

“JESUS IS SUPERIOR TO...” SERIES

MADE LIKE HIS BROTHERS

HEBREWS 2:14-18

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.

Introduction

Billy Graham is noted as being one of the greatest evangelists of the 20th century. In 1996 he held a crusade to 349,000 people over seven days in the Metrodome in Minneapolis, Minnesota. On a Wednesday evening, He preached a message out of John 3:16. One of the statements he made was:

"In fifty or seventy years you will all be dead." Of course he was talking about the physical body, because he went on to say, "When you were born, you were born to live forever, and you will—either in heaven or in hell."

Death is a very real part of our lives. We are born, live our lives and then we die. Death would be a horrible thought for most people, but for the Christian, there is a great Hope and His name is Jesus.

The writer of Hebrews continues his argument concerning Jesus being Superior and the area he covers in this section is trusting Jesus is superior to fear; and most importantly, the fear of death.

The author provides three reasons for Christ's sufferings: (1) to identify with humanity (vv. 10–13); (2) to destroy the power of death (vv. 14, 15); and (3) to become an intercessory High Priest (vv. 17, 18).¹

¹ *King James Version study Bible* . (1997). (electronic ed., Heb 2:17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

In the previous study, we were introduced to Emmanuel, God with Us. His humanity enabled Him to “...bring many sons to glory” (vv. 10-13). In this study we will look at the second and third reason for the suffering of Christ.

Question: If I were to ask you the reason that Jesus came to the earth, what would your response be? Some might say for the salvation of the world (John 3:16). Others might say to increase the Kingdom of God.” (Matthew 4:17-23). Today we will look at other reasons why Jesus came to the earth.

JESUS KNOWS THROUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

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,

“*Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood*” – It is evident from this statement that Jesus did not die for angels; as they cannot die. He came to declare the Kingdom of God and to lead humans to salvation.

“...*he himself likewise partook of the same things*” – Jesus took on a human body, not an angelic presence. He took on the whole nature of man.

“...*that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil*” – Angels don’t die, but Jesus died, there is no argument there, except those loonies that want to suggest that Jesus simply “swooned” or became so unconscious that everyone believed he was dead. He died. The soldiers knew it and they were experts of torture and killing.

The first reason given for Jesus dying is to conquer death and the one who has power over death, the devil. But not just conquer death, but to destroy or subdue it.

Satan is many things, but our introduction of him in the Scriptures is where he tempted Adam and Eve and brought sin into the world. That sin brought death, both physical and spiritual.

Caiaphas, the high priest the year of Jesus crucifixion said these words concerning the need of Jesus’ death.

John 11:51-52 *And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; 52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.*

The Biblical Illustrator titles this section *“He died in order to destroy the terror of death in humanity.*

In their book titled *“Hebrews”*, Evans and Ogilvie bring their readers to the life and times of Jesus in such a powerful way.

As a baby, Jesus was born to a teenage girl whose heart agonized at the oppression of her people (Luke 1:51–55). He drank the milk of her breasts while her innermost being throbbled with a passion for liberty. As a lad, He walked streets that were occupied by foreign troops. Swaggering or standing spread-legged in haughty arrogance, with weapons slung over their shoulders, they reflected their ruthless authority in their cold looks. As a teenager, Jesus knew the frustration of having parents who did not understand His radical calling. As a young businessman, He understood the difficulty of meeting payroll and dealing with adamant customers who demanded unreasonable service. He periodically heard the belligerent knock of the tax collector on His door demanding exorbitant taxes for a foreign oppressor. As a leader of a new movement, He was pained by the slowness of His disciples to grasp the true meaning of God’s kingdom and His servant identity. He felt the rising tide of hostility from the religious establishment and recognized the tightening vise of inexorable political power that was determined to squeeze all the breath out of His new movement. He seethed at the corruption of an illegal trial. He knew the stinging pain of the lash and the thong, the exhaustion of carrying a heavy cross, the cruelty of the soldiers pounding nails through His hands and feet. As He hung on the cross for hours, His bones began to pull from their sockets; His mouth was parched with the loss of blood and relentless heat. He experienced the alienating weight of the world’s sin, the yawning chasm growing between Him and His Father. He quietly watched the shades of death pull over His eyes until finally He gasped His last breath and gave over His life to God in a final act of submission. Then His limp and lifeless form was laid in a borrowed tomb.²

15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

² Evans, L. H., Jr. & Ogilvie, L. J. (1985). *Hebrews* (Vol. 33, p. 79). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.

“...and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” – Oh how miserable is the life of those that fear death. The fear of death holds many in slavery or bondage. That condition is the most miserable and gloomy condition known to man. The reason is that death is the result of God’s wrath on sin. Therefore, death is not only the separation of the soul and the body, but is also punishment for those that do not believe. It is eternal ruin;

Matthew 13:49-50 *So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

Revelation 14:11 *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night...”*

I found an article on the internet giving seven reasons why people fear death.³

1. Fear of the Unknown – contrary to some of the stories, books and movies recently, no one knows what happens after death.
2. Religious Issues – heaven or hell.
3. Fear of the Dying Process – many don’t fear death itself, but the dying process scares them.
4. Fear of the Loss of Control – all our lives we have been in control of our lives, but no one has control over death.
5. Fear of What Will Become of My Family – how will my family cope without me.
6. Fear of Being Replaced or Forgotten – fear that somebody will take their place in marriage, family, business, etc.
7. Fear of Not Achieving – not completing all their plans in life.

Many fear death for several reasons. Some others are:

Fear of non-existence after death. Fear of eternal punishment. No hope beyond the life they now live.

JESUS HELPS THE BELIEVER

16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.

“*For surely it is not angels that he helps*” – Simple, Jesus the Messiah did not die for the angels.

“...*but he helps the offspring of Abraham*” – Jesus came to help the descendants of Abraham’ and by the sacrificial work of the Lamb of God, the bride of Christ. Writing to descendants of Abraham, Jews, this does not exclude the idea that he died for the whole human race (John 3:16), He died for all.

³ 2 Touch Tomorrow. <http://2touchtomorrow.com/2012/05/16/seven-reasons-people-fear-death/>

JESUS IS MERCIFUL AND A FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST

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.

“*Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect*” – In every aspect, Jesus was like his “brothers”. He had limitations in his human body.

He hungered.
Wept.
Agonized.
Felt loss.
Knew betrayal.
Sought for answers.
He was ridiculed and bullied.
He felt praise and the sting of criticism.
He knew hunger and thirst
He knew temptation
He grew weary.
He knew the life of work and toil.
He knew the life of a conquered nation.
He was made like his brothers in every respect.

“*...so that he might become a merciful*” – Jesus understood compassion from both sides; human and God. He understood mankind’s weaknesses, trials and temptations as he had a nature like his brothers.

“*...and faithful high priest in the service of God*” – What were the duties of the “high priest?” The high priest was from the lineage of Aaron. He was ordained and anointed with oil. He was “set apart” for the work of the LORD.

The high priest:

- Was the judge of all things pertaining to the Jewish religion
- He was given the task of offering the Atonement for the nation, including entering the Holy of Holies once a year.
- He was considered the spokesman for God when properly adorned with his priestly garments

“*...to make propitiation for the sins of the people*” – the Greek word “hilaskomai” means “to atone for” or “be merciful or make reconciliation for.” That is what the death of Jesus obtained for the believer...God will be merciful for Jesus atoned for our sins.

JESUS HELPS THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING

18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

“*For because he himself has suffered when tempted*” – In today’s terminology, Jesus has “been there. Done that” for everyone. He knows pain and death, but He also knows the suffering caused by temptation. The Gospel of Mark says of Jesus time in the wilderness:

Mark 1:13 *And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.*

“...*he is able to help those who are being tempted*” - Jesus knows your times of temptation, and His word will sustain you through those times.

Conclusion

Jesus was made (incarnate) like His brothers

Jesus has experienced everything you will experience

Because of this, Jesus is there to help the believer

Jesus is Merciful

Jesus is our High Priest

Jesus will help those who are suffering.

Bob Crowder