, God has given us information about himself, but in these days, he has spoken to us by his son." And his son, of course, is himself in the flesh—he is the *apaugasma*. He is the radiance of the glory, he is Wisdom, he is all these things we've talked about in the previous two episodes. The book starts by establishing Christ's superiority to the Torah and to angels. The logic, of course, is that those two are connected—and that's what he's getting here in Hebrews 2: "the message declared by angels." Well, the Torah

was dispensed by angels. There's this angel of the Lord thing going on, there's the Divine Council thing going on at Sinai (we talked about that in *Unseen Realm*). The writer of Hebrews is saying, "Look, this message that we were taught by those who actually heard it firsthand is better—it's superior.

This takes me back the statement I made in the introduction to Hebrews episode. I said, "I don't know how you can be in the Hebrew Roots Movement and like the book of Hebrews" because you not only get explicit statements of the Christ's superiority and the superiority of the gospel... By the way, the gospel is the offer of salvation by faith in the work of a person whose death atoned for sin. It has nothing to do with the Torah. Christ is connected to the Torah because he is the ultimate fulfillment of it—he is the embodiment of Torah, just as he is the perfect image of God. "You've seen me, you've seen the Father." Well, you see Jesus, you've also seen what it would mean to live out the law. But what he actually *does* to accomplish forgiveness of sins in the gospel is to do something the law couldn't do. The law couldn't become incarnate and die. The law couldn't lay down its own life. It's not a living entity. Again, the superiority—and I would say even the necessity—of this revelation is what the author is getting at here. I say "necessity" because of what else we're going to run into in chapter 2. But we have a reference, again, to "declared at first by the Lord" (that's Jesus) and "it was attested to us by those who heard."

So the writer is saying, "Look, I'm not one of the Twelve. I wasn't one of these people who followed Jesus around while he was on earth. We heard this from some of those people." But he doesn't include himself in that group.

And then lastly, God bore witness to it. He validated it by:

...signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

The one reference there... You've got signs and wonders. The Synoptic Gospels are full of signs and wonders to validate the ministry of Jesus and to validate what he's saying. We have references to the Holy Spirit distributing gifts. (I discuss this in *Unseen Realm* in the "leading captivity captive" passage.) It's actually a reference to what happens at Pentecost—the giving of the Holy Spirit and the distributing of the gifts. This is what the writer of Hebrews is hearkening back to. That takes us up to verse 5. Let's just read 5-18, just so it's in the heads of the listeners. This is really the rest of the chapter. Beginning in verse 5, after these comments about the gospel message being superior and being validated, we read this:

⁵ For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. ⁶ It has been testified somewhere,

**“What is man, that you are mindful of him,
or the son of man, that you care for him?
⁷ You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned him with glory and honor,
⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet.”**

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. ⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Just to stop here for a moment, we’re going to be talking about the necessity of the incarnation and the connection of the incarnation to the offer of salvation. The connection—the bridge—between the two is *humanity*. That’ll become important as we proceed.

20:00

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,¹² saying,

**“I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”**

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he

had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

That's the end of the chapter. Go back to verse 5:

⁵ For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking.

This is a reference to the inheritance of believers—this "world to come." There's an intrinsic link between inheritance and rule in the New Earth and redemption. Let me repeat that, because it's important: *There's an intrinsic link between inheritance and rule in the new Earth/the new Eden and redemption.* Angels are excluded from that. They don't rule in the new Eden, do they? If you go to the visions of the new Eden (Revelation 2-3, 1 Corinthians 6), we are the ones who share the messianic rule in the new Eden. Angels do not. The sharing of that rule is directly connected to the offer and acceptance of redemption/salvation/forgiveness of sins. Angels are excluded. In fact, we displace them! We displace the fallen *elohim* sons of God. These passages that I just referenced (Revelation 2:26, Revelation 3:21, 1 Corinthians 6:3) reveal that we have greater authority than angels. It's this Council hierarchy thing. We are going to rule over angels. We are the ones who share the throne with Jesus. We are the ones who are put over the nations—not them. *Not them.* And that exclusion is significant because of the link between rule in the New Earth (the line in Hebrews 2:5) and the offer of redemption. And, of course, all of that hinges upon Jesus becoming incarnate, as we'll see in a moment. Go back to verse 6:

**⁶ It has been testified somewhere,
 "What is man, that you are mindful of him,
 or the son of man, that you care for him?
⁷ You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
 you have crowned him with glory and honor,
⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet."**

Yeah, and when everything is in subjection under his feet, who does he share it with? The angels? No. No, he doesn't. He shares it with human believers—the human redeemed.

I want to take a little bit of a rabbit-trail before returning to this "angels and redemption" thing and the importance of Hebrews 2:4. That quotation you just heard ("what is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care

for him") is a quotation of the Septuagint of Psalm 8:6. In English it's actually Psalm 8:5. In Hebrew, it says "a little lower than *elohim*." In the Septuagint, that gets translated "a little lower than angels."

25:00 Here's the rabbit-trail I want to take. This might be of interest to some of you, but I want to put it out there so there's a record of it. This is material that did not make it into my dissertation back in 2004 because of page count, but you will find it in readable form in non-academese (I hope) in my new book on angels. And that is, there's an academic myth that you run into that sort of suggests that by the time you get to the Second Temple period and the New Testament, the Jews don't like the idea of divine plurality: *They don't like the idea that there are multiple elohim running around. One time that was okay because Israelites used to be polytheists, and then they evolved into this magnificent breakthrough idea of monotheism. And once they hit the monotheistic wall, they never wanted to go back to the polytheism. And so the writers of Second Temple texts and the translators of the Septuagint and the writers of the New Testament take great care to eliminate references to their older polytheism of the Israelites.*

That's bunk! There's an academic word for you: bunk!

I published an article in *Tyndale Bulletin* on the Dead Sea Scroll material. There are over 160 references to plural *elim* or *elohim*—many of them in Divine Council scenes in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Somebody didn't get the monotheistic memo! Somebody didn't get the memo about, "Oh, we can't use divine plurality language anymore because we're monotheists now!" Again, monotheism is a modern construct. I talk about this at great length in *Unseen Realm*. It's a term that doesn't mean a whole lot to what you actually see in the Hebrew Bible. What you see in the Hebrew Bible is the uniqueness of one God—Yahweh, the God of Israel—among all the other *elohim*. *Elohim* is not a term that has attributes assigned to it. There are half a dozen different things that are *elohim* in the Hebrew Bible. Plural *elohim* has nothing to do with a set of gods that are essentially interchangeable and all the same. It's just bogus. I don't know any other way to say it. But this has become dogma in critical scholarship, along with the myth that I just described to you about this evolution to monotheism: "Oh, we can't use *elohim* in plural anymore because we're just not allowed to do that because we've had this great religious breakthrough!" It's just nonsense, and it's contradicted by the data.

That's just the Dead Sea Scroll stuff—160 times people don't get the memo. The same is true with the Septuagint. I'm going to read an excerpt from this new book I've been working on about this academic myth.

Statistically, LXX refers to angels as a group three times as often as the traditional Hebrew text (33 vs. 10).

By the way, angels as a group are not mentioned very often in the Hebrew Bible. It's usually the angel of the Lord—a particular angel, but ten times or so you get plural angels. But in the Septuagint, you get angels a lot more than the traditional Hebrew text.

The higher count is partially due to the inclusion of books in the Septuagint that are not part of the Hebrew canon. But the canonical issue cannot completely account for the greater reference to angels (*angeloi*) in LXX. In several instances, the language of divine plurality in the Hebrew Bible (references to “gods” via plural *'ēlîm* or *'elōhîm* and *benê 'ēlîm* / *'elōhîm*) was rendered with *angeloi*. [So we have “gods” rendered as “angels.”] What are we to make of this?

Many scholars believe this indicates a rejection of divine plurality as part of a theological evolution out of polytheism toward a rigid, intolerant monotheism. This notion, often repeated by scholars, is based on a misunderstanding of divine plurality and a failure to examine the totality of the data. I have addressed the former at length elsewhere; our focus here is the latter.

There are two primary sources for assessing the coherence of whether Jewish writers in the Second Temple period saw a problem with the language of divine plurality in the Hebrew Bible: The LXX and the Dead Sea Scrolls. We'll begin our discussion with the former.

I wrote this article for Tyndale Bulletin and I posted on my blog (they let me do that, you can go read it). But the Septuagint stuff is in my new book.

As noted above, LXX does indeed render the language of divine plurality with *angeloi*. But there are two facts that must be considered before drawing conclusions: the LXX translators do not do this consistently and in most of the places where they do opt for *angeloi*, there are manuscripts of LXX that render the divine plurality literally and do not use *angeloi*.

25:00 I have a table in the book of this. I'm not going to try to translate this to audio but I'll just try to summarize it.

The chart illustrates that there are eight (of over 30, so about 1/4) passages where an LXX translator has taken the language of divine plurality and rendered it as “angels.” But the chart indicates there are more places where the LXX translator decided otherwise, preferring a more literal equivalent. Some of those instances (Psa 29:1; 82:1 89:7; Exod 15:11) are among the most frequently-cited passages by scholars seeking to argue that the Hebrew Bible preserves vestiges of polytheism. If Jews of the Second Temple Period were concerned that such language might be taken as polytheism, it makes little sense to leave passages like

these intact—undisguised as angels. The unevenness of what we find shows that LXX cannot be regarded as proof for a campaign to erase supposed polytheistic language and “downgrade” instance of divine plurality to angels.

The argument that LXX sought to eliminate “polytheistic” language gets even weaker when one investigates the text-critical data for the eight passages that render plural *’ēlîm* or *’elōhîm* and *benê ’ēlîm* / *’elōhîm* with *angeloi*. Of the eight instances noted above where the translator decided to use *angeloi*, there are variant LXX manuscript readings preserving the more literalistic rendering [*theoi* or *theos*] in half of them.

So of the eight—of the one-quarter—that take the divine language and use *angeloi*, half of those (four of them) have alternative readings in Septuagint manuscripts that call them “gods” (use the plural of *theos*). And, of course, the other three quarters of the examples where we have references to plural *elohim* or *elim* in the Bible, the Septuagint translators feel just fine referring to them as plural “gods.” So again, the Septuagint translators didn't get the memo, either. The Dead Sea Scroll folks didn't get it, the Septuagint translators didn't get it... the idea is just bunk. It really is. It does not conform to the data, but you'll see this argued in academic circles all the time. God forbid we have a community of faith like the Israelites in the biblical period... God forbid that we don't have someone that saw everything polytheistically and then all of a sudden didn't. Again, my view is that the biblical writers saw the superiority and uniqueness of Yahweh from the get-go. There was no shift. They understood that Yahweh was unique among the gods, and that uniqueness is not conveyed by the term *elohim*. Uniqueness is conveyed by what they say about *that elohim* and don't say about any other. To try to complete the rabbit-trail here and land the plane, this is why I hope my own dissertation made a contribution, because this academic myth is honestly circular reasoning. It's an unexamined thing that is considered self-evident in academic circles. When you actually look at the data it makes no sense at all.

End of rabbit-trail. Let's get back to Hebrews 2. I just wanted to bring that up because I know if I didn't I would get questions: “Well, did you see that ‘a little lower angels’ here is *elohim* in the Hebrew Bible? What's going on there?” I just told you what's going on there. They're not denying the content of the Old Testament. In the New Testament (I won't quote the book here), *angeloi* becomes a generic term for “residents of the spiritual world that are not in rebellion against God.” They're the good guys. All the good guys get called “angels” and all the bad guys get called *daimon*, which we transliterate into “demon.” There's this winnowing of the language. You're losing the nuancing of the terms. You essentially make them white hats or black hats in your translation. But the fact that the Septuagint translators (and the New Testament, of course, uses the Septuagint quite frequently) had no problem rendering plural “gods” with

the plural of *theos* three-quarters of the time. There is no agenda to eliminate the language. It's just "good guys v. bad guys."

Back to Hebrews 2. Let me just read to get our minds back into the passage.

30:00

⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers...

Question: Were angels under the penalty of death? Are they spoken of in the same terms? You could argue that they're put in the pit and the rest of them are like, "You're going to get destroyed. You're going to die like men." You could say that. Here's the second and better question: Is there a passage that links that sentence—or the relief of that sentence—with the atoning death of a substitute? The answer is no. "Well, didn't you just read it, Mike?" No, because he's talking about humans. He's saying that the one who would die the substitute death became a *man*. He did not become an angel. If you really think about it, the sentence that humanity is under is different because we are embodied. The curse of death... In the New Testament passages, we have Satan being described a couple times as being the "lord of the dead" or somehow owning the souls of humanity. That's never said about angels. Adam and Eve get expelled and they start to die. The curse is linked to mortality, which starts to take effect right away in the human world. It becomes a problem. Are we going to remain in Sheol? Everyone dies, that sort of thing. Whereas the angelic stuff is put off to the Day of the Lord—to the eschaton. There are differences. But the fundamental difference is the link of the solution to becoming a man—becoming a human. The substitute became the thing that was the object of the atonement, and the object of that atonement was not angels—it was humans.

If you go into the passage a little bit more:

That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,¹² saying,

**“I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”**

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

It's the slavery of death! Every human's life is but a vapor. The angels can't say that. The angels are these everlasting beings until the eschaton. That's not the case with us. We are a whole person when our body and soul is fused. It's not that we lose identity when we're disembodied and we're with the Lord (Paul's "to be absent with the body is to be present with the Lord" and that whole thing). Our immaterial part still has identity, but our existence, as we are born with it and born to understand it—the existence that we can comprehend—is inherently tied to mortality. We all learn at some point that we're going to die. [laughs] It isn't going to be too long. It's like a curse. The way he puts it here is that we're "subject to lifelong slavery." But the next verse is the kicker:

¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps...

Who is the "he?" He is the one who partook of the same things back in verse 14. He's the one who became a man so that he could conquer death and conquer the one who has the power of death—that is, the devil.

¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he *had to be made like his brothers* in every respect,

Who are his brothers? Well, it's in the preceding verses that we just read. His brothers are *humans*. He had to be made like his brothers in every respect...

...so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of *the people*.

40:00

I don't know how much clearer this passage could be. This is the key text that undermines the idea that angels are offered redemption. There might be some

out there that don't like that. Sorry, I don't write the material! I just go through it and observe it and read it and talk about it. I did blog about this a while back ("Can Fallen Angels be Redeemed?"). You can look that up on my website. In that post, I talk mostly about the language of Revelation 1-3 because that's kind of how this is argued. I did get into Hebrews 2 toward the end of it, but we're going to say a little bit more about Hebrews 2 here. I'm going to drift a very little bit into Revelation, and then I'm going to go to Colossians 1:19-20 because that's the other passage that the idea of angelic redemption is based on and that I did not get into in the post online. Between this and the blog post and, of course, the new book that will have most of a chapter devoted to this, we'll have covered the bases of the topic.

Since we're in Hebrews 2, let's focus there. I'm going to quote you part of what I have written in the new book about this issue.

The supremacy of Christ over angels is the central theme in the first two chapters of the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 1:13-14 establishes that point:

And to which of the angels has he ever said, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'? Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

In other words, they're not the ones who inherit salvation. They *serve* the ones who inherit salvation. And the ones who inherit salvation will sit at his right hand. The passage is referring to Jesus sitting at the right hand—that's correct—but Revelation 2:26 and Revelation 3:20-21 refer to *us* sharing the throne and *us* having a messianic Psalm (Psalm 2) about ruling the nations with a rod of iron... Jesus quotes a messianic Psalm and applies it to *us*. He doesn't apply it to angels, he applies it to *us*. It's completely consistent with Hebrews 2. Back to my excerpt here:

Note the wording of verse 14 carefully. Angels are ministering spirits sent to serve *those who will inherit salvation*. The passage distinguishes angels from those who inherit salvation, in turn suggesting that angels do not.

Why this wording? Why would the writer focus on human beings when it comes to salvation and, apparently, exclude angels? Hebrews 2:5-18 answers those questions and in so doing shuts the door on redemption for fallen angels. Consider the first four of those verses (Heb 2:5-8a):

**⁵ For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. ⁶ It has been testified somewhere,
 “What is man, that you are mindful of him,
 or the son of man, that you care for him?
⁷ You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
 you have crowned him with glory and honor,
⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet.”**

The writer makes reference to the world to come, the new earth described in Revelation 21-22. The new earth is cast as a global Eden, the climactic consummation of God’s salvation plan. Eden is restored. Human beings inherit this salvation precisely because the original Eden and the world itself were created *for human beings*. God’s original plan was to live among his human family on earth. We who were made lesser than the divine beings (Heb 2:6-7) were destined to become members of God’s household. At the Fall, this goal was derailed. The rest of the Bible is about God’s effort to restore what was lost—to dwell among his people, transforming the earth into his kingdom.

The point is straightforward: the plan of salvation is focused on human beings because human beings were the original object of eternal life in God’s presence on earth. Angels were not the focus because the Fall disrupted *an earthly enterprise*. God’s human imagers were corrupted, left estranged from God—left unfit to live in God’s presence. In the end, it will be human beings who will share authority with Christ in ruling the new earth, not angels. This is why passages in the book of Revelation about the same eschatological outcome [as Hebrews 2:5] focus on human believers, not angels:

45:00

²⁶ The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷ and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. ²⁸ And I will give him the morning star. (Rev 2:26-28)

²¹ The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. (Rev 3:21)

The apostle Paul makes the point emphatic by reminding the Corinthian believers that they would one day judge angels (1 Cor 6:3). Human believers have a higher status in the new earth.

The writer of Hebrews continues describing the hope of the eschaton (Heb 2:8b-13):

⁸ ... Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. ⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone...

Who is the “everyone” in the beginning of this passage? If we care about reading in context, it’s the human beings the writer referred to a few lines ago (“What is man...?”). The Greek term translated “everyone” is *pantos*. The grammatical form is masculine singular, a reference to the totality of humankind.

In verse 9 Jesus is compared to these humans, inferior as they are to angels, because Jesus was human [he became human]. God became a man in the person of Jesus Christ. The incarnation links Jesus to us. Why was the incarnation important? Because atoning for the sins of the world of humankind (John 3:16) required an eternal sacrifice. But eternal beings cannot die, and so God had to become a man. The eternal Son cannot die for sin unless he is human and capable of dying. One cannot have a resurrection that defeats death unless there is first a death. In other words, atonement for sin could not be accomplished without incarnation.

Do you see the connection? The second Person of the Godhead became a man because the object of the atonement was fallen humanity (Luke 19:10; 2 Cor 5:21).

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus became a human because he needed to save humans. Becoming human was necessary because its ultimate purpose was a death that atoned for humans. Becoming human had no necessary link to angels, who are not human. Christ’s death for sin substituted for our death for sin (Gal 3:13; Rom 4:25).

The necessity of a human sacrificial death means the death of Christ did not have angels, who are not human, as its object. As such, the atoning death is not linked to angelic sins, but to human sins.

The remainder of Hebrews 2 confirms this interpretation:

¹⁴Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

A few key lines deserve comment.

50:00

1. “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he (Jesus) partook of the same things. . . .” (Heb 2:14a). This language establishes the rationale of the incarnation. Jesus became a human because we, the object he intended to redeem, are human.
2. “...that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” (Heb 2:14b). The obvious point here is that human death had to be overcome. Less obvious is the related thought that the Devil also had to be dealt with because he had the power of death over humanity. The idea is that, without redemption, Satan’s power over humans—his “legal” ownership of every human being estranged from God in the wake of what happened in Eden—would remain intact. But Scripture nowhere endorses the notion that angelic sin resulted in this sort of bondage to Satan. Humanity is under the curse because of Eden. Angels are nowhere said to be under the curse of Eden—which is what the atoning sacrifice of Jesus targets—nor under any other curses that gives Satan “legal” claim to their lives.
3. “For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Heb 2:16-17). These statements make what we have been discussing explicit. The sacrifice of Jesus does not help angels. It helps [human] believers—the children of Abraham by

faith (Gal 3:26-29). Jesus had to become like his human siblings, lower than angels (Heb 2:9-11) to atone for the sins of those siblings.

²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

It's just so clear. Jesus had to become like his human siblings—lower than angels (Hebrews 2:9-11) to atone for the sins of his siblings.

In summary, the language of Hebrews 2:5-18 leaves no doubt the object of Christ's redemptive work is humanity, not angels.

If people want to argue about the book of Revelation and the language in Revelation 1-3, I have a little bit on that from the new book:

Ultimately, it is the grammar of Revelation 1-3 that provides the greatest clarity with respect to how the angels of the churches should be considered.

The argument here is that when Jesus speaks to the angel of the church of _____ (fill in the blank) and then somewhere in what is said there is something like, "Repent!" or some other extension of forgiveness, people will say, "Look, he's talking to the angel there, so angels can be redeemed! They can repent!" It's not quite as simple as that because there are other things going on in the passage. Listen carefully:

In each of the seven directives given to the churches ("To the angel of the church of X write"), each *church* is addressed with second person *singular* pronouns. For example, Rev 2:1 begins with the directive to the church at Ephesus. The speaker then says, "I know *your* works, *your* toil and *your* patient endurance, and how *you* cannot bear with those who are evil." In each case of the second person (your, you) the pronoun or verb form is grammatically singular. The point is that, while the angel of the church is addressed by the directive, the messages are not for the angel. They are instead for the collective church.

This perspective makes sense in light of the fact that when John was first commanded to write [at the very beginning of the book of Revelation], the intended audience was specifically said to be the seven churches, not the angels (Rev 1:11 — "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches").

55:00

So they're for the collective people of the churches. You get this language that we just read: "To the angel of the church of (somewhere), write..." and then in a couple places you have this command to repent or something like that which makes it sound like, "Hey, if you repent you're going to be saved, you're going to be forgiven." And people think that's extended to the angels. Well, not only do have Revelation 1 and 11 tell us that John was writing to the *churches* (the congregations there) and not only do we have this collective sense in the pronouns, but get this:

Each directive to each church concludes with the formulaic "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the *churches*," which indicates clearly that each message was for the entire congregation. Though each directive is addressed *to* an angel, its content is *for* the church. The angel of each church is therefore some sort of surrogate [a conduit through which the message is given, not the object of the message]. The angels and the churches are not identical, but they are related.

The fact that the intended audience of the messaging of the risen Christ is the human membership of each respective congregation must not be overlooked. It is significant for discussing the first argument for angelic redemption. By way of example, consider the following examples from Revelation 2:

To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands... Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. (Rev 2:1, 5)

And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. . . . Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life (Rev 2:8, 10)

And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword. . . . Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. (Rev 2:12, 16)

This is the familiar pattern: repent, be faithful unto death later on... you get this kind of language to the different churches.

It is noteworthy that each of these instances contain the same statement that makes it clear that the intended audience of these calls for repentance is the church, not the angel through whom the message is mediated. Each passage ends with the statement, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7, 11, 17).

Again, the angel is a surrogate. The angel is a conduit. The angel is—dare I say?—a messenger-boy. That's what angels are! Christ is giving a message to an angel and the angel is to take that message to the congregation. This is what angels DO! They are messenger-boys. The content of the message is for the churches. Revelation 1-3 affirms this point over and over again. So the content of the messages is for people.

The text makes it clear that the risen Christ is speaking to the congregations, composed as they are of human believers. The angel is not the church; the angel is a communicative surrogate for the church. Consequently, the angel is not the target audience for the calls to repent. Moreover, there is no indication that the angel surrogates are fallen and estranged from God.

Think about that! Why would we conclude that the angels of the churches are fallen angels that need to repent? There's no reason to think that. There's nothing in the passage to suggest that God is now using fallen angels in rebellion against him to take messages to believers! It just makes no sense. And it has no textual basis.

I could go on and on with this, but I want to hit one more point. We're getting a little on the long side here on the podcast. What about Colossians 1:19-20? Here's the other verse that angelic redemption will refer to. I think Hebrews 2 kills it, and that was our chapter for the day. Revelation 1-3 doesn't support it at all; it makes no sense at all. But we need to throw Colossians 1:19-20 in this. Here are the two verses:

¹⁹For in [Jesus] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

The Greek phrase there for "to reconcile to himself" is *eis auton*. Most scholars would acknowledge that "all things, whether in heaven or on earth" includes the heavenly host. I would.

Given that assumption, the issue that requires consideration is the meaning of “reconcile” and “making peace” through the cross. Most readers presume that this language refers to the forgiveness of sins, but that is not the case. The idea of

reconciliation is multi-faceted. For example, the work of Christ is connected to the renewal of creation. That has nothing to do with forgiving sins. Creation did not sin. It committed no moral offense against God. Hence its “reconciliation” (creation is, of course, included in “all things”) means something different than forgiveness of sin.

1:00:00

O'Brien, in his Colossians commentary, discusses the passage this way and makes some interesting observations:

The unusual feature of this passage is that it refers to the reconciliation of “all things” (τὰ πάντα; *ta panta*) and that as a *past* event.

That might not sound self-evident to you, but hang with me.

Although 2 Corinthians 5:19 (cf. John 3:16 and similar passages) speaks of the reconciliation of the world (κόσμος; *kosmos*), it is clear that it is the world of men which is in view. Further, it is argued that the freeing of creation from its bondage to decay so that it obtains the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom 8:19–21) is a *future* eschatological event. Three related questions, therefore, arise: (a) What is the meaning of the phrase “to reconcile all things to him”... (b) What is the relationship of this expression to the words which follow, “having made peace through the blood of his cross”... (c) Is it possible or even desirable to equate verse 20 with the notion of God’s leading the evil powers in his triumphal procession [in Colossians] 2:15?

You have to realize that Colossians 1:19-20 is not the only reference to invisible things in heaven. There are other passages, even in that chapter (Colossians 1:16 and, of course, Colossians 2:15). What O'Brien is saying is that we might want to consider Paul's talk about these powers together—all of it. That might be a good idea. And I would suggest it is.

Back to the new book:

Two points are especially crucial for accurate parsing of the question about angelic redemption. First, the reconciliation of which Col 1:20 speaks is a *past* event [something already accomplished]. Many who presume the passage is about the offer of salvation now being open to angels fail to grasp this point as it derives from Greek grammar and syntax.

Most of those people aren't going to be looking at that, anyway. Marcus Barth explains:

Eis auton (to him) here does not indicate the completion of “imminent” reconciliation, and thus does not indicate a futuristic occurrence. The expression, which is construed in the aorist tense, “all things are reconciled *with him*,” is to be interpreted as a parallel construction to the expression in stanza 1 [Col 1:16], “all things were created in him,” and its special significance derives from there. It signifies, as the use of the aorist shows, the fulfillment of the corresponding expression in 1:16. Accordingly, reconciliation has its foundation in the creation and is now arriving at its completion in the dominion of the Son over all things.

My book again... I’m going to translate the academese:

The point is that the statements in Col 1:16 (“all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, were created by him”) must be understood in tandem with Col 1:20 (“all things, whether on earth or in heaven, are reconciled to/with him”). Both statements are in the same paragraph unit, and both verbs are aorist tense, the Greek tense which focuses on completed action—not action in process, or action yet unaccomplished. Hence Barth’s statement that the reconciliation of Col 1:20 (which still needs to be defined) is rooted in creation and now, after the cross, is moving toward its consummation, which itself is expressed as the dominion of the Son over all things.

The link of the reconciliation talk of Col 1:20 (and the original creation order of Col 1:16) to the kingship of the Son derives from Col 2:15...

Let me read that to you:

¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

All three of these things need to be understood in tandem. The basis of the relevance of these things to Colossians 1:20 is that all three of them reference invisible spiritual beings in heaven—things in heaven—supernatural powers. They are created by the Son in Colossians 1:16, they are reconciled to the Son in Colossians 1:20, and they are triumphed over in Colossians 2:15. All three passages are talking about the same thing—the same guys. Are we going to keep these things together, or are we going to pull one out and make hay with it? Back to an excerpt from my book:

1:05:00

Note first that the cross does result in the offer of redemption *for humanity*.

Let me read Colossians 2... We read 2:15, but let me go back a couple of verses. Listen to this. This is about the triumphing over the rulers. The preceding two verses say this:

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Again, what the cross results in is freedom for humanity. But for the supernatural powers what does it result in? Their defeat. Colossians 2 doesn't view the effect—the impact—of the cross the same way with respect to angels (supernatural non-human beings) as it does to human beings, does it? The text is clear. The effect of the crucifixion is different for humans than it is for angels. It just is! Again, I don't write the material, but there it is.

The implications of connecting Col 1:20 with Col 1:16 and Col 2:15 is that “reconciliation” does not mean an offer of forgiveness that is still on the table [for angels]. It means something else. In accord with Col 1:16, 20, all the verb forms in Col 2:15 are aorist and therefore describe a real condition that is completed. The “reconciliation” that is being described in Col 1:20 must be defined as an already completed reality that is consistent with both original creation order and the kingship of the risen Christ.

You have to honor these contexts when you talk about reconciliation in Colossians 1:20.

Of the various suggestions made by scholars for understanding the meaning of reconciliation in Col 1:20, there is only one that both acknowledges supernatural beings must be included and that remains true to the verse's relationship to Col 1:16; 2:15.

I think the best articulation of this is by Edward Lohse in his *Hermeneia* commentary. He writes this:

Although there has been no previous mention of it, it is presupposed here that unity and harmony of the cosmos have suffered a considerable disturbance, even a rupture. In order to restore the cosmic order reconciliation became necessary and was accomplished by the Christ-event. Through Christ, God himself achieved this reconciling. The universe has been reconciled in that heaven and earth have been brought back into their divinely created and determined order through the resurrection and exaltation of Christ. Now the universe is again under its head and thereby cosmic peace has returned. This peace which God has established through Christ binds the whole universe together again into unity and underlines that the restored creation is reconciled with God. Contrary to apocalyptic expectations, peace is not something which will come only at the end of time;

rather, it has already appeared in all things and the cosmic work of redemption has been done (cf. Phil. 2:10f.).

Here's the "already but not yet" *again!* Back to the quotation:

As the one who reconciled the cosmos, Christ has entered his kingly rule. Because he is the mediator of reconciliation, he is therefore also praised as the mediator of creation, as Lord over the universe, over powers and principalities.

That's all from Barth. Back to the excerpt from my book:

The point is that "reconciling all things in heaven and earth" in Col 1:20 refers to the restoration of creation order and authority.

That's what it means. It's not about the forgiveness of sins.

1:10:00

In Col 1:20, "reconciliation" means the return to creation order and the re-installment of Christ to his position of rulership at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55-56; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 13; 1 Pet 3:22; Rev 5:1) after his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension. An offer of salvation to angels is not in view. Instead, the aberration of their dominion over the affairs of men is corrected. Their authority is now illegitimate. They of course will not willingly surrender power, and so that must be—and will be—taken from them. Humans still estranged from God are thus deceived and enslaved by powers unauthorized by the true king. That is the point of the Great Commission—setting captives free.

To wrap up, Hebrews 2 is just *central* to all of that. We don't want to lose sight of Hebrews 2 amid this rabbit-trail of angelic redemption, even though it's a core thing to talk about in Hebrews 2. We don't want to lose sight of the main points here. So as we wrap up, Hebrews 2 makes several points that I'll number.

1. The gospel was superior to the Law because Christ was a superior means of revelation (Hebrews 1:2).
2. Taking no heed to the gospel was as serious as taking no heed to the law had been. *Had been*. The law is now lesser. In many respects, it is *passé*. It is under, subservient to, lesser than the revelation of Christ.
3. The law could not save. It was neither eternal, nor was it a sacrifice for sin. Only an eternal being who could die (think about that paradox) could succeed in propitiating God, fulfilling the covenants, and guaranteeing eternal life. This is why God had to become man in Jesus Christ. The incarnation is essential to salvation. Christ was the fulfillment of the Law, the perfect image of the mind and will of God. He died and rose again,

making salvation possible. What I mean by that is that Christ could be the perfect fulfillment of the law, he could be the perfect reflection of the mind and the will of God, but if he wasn't mortal he couldn't die. And he had to die to rise again. And he had to rise again to defeat death. The incarnation is essential to redemption. And the object of it (because Jesus became human)... Why did he become human and not something else? Because humanity was the object of the plan, not angels.

4. The incarnation also means humanity is the object of redemption and of forgiveness of sin, not angels. God didn't become an angel. Angels will not inherit the new Eden. God became a man so that humanity could be forgiven and inherit the new global Eden.

TS: Mike, you just upset a lot of *elohim* listening to the show out there. [laughter] They're not very happy with you.

MH: Do we worry about them more than the Hebrew Roots folks? [laughing] The angelic redemption folks... that's a small crowd. But there it is. What can you do?

TS: I guess we're not going to need the angels delivering our messages because we have email now.

MH: [laughs] Well, see, they're made out of electrons. They're made out of energy particles. They're the ones that correct your spelling wrongly! [laughter]

TS: There you go.

MH: Mischievous angels are working through the email!

TS: Speaking of absurdity, next weekend our show is going to be about the end of the world because the world is ending next weekend!

MH: That's right. We're going to do the show on why the world... We were just talking about this, so think about the paradox here. We're going to have a show on why the world isn't going to end, and we're going to record it before September 23rd, right? Is that how the calendar works out for us?

TS: Yeah, the 22nd is when we're recording.

1:15:00

MH: There you go. I don't feel like I'm spitting in the wind there or going out on a limb. But that's what we're going to talk about: Why didn't the world end on September 23rd? We'll record it before then and you'll hear it after.

TS: IF we're still around that is. [laughter] We *hope* to be here...

MH: You know what, Trey? I'm not crossing my fingers.

TS: I hear ya on that one. All right, Mike. I just want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God bless.