

**SBC – Dec. 24, 2023**

**Hebrews 2:5-18 (NKJV)**

***“The Mission of the Lord Jesus Christ”***

On Sunday mornings, for the last few months I have been going through the book of Romans. This morning, since Christmas is upon us, and we have lots of people gone who are normally here, I am going to bring a message from Hebrews 2.

This message intersects with and underscores many of the points we have seen in Romans. See if you can note them as we go along.

Both Romans and Hebrews are great DOCTRINAL books. Roman has been described as presenting Christ as the “one way” while Hebrews presents Him as the “better way”. Hebrews presents Christ as the full and final revelation of God.

Christ in Hebrews is presented as better or superior to the prophets, the angels, Moses, Aaron, the Levitical priests, Joshua, and the old covenant. Hebrews exalts both the PERSON and the WORK of Christ in His incarnation, substitutionary death, and in His priesthood. Christ is shown to fulfill old covenant typology and is shown to be superior to all of these.

Hebrews 2 essentially answers the question: Why was Jesus born? This builds on WHO Jesus is as God as seen in chapter 1. I am only going to touch on the KEY points in this chapter and present the package as a whole as to WHY Jesus came.

### **Slide # 1**

**Jesus came to be our...**

Status changer (dominion restored for man) 2:5-8

Substitute – 2:9

Salvation Trailblazer 2:10

Sanctifier – 2:11

Satan- Conqueror – 2:14

Sympathetic High-Priest – 2:17-18

**Hebrews 2:5–18 (NKJV)**

**5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.**

**6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: “What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him?”**

**7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.**

These verses are teaching us that God created MAN to rule for Him. When God created the world and everything in it in 6 days all along the way we find that God “saw that it was good”. It was only after the creation of mankind in His own image do we read “very good”.

God in effect made the man and the woman as royalty over all the earth – intending for them to rule over it for Him.

But then something happened that is called the FALL – the FALL of mankind into sin. In following Satan instead of God, man allowed the devil to be over him. Jesus called the devil “the ruler of this world” (Jn. 12:31). In 2 Cor. 4:4 Paul called him “the god of this age”. Now the entire world system is in rebellion against God and they follow Satan who heads up this system of rebellion.

But this has not changed God’s plan or intention that ultimately MAN rule the world for Him. How can it yet be that mankind will RULE the world for God? Enter Jesus!

Hebrews 2:5 affirms that God’s plan and destiny is that angels will not RULE in the “world to come” which means the KINGDOM to come. In the kingdom angels will not be in charge – rather people will be. Now Jesus is coming as “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16). That is totally unchallenged but under Him His people will rule with Him.

## **Slide # 2**

### **Revelation 5:9–10 (NKJV)**

**9** And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

**10** And have made us kings and priests to our God; **And we shall reign on the earth.”**

But for right now we don’t see all things put under mankind.

Right now angels have a greater functional role than mankind. For example, angels do not die while we do. But in the kingdom age – the world to come - God is going to FLIP this where mankind will again have dominion.

Mankind was created SPECIAL - being the very image bearer of God. He was created for glory, honor, and dominion. Almost in amazement with David the writer quotes Psalm 8:4...

### **Slide # 3**

#### **Psalm 8:4 (NKJV)**

**4** What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?

Actually he quotes Psalm 8:4-6 as seen here in Hebrews 2:6-8.

### **Slide # 4**



From a natural standpoint our entire planet in the BIG scheme of things is so tiny and miniscule as to make it seemingly insignificant and unimportant.

### **Slide # 5**

Who are we? We find that we live on an insignificant planet of a humdrum star lost in a galaxy tucked away in some forgotten corner of a universe in which there are far more galaxies than people.

– **Carl Sagan**

How can it be that man matters? How can it be that God is vitally interested in us? As the writer goes on to show the answer is that God is mindful of man and visits him because humanity is greater than all other created beings. He is the crowning work of God's creation with the highest calling. God's care and visitation proves mankind's value. Mankind matters so much because it matters to God!

The language here refers to original creation where mankind is said to be "***crowned with glory and honor***".

There was special dignity (**glory**) bestowed on mankind as image bearers of God. Mankind had the esteemed privilege to walk with God and to serve as His vice-regents over God's created earth. Thus, God designed man to RULE – to have DOMINION over His creation.

Glory refers to being made in God's glorious image. Honor refers to the authority and position which God has bestowed upon mankind. Adam and Eve were in effect **king and queen** over God's original creation on earth. They were set in the midst of God's paradise on earth and walked with God in perfect fellowship. Under God they were totally IN CHARGE!

Note the double emphasis in verse 8 that ALL THINGS were put under the dominion of man. Under his feet is the position of absolute authority. The idea is seen in a conquering king putting his foot on the neck of a deposed king. It signified absolute dominion.

God intended for mankind to rule with absolute authority – and that has not changed. God designed man to RULE and this will ultimately be fulfilled and realized in Jesus in the kingdom! God rules and as those made in His image we were created to rule! And by grace we will in the KINGDOM!

**But now we do not yet see all things put under him.**

God put all things under the dominion of mankind as seen in Genesis 1 – but something happened to where we don't see that kind of dominion being exercised today. What happened was sin! What happened was the fall of mankind as seen in Genesis 3.

Sin brought the CURSE on creation so that man trying to control things on planet earth now is very difficult. Now the earth itself brings forth thorns and thistles and requires great effort to control it (cf. Gen. 3:18). Animals are no longer docile creatures but rather are often ferocious and dangerous. The whole of nature was affected (cf. Rom. 8). Mankind today has at best "**limited dominion**" that is maintained only with great toil and difficulty.

But perhaps the biggest way in which man lost his absolute dominion rule was in relationship to angels, and in particular in relationship to the fallen angel of Satan and the fallen angels who follow him who are known as demons.

**Slide # 6**

**Luke 4:5–6 (NKJV)**

**5** Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

**6** And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

This authority described by Satan is the very dominion authority that God originally gave to man, but which has now been usurped by Satan in the fall of mankind. Now Satan is a defeated foe but his sentence has yet to be carried out.

**Slide # 7****Romans 16:20 (NKJV)**

**20** And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Satan is about to be crushed by God, but not yet. He is still on a leash with authority over the world. What makes Satan so upset is that the one aspect in the world that he doesn't control is the believer who is walking in the Spirit. This is terribly frustrating to him and he is powerless to do anything about it other than cater to our flesh - and still having the flesh we are yet vulnerable to temptation when we take our eyes off Jesus.

**But now** (in contrast to the dominion mandate given at Creation) we do not yet see all things put under him (mankind)....

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

Right now we don't see the original dominion mandate being fulfilled in mankind. But we see Jesus who will ultimately bring about the fulfillment of it. This is why He came! He as the second Adam came to fulfill what the first Adam failed in.

Jesus is our champion. He is the one that comes forth on behalf of humanity to restore our fortunes. He comes forth as our great representative. He comes forth as our Savior and Lord and rights things in mankind's favor! He once again puts mankind back in the top position.

But in order to accomplish this He had to assume a position a “***little lower than the angels***” which He did in becoming a man. Jesus becoming a man is commonly called “the incarnation”.

The name Jesus is a very special NAME. It was given to Him upon Him becoming human.

The Name Jesus in the NT corresponds to the name **Joshua** in the OT. Thus, the names **Jesus** and **Joshua** are equivalents (cf. Acts 7:45, Heb. 4:8). The Name Jesus literally means “YHWH is salvation” or “The LORD saves”. In effect this Name means **GOD-SAVIOR**. It inherently speaks of His Deity as YHWH but also of Him being Savior. He is the God Who Saves! But in order to save He had to become HUMAN! Jesus is the God-Man Who saves!

### **Slide # 8**

**Joshua** (Hebrew -OT)

**Jesus** (Greek - NT)

= YHWH is Salvation (God-Savior)

**Matthew 1:21 (NKJV)**

**21** And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall **call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.**

In Hebrews 2:9 it's like the writer runs to the end of the story of Christ death followed by His resurrection and exaltation (crowned with glory and honor), and then comes back to add more detail to the fact of His death saying, “***that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.***”

Here is where we have the glorious truth of Christ being our substitute. Christ as the representative of humanity died for us all.

Christ's death for sin was a GRACE payment. This is the GRACE of God on display. Grace means God's favor – His unmerited, undeserved favor. It's an undeserved gift. That is the essence of the cross!

If you are looking for a definition of GRACE look no further than the cross. It's the love of God paying for our sins. We are guilty we should have paid the eternal death penalty – but Christ voluntarily came and took our place.

This is why Christ was born – He was born to die for our sins as the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29).

Note the writer specially says, “***the grace of God***” – is that Jesus “***might taste death for everyone***.” That is the GRACE of God. That is the gospel of grace. It’s that Christ died for our sins. We don’t pay for our own sins. Jesus paid it all – all to Him we owe.

It is for this reason that all in heaven sing “***worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive honor and glory***.” (Rev. 5:12) No one in heaven is walking around congratulating themselves. No! They give 100 percent praise and glory to Jesus alone– because it’s all His doing.

Jesus was all alone on the cross. He alone is Savior! And in His dying breath He said, “***It is finished!***” (Jn. 19:30). He by Himself paid it all! That’s the gospel of grace! If anyone adds to it Paul in Gal. 1:8-9 says, let them be accursed! Don’t add your 2 cents – don’t add your good works, - don’t add church – don’t add baptism or sacraments or efforts. Don’t even add prayer. Faith is a matter of the heart. We believe in our heart and then as expression of that faith we confess with our mouth (Rom. 10:9-10).

When it says that Christ “***might taste death***” it means that He might appropriate or that He might experience it for everyone. And note it specifically says that He might taste death for EVERYONE.

### **Slide # 9**

Just as the sin of the first man influenced the entire race, so the death of Christ made a universal provision for deliverance. It’s value, of course, must be received by personal faith. – **Robert Gromacki**

In Christ – a MAN has been exalted to the highest position in the universe. Right now a MAN is at the right hand of God – He is the God-Man – our Lord Jesus Christ. As redeemed mankind we will share in that glory (cf. Rom. 8:17).

Christ came to pay the penalty for our sins, but beyond that Christ came to restore us and exalt us to the dominion glory that God intended for us from the very beginning (cf. Rev. 2:26-27, 3:21). Where sin abounded grace has abounded much more (cf. Rom. 5:20).

I remember the winter in Lake Benton, Minnesota, after my dad died. It was cold. Money was scarce. We had bought fuel twice already before Christmas. Mother had charged almost \$30 worth of groceries at Ernie's store, and that bothered her. One morning she put \$10 in an envelope for me to drop off at the store on my way to school. IN fact, she insisted on pinning it to my shirt so that I would not lose it. I delivered the envelope, and Ernie told me to stop by after school and pick up the receipt. When I arrived home, I gave it to Mother. She opened it and began crying. The \$10 bill was still there along with a wad of grocery slips. ON the top one was written, "Paid in full- Merry Christmas!" **-Rod C. Broding**

***"Paid in full – Merry Christmas!"*** That's God's promise message to us. God sent His Son to be the full payment for our sins. That's the good news!

I love the Rod Broding story but let me embellish it a bit. Suppose Ernie (the store owner) also attached the title deed of the store to the grocery slips saying, ***"I not only forgive your debt but I also raise you up to the position of co-owner of the store."*** That is abounding GRACE. That is what Christ has done for us! He not only paid our debt, but in GRACE has exalted us to reign with Him! In Christ we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (cf. Rom. 8:17).

### **Slide # 10**

#### **Romans 8:17 (NKJV)**

**17** and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

#### **Romans 8:32 (NKJV)**

**32** He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

#### **Revelation 21:7 (NKJV)**

**7** He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Indeed, the coming of Christ was proclaimed with the angelic announcement of "tidings of great joy" – and the best is yet to be! We have been forgiven and we on our way to reign in the kingdom. We are now said to be joint heirs with the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.



That means we will share in all that belongs to Him! In Christ God has given us everything there is to give! Let that sink in!

**10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**

It was fitting for God to send Jesus in the way that He did. Fitting means it is completely consistent with all God's requirements related to both His holiness and His love. It fits perfectly with having Christ go through what was necessary to make the way of salvation possible for us, and to equip Him to be the perfect High Priest.

The great plan of God which involves the incarnation, including the death and resurrection of Christ, was designed by God to accomplish various things including "***bringing many sons to glory***". One of the great objectives in the incarnation was the bringing of many sons to glory. It could be accomplished no other way. But God in His wisdom made a way that was consistent with Who He is and His Holiness.

When it describes Christ as "***the captain of their salvation***" the word **captain** means **pioneer** or **trailblazer** (cf. Acts 3:15, 5:31, Heb. 12:2). Christ has gone before us, in effect blazing the trail to glory for us and we follow in that train (cf. Isa. 53:12, Mk. 10:45). We are on the way to glory. Christ has gone before to prepare a place for us (Jn. 14:3). We are going to be with Christ and will behold His glory (cf. Jn. 17:24). God is bring many sons – and where is he bring them – TO GLORY! Our destination is glory.

And the coming of Jesus made this possible!

### **Slide # 11**

**G.B. Hardy**, in his book *Countdown*, said this is the ultimate question in the world. "Number one, has anybody ever cheated death?  
Number two, if he did, did he leave the way open for me?"

Has anyone ever conquered death? Yes there is One. His Name is Jesus!  
Has He made a way for others to follow?

Yes, He is bringing MANY sons to glory. He is not bringing just a few, but MANY with Him. Heaven, is going to be filled with throngs of redeemed saints.

In Rev. 7 John saw a great multitude which no one could number of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb (cf. Rev. 7:9).

It was fitting and necessary for the captain of our salvation to be made “*perfect through sufferings*.” Christ as God was always perfect. Christ, as the sinless God-Man, was always morally perfect. In view here is a “**functional perfection**” (cf. 2:18, 4:15, 5:7-9).

The word perfect means “*to reach a goal*”, “*to make complete*”, or “*to bring to fulfillment*”. Christ had to be made perfect, not morally, but in the sense that His humanity had to complete a suffering regiment. There were certain things that He had to experience, learn, and accomplish in suffering that could be achieved no other way (cf. Heb. 5:8-9).

**11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,**

Verses 11-13 emphasize Christ’s IDENTITY with mankind as a human being. He is one of us! Oh, He is far more than us, and yet at the same time He is fully human. What a privilege for us to identify with Him, but think of it – He is not ashamed to openly identify with us as one of us in His humanness! The Savior – the Christ, is a MAN, and yet not merely man – but rather the God-Man. But the point here is that of His identity as a fellow human-being – as a fellow member of the human race.

Christ is the One Who sanctifies (sets apart) and those who are being sanctified (set apart) are believers. Both the Sanctifier and the Sanctified (that is Christ and believers) are all of one – that is we all share a common humanity.

But note carefully that it is not all people generally that Jesus calls “**brethren**” but only those who are sanctified by Him – only those set apart as belonging to Him. In Acts 26:18 Jesus spoke of “those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” As the sanctified we are set apart as belonging to Christ the moment of saving faith (that is our position) and then in practice we have God at work in our walk to bring about practical sanctification.

### **Slide # 12**

**Hebrews 10:14 (NKJV)**

**14** For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

All true believers are perfected forever (that is they have positional sanctification), and we are in the process of being made more like Jesus (practical sanctification).

Twice in the NT we read of God not being ashamed of His people (both references are in Hebrews). Here in Hebrews 2:11 we see that Christ is not ashamed to call the “sanctified” His brethren”. The other place is in Hebrews 11:16 where it says God is not ashamed to be called the believers God – that is those who hope for a better country to come.

### **Slide # 13**

**Hebrews 11:16 (NKJV)**

**16** But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

**12 saying: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”**

Heb. 2:12 is a quote from Psalm 22:22. Psalm 22 is called the “Psalm of the Cross”. It is the basis of the cross that allows Christ to call us “brethren”. But although the emphasis of Psalm 22 is the cross it also points to the resurrection which is the context of this quote.

### **Slide # 14**

**Psalm 22:21–22 (NKJV)**

21 Save Me from the lion’s mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! [Prayer from the cross]

You have answered Me. [In the Resurrection]

22 I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. [Post Resurrection]

Jesus taught that only those who do the will of the Father are His spiritual family (cf. Mt. 12:50, Lk. 8:21), but during His earthly ministry prior to the resurrection Jesus never DIRECTLY called His disciples “brethren”.

However, He did so after the resurrection (cf. Mt. 28:10, Jn. 20:17). Not until He had made full payment for sin on the cross did Christ openly express His intimate identification with believers as “brothers”. The cross is the basis – the resurrection declares it fulfilled.

We are Christ’s “brethren” comes from the mouth of the triumphant Messiah in the resurrection in fulfillment of Ps. 22:22. Based on Christ’s death we have forgiveness – based on His resurrection we as His brethren will share in His glory.

Note that Christ declares God’s Name to His brethren. A person’s name stood for their whole character, their whole person. Christ made known God to His “brethren”. As brethren we have come to know God through Christ (Jn. 8:19; 14:9; 1 Jn. 5:20).

Not only does Christ make God known to His brethren He also leads them in worship. He says, *“In the midst of the assembly will sing praise to you.”* What an interesting dynamic. In the resurrection, Christ is worshipped, and yet, as a resurrected Man, He leads His brethren in worship of the Father.

**13 And again: “I will put My trust in Him.” And again: “Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.”**

Verse 13 is a summary of 2 quotes from Isa. 8:17 and 18 (cf. 2 Sam. 22:3, Isa. 12:2). The first quote: ***“I will put My trust in Him”*** comes from the prophet Isaiah in Isa. 8:17. Isaiah spoke these words but they are ultimately applied to Christ Who fully relied upon God His Father. Christ in His humanity is the ultimate example and model of faith. He is “the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2).

***And again: “Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.”*** is a quote from Isa. 8:18.

Although spoken of Isaiah and his children as representative of a faithful remnant, the writer here applies it to Christ and His identification with believers Whom the Father in sovereign grace has given Him.

These OT quotations place the speaker (Christ) in the same family category with God’s children. They serve to intimately identify Christ as BROTHER to all those who are believers.

**14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,**

Just as being human means that we partake of flesh and blood so Christ also likewise became a flesh and blood human being. The writer is saying in the strongest of terms that Christ became human just like us. And the reason He did so was...

**that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,**

Christ came to destroy the devil who has the power of death. Christ's death was a defeat of the Devil (cf. Jn. 12:31, 16:11).

God has the power of life – the devil has the power of death.

In what sense does the devil have "*the power of death*". Ultimately life and death are in the sovereign hand of God (cf. Deut. 32:39, Job 1:21, 2:6, Ps. 90:3, 139:16, Mt. 10:28, Lk. 12:5, Rev. 1:18). The Devil can only do what God allows.

However, the death of the human race is traced back to the devil in the sense that it was the devil who led mankind into sin and by sin comes death (cf. Gen. 2:17, 3:19, Rom. 5:12, 6:23, Col. 1:13). Christ called the devil "**a murderer from the beginning**". (Jn. 8:44). In sin we are in effect held in the devil's death grip. Christ also called the devil the father of lies (Jn. 8:44). It's through lies and deception that the devil keeps mankind in the bondage of sin and death (Rev. 12:9). That is his power.

It is a powerful death hold. Only Christ through His death could break the devil's death grip on humanity. Christ conquered the power of death through death (cf. Col. 2:15).

The devil holds people in death through deception, but Christ frees people through the truth of the gospel – when they believe it (cf. Mt. 16:18, Jn. 8:32, 36, 1 Jn. 3:8). As we believe the gospel we pass from death to life (cf. Jn. 5:24). In salvation Christ not only frees us from the penalty of sin but also from the power of the devil. We now walk in the light of God's truth and in the power of resurrection life.

The Greek word (***katargeo***) translated “destroy” is better translated as “*rendered inoperative*”. The devil is not destroyed in the sense of being abolished, but in Christ he has been disarmed and no longer holds the power of death over the believer. We know the gospel truth which brings us life and freedom. Eventually the devil will be confined to the lake of fire for all eternity, but he is not there yet. He is a defeated foe, but still active at present.

At present he holds unbelievers in the grip of sin and death, but not believers. We are now free in Christ. Although he tempts us (cf. 1 Thess. 3:5) and continues to be our adversary (cf. 1 Pet. 5:8), we are not in bondage to him any longer. If the Son makes you free then you are free indeed (cf. Jn. 8:36). We no longer need to listen to any of the devil’s lies! Instead, we are free to walk in truth.

### **15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

The great fear in life is the fear of death. It is called “***the king of terrors***”. The fear of death speaks to the reality that we are moral beings with a God-consciousness. We fear accountability. The fear of death and what happens at death is a terrible form of bondage. That is where people without Christ live. If they are honest dying scares them to death.

#### **Slide # 15**

From the time you were born your mother was afraid you would die; the household kept in touch with doctors – “through fear of death;” funerals passed your house, often carrying loved ones, filled with dread; the cemeteries you passed cried out, “You will soon be here!” The philosophers and the poets you read made your life “a brief passing moment,” - and then death. The human race is today SUBJECT TO BONDAGE. They may talk peace – but yonder comes the undertaker! --**William R. Newell**

But praise be to God, Christ has released us from the bondage of the fear of death. The blood of Christ now cleanses our conscience (cf. Heb. 9:14, 10:22). Now we know the truth that in Christ there is no condemnation (cf. Rom. 8:1). We know the truth that in Christ to die is gain (cf. Phil. 1:21).

Christ has so overwhelmingly defeated death that the very term “death” is no longer really appropriate for believers.

The NT speaks of it as a departure – to depart and be with Christ is far better (cf. Phil. 1:23). The NT now speaks of the body as sleeping as it is only a temporary condition that awaits the resurrection.

In Christ the sting of death has been removed – death has been robbed of its victory (cf. 1 Cor. 15:55). And there is such a thing as dying grace.

***Evangelist DL Moody*** when asked about dying grace said...  
 “When the dying hour comes, there will be dying grace; but you do not require dying grace to live by.” – D.L. Moody

And indeed this was his experience. On his death bed Moody said, “***Earth recedes, Heaven opens before me. If this is death, it is sweet! There is no valley here. God is calling me, and I must go.***”

Moody so aptly said...

### **Slide # 16**

*“Death may be the King of terrors... but Jesus is the King of kings!”*

God gives living grace for living and dying grace for dying. When it comes time for you to die God will give you grace! The bondage of the fear of death has been removed in Christ. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints” (Ps. 116:15). If you are not afraid to die then you can really enjoy living – living for Christ.

**16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.**

The writers point is that Christ came to rescue people. Christ did not become an angel to rescue fallen angels. No provision has been made for the salvation of fallen angels.

I take it that the “***seed of Abraham***” in this context is emphasizing his spiritual seed that share in the same faith of Abraham as seen in Romans 4 and Gal. 3.

Those helped refers specifically to those who are of faith, who are said to be the sons of Abraham in Gal. 3:7. In Romans 4:12 Abraham is said to be the father of all those who walk in the same steps of the faith which he had.

**Slide # 17****Romans 4:16 (NKJV)**

**16** Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that **the promise might be sure to all the seed**, not only to those who are of the law, but also to **those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all**

**Galatians 3:29 (NKJV)**

**29** And **if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed**, and heirs according to the promise.

Yes, Christ died for everyone (v. 9), but those that are specifically helped by Christ, those that become that actual beneficiaries of His help are those who have an Abrahamic like faith. It is they who are “seed of Abraham”.

**17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

In order to pay for the sin of mankind Jesus had to become a MAN. In all things (apart from sin) He had to be made like His brethren. To be our representative He had to become one of us. This is the kinsman-redeemer principle that is spelled out in the OT and beautifully illustrated in the book of Ruth (cf. Lev. 25).

It was the high priest's responsibility to represent the people before God and to offer sacrifice for sin before God on their behalf. Christ had to become a man in order to be able to relate to us and to properly represent us. As such He is a merciful and faithful High priest in things pertaining to God.

Merciful means He is full of compassion, sympathetic, and caring. He can relate to the struggles of life that we as human beings deal with and He cares for us (cf. 1 Pet. 5:7).

And He is a faithful High Priest meaning He is trustworthy, reliable, and dependable to represent us properly before God (cf. 4:15, 7:26). He faithfully meets all the standards of God. He represents us WELL!

In representing us at the cross Jesus made “**propitiation for the sins of the people.**” Propitiation is the idea of satisfying or appeasing the wrath of God.



When people sin, it arouses God to wrath (cf. Rom. 1:18) and they become enemies of God (cf. Rom. 5:10). The wrath of God abides on the unforgiven sinner! (cf. Jn. 3:36)

Christ as our HIGH PRIEST satisfied God's righteous demands of a payment for sin and appeased His wrath in His substitutionary sacrificial death. In effect God said, "***It is enough! It is adequate! I accept that payment for sin!***" In Isa. 53:10 it says God made "***His soul an offering for sin***" and then in verse 11 it says, "***He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.***" That's propitiation (cf. Rom. 3:25, 1 Jn. 2:2, 4:10).

**18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.**

Being a man enabled Christ to experience temptation. The language here is that He suffered, being tempted. It was a miserable experience. Heb. 4:15 says He "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (cf. 7:26)

But this experience of suffering in temptation allows Him to now fully sympathize with us in our struggle with sin. He is now perfectly suited to minister to us as a merciful and faithful High Priest in our battle with sin.

### **Slide # 18**

#### **Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)**

**16** Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

When you are struggling with sin - come to Jesus. He knows – He cares – and He is able to help you.

I saw an interviewer on TV asking people what Christmas meant to them. They said all kinds of things like getting together with family, presents, eating lots of food, football, etc. It reminded me of a true story I read years ago in our Daily Bread...

**Two women were dressed** up in their best at a fancy restaurant. A friend saw them and said "**What is the special occasion?**" One of the women said we are having a birthday party for our 2 year old. The friend then said, "***But where is the baby?***" And the lady said, "**Oh, I dropped him off at my mother's house. She's taking care of him until**

the party is over. It wouldn't have been any fun with him along." How ridiculous – having a birthday party for a boy who is not even welcome at his own party.

But really, that is how most of the world treats Jesus. They make the celebration of His "birth" all about them and theirs instead of making it all about Jesus.

A few answered the TV interviewer with the idea that Christmas is the celebration of Christ's birth – but went no further. No one even came close to touching on the significance of Christ's birth – WHY He was born!

I submit to you that what Christmas means to the true believer with understanding is found in Hebrews 2.

### **Slide # 19**

**Jesus was born to be our...**

- **Status changer** - (dominion restored for man) 2:5-8
- **Substitute** – (Savior) 2:9
- **Salvation Trailblazer** - (Made a way by taking sin out of the way) 2:10
- **Sanctifier** – (Sets apart those who believe in Him) 2:11
- **Satan- Conqueror** – (Took away his power of death) 2:14
- **Sympathetic High-Priest** – (Our caring representative) 2:17-18

Indeed this is the deeper meaning of what the angel announced 2000 years ago when at the birth of Christ he burst forth proclaiming...

### **Luke 2:10–11 (NKJV)**

**10** Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

**11** For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Let us continue the celebration as believers who know the true meaning of why Christ was born and God help us to be a vibrant testimony to that reality this Christmas holiday season.

Merry Christmas everyone!