

Hebrews 2:14-18 to 3:1-11

We concluded our lesson last week by considering the Captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 2:10 **"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."**

Now we all know that Jesus is already the Perfect One, and so we wondered why He needed to be made perfect through sufferings.

Then we realized that He needed to be made perfect (or complete) in His Saviourhood.

The perfect Son of God could not save us by
His perfection.

We did not need, or at least could not
attain to, a perfect example.

What we needed was a substitute, a
sacrifice for sin, a man, someone of
our own kind, to die in our place.

And so we come today to the reason and
necessity of the incarnation of Jesus
Christ.

Hebrews 2:14-15 **"Forasmuch then as the
children are partakers of flesh and
blood, he also himself likewise took
part of the same; that through death he
might destroy him that had the power of
death, that is, the devil;**

¹⁵ **And deliver them who through fear
of death were all their lifetime
subject to bondage."**

Yes, Jesus became a real man.

In that sense only, He " -- **took part of the same.**"

He was a man, but not a son of Adam's fallen race.

No, He is not the Son of Adam, but rather the Son of God.

He was the Son of Mary, but not the Son of Joseph.

So there was no sin in Him.

As Hebrews 4:15 tells us, "**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**"

However, while we are looking at this verse in Hebrews, let us notice one more thing.

Although He was "**without sin,**" still He "**was in all points tempted like as we are.**"

Now if He doesn't have a sin nature, if there was no enemy from within co-operating with the enemy from without, if He doesn't have a heart like ours, which "**is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,**" then how could He be tempted?

Well, He could be tempted, and was tempted in many other ways, because He was a real man with a real body.

Satan realized that fact, and so worked on Jesus' areas of temptation.

First of all, because He was a real man, He had real physical needs.

When Jesus was "**led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted**" (or

tested) the Devil first worked on the area of Jesus' need for food.

Would He stray from His role as the servant of Jehovah and act on His own to satisfy His hunger, or would He wait for His Father to end the fast?

"Command that these stones be made bread."

What a temptation for a man that had not eaten in forty days and forty nights. Then there was the temptation to avoid the path of denial that lay out before Him.

"If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Would it not be easier to immediately convince Israel of the fact that He was

the Son of God by using this marvellous display than to follow the path of denial that was ahead?

And then finally "-- **the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;**

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Of course, God the Father was going to give Him all the kingdoms of the world someday anyway.

But think of the shortcut.

Satan was offering Him the possibility of having it all now, and avoiding the path of suffering that was to end at the cross.

Now that might have been a temptation to someone else, but not to the Son of God.

Yes, Satan was a mile off base in using that temptation, and Jesus let him know it.

"Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

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So, because Jesus was a man, He could be tempted by hunger and thirst and physical suffering.

In fact, in the area of physical suffering, He suffered a temptation that we would never have to endure.

We might worry about the future, but Jesus knew the future.

From eternity, He knew what would be involved in saving mankind, and yet He came anyway.

He knew every detail of the physical suffering that preceded the cross.

Isaiah prophesied concerning the shameful condition the soldiers would leave Him in: **"his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men"**

He knew that even before Isaiah did.

And because He was God, the cross caused Him spiritual suffering also.

His divine nature was appalled at the spiritual suffering involved in being separated, for the first time, from His Heavenly Father during the time that He was made sin for us.

Listen to His words of agony as He
anticipated that awful separation:

**"And he went a little farther, and fell
on his face, and prayed, saying, O my
Father, if it be possible, let this cup
pass from me: nevertheless not as I
will, but as thou wilt."**

Oh yes, He was tempted, but there was never
any doubt that He would yield to
temptation.

In His most agonizing plea, He added--

**"nevertheless not as I will, but as
thou wilt."**

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So if this plan of incarnation involved so
much suffering for the Son of God, why
did He leave the Ivory Palaces to be
born in a stable?

Hebrews 2: 14-15 gives us the answer:

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Because "the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

There was no higher or lower nature than man's that could suffer for the sin of man and satisfy the justice of God.

Christ became man that He might die, because as God, He could not die.

Herein we see the love of Christ in that when He knew what He must suffer in our

nature, and how He must die, still He readily took our nature upon Him.

God could never accept the Old Testament sacrifices and offerings to put away sin, and so Christ came.

Hebrews 10:4-7 **"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.**

⁵ Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

⁶ In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

⁷ Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."

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Hebrews 2:14 **"That through death he might
destroy him that had the power of
death, that is, the devil;**

¹⁵ **And deliver them who through fear
of death were all their lifetime
subject to bondage."**

As a member of the human race, Jesus became man's Champion, going forth as David had to destroy our great Goliath, Satan, who had terrorized the world ever since the fall.

The cross was for Christ the place where He met our cruel foe, and put an end to his authority over us.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Satan is now a defeated foe!

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And this is something that Christ has done for no one else.

V 16 **"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."**

Unfortunately, the word "**nature**" in this verse, as it is rendered in the King James Version, does not exactly give the proper meaning.

You will probably notice in your Bible that this word is in italics.

Those that have an understanding of the original text say that a better translation would read, **"For truly He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He took hold."**

Apparently the thought is that Jesus did not come to be the Saviour of fallen angels but only of man.

The angels who followed Satan in rebellion against God received the just condemnation for their unrighteous deeds.

As the tree fell, so it lies, and must lie for all eternity.

Jesus did not take the form of an angel and become their substitute.

Only the great mission of mercy to mankind caused Christ to leave His exalted place in heaven and become a man.

**"He took on him the seed of Abraham." and
"was made a little lower than the
angels for the suffering of death."**

He took on Himself the human nature of one descended from the loins of Abraham because the same nature that had sinned must suffer for man's sin.

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Sometimes I think we don't really appreciate the uniqueness of God's love and mercy to mankind.

We were as equally guilty of rebellion against God as the angels were, but God left heaven to rescue us, not them.

It is apparent way back in Genesis that God would have mercy on man.

There He graciously reasoned with man, and man only, in order to lead him to repentance.

First He said to Adam, "**Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?**"-- giving him

an opportunity to confess and repent of his sin.

Then he said to Eve, **"What is this that thou hast done?"** so she could think better of her actions, and repent.

It was only after their unrepentant hearts blamed someone else that God pronounced judgment.

And even then in due time He provided a covering of skins.

God's plan was always to redeem them.

But to the serpent that had collaborated with Satan, there was no effort to lead it to repentance, but, instead, immediate judgment.

"And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy

**belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt
thou eat all the days of thy life:"**

So God's **"unspeakable gift"** was only given
once, and we were the only recipients.

**"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable
gift."**

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The incarnation of Christ was required to
accomplish our salvation.

But the fact that He became a real man and
dwelt amongst us produced another
wonderful benefit.

V 17-18 **"Wherefore in all things it behoved
him to be made like unto his brethren,
that he might be a merciful and
faithful high priest in things
pertaining to God, to make
reconciliation for the sins of the
people.**

18 **For in that he himself hath
suffered being tempted, he is able to
succour them that are tempted."**

Because He is a man, He can be **"a merciful
and faithful high priest."**

He can be faithful to God and merciful to
man.

In **"things pertaining to God,"** to His
justice, and to His honour, Jesus was
the perfect sacrifice to reconcile God
to man.

Yes, He was the faithful High Priest making
atonement for the sins of the people so
that God **"might be just, and the
justifier of him which believeth in
Jesus."**

In this we see the fulfillment of the type
set forth on the Day of Atonement when
the high priest first offered the

sacrifice at the brazen altar and then presented the blood in the Holy of Holies.

In this ceremony, first of all we see Christ foreshadowed as He offered up Himself upon the cross to make atonement for our sins, and then we see Him as the risen Christ presenting Himself before God in all the power of His own shed blood.

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So Christ's substitutionary death not only satisfied God's righteous nature, but also, in things pertaining to the believers, He is a faithful and fully adequate High Priest.

"In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

Not only was He made "**perfect through suffering**" to become a perfect Saviour, but He was made "**perfect through suffering**" as to His Priesthood.

He can have compassion because He Himself was tempted and troubled of soul.

He has personally been "**touched with the feeling of our infirmities,**" and so not only is He the skilful physician, but also the sympathizing physician.

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

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Chapter 3 builds upon the subject laid down in the closing section of Chapter 2, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ as the great High Priest.

Here the writer fervently exhorts Christians to have their High priest much in their thoughts.

Hebrews 3: 1 **"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."**

Yes, our Lord should be the object of our closest and most serious consideration.

And no one in heaven or earth is more deserving of our meditations.

One very profitable meditation concerning Christ lies in considering our present status because of Him.

V 1 says, **"holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling."**

Because of Christ, we are brethren, and should love one another.

And not only are we enfolded in this
brotherhood, but Christ Himself calls
us His brethren.

Hebrews 2: 11 " **For both he that sanctifieth
and they who are sanctified are all of
one: for which cause he is not ashamed
to call them brethren**".

And we are holy brethren. " **Wherefore, holy
brethren, partakers of the heavenly
calling.**"

Not only in profession and title, but in
principal and practice, we should be
holy.

And to be holy, means to be sanctified, or
set apart for Him.

In our daily walk, let us never forget that
we are a peculiar people, or a
particular people, set aside for Jesus
Christ.

Titus 2:14 " **Who gave himself for us, that
he might redeem us from all iniquity,
and purify unto himself a peculiar
people, zealous of good works."**

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And V 1 also says we are "**partakers of the
heavenly calling.**"

Think of all that we are partakers of
because of Christ:

We are partakers of the grace of God that
bringeth salvation;

We are partakers of the indwelling Holy
Spirit;

And because the Holy Spirit dwells within,
we are told that our bodies are now the
temple of God;

We are not junk. We have been made very
special to God;

We are partakers right now of heaven that
has come down into our souls;
And in our meditations in the Word, we can
be seated **"in heavenly places in
Christ."**

Oh, shouldn't we fervently **"consider the
Apostle and High Priest of our
profession?"**

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And we should be careful to consider Him as
He really is, as He is described to us
in the holy Scriptures.

Too often today the concepts of Christ that
we have displayed before us are not the
result of the revelation of the Holy
Spirit, but rather the fantasies of
man.

And too often, man's idea of the Son of God,
and, indeed, God Himself, are as
distorted as his idea of Christmas.

So let's study the Word, for indeed the
whole message of the Word is the
revelation of Jesus Christ.

Let us think upon Christ as He would have us
think of Him.

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And what are we asked to consider here?

V 1 admonishes us to "**consider the Apostle
and High Priest of our profession,
Christ Jesus;**

² **Who was faithful to him that
appointed him, as also Moses was
faithful in all his house."**

First of all, we are to consider His titles.
He is the Apostle and High Priest of our
profession.

An apostle is "one sent."

He is God's prime messenger, as Hebrews 1:

1-2 says: **"God, who at sundry times and
in divers manners spake in time past
unto the fathers by the prophets,**

**2 Hath in these last days spoken unto
us by his Son."**

Jesus was sent to speak for God, and,
indeed, He was **"the image of the
invisible God."**

And not only was He the great revealer of
the faith which we profess, but He was
sent to bring us into the presence of
God.

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And as He trod the dusty paths of earth, He
was careful that every step was in
accordance to the will of His Father.

He said to His disciples, **"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish the work."**

So V 2 says **"Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house."**

Moses was faithful in the discharge of his office to God's chosen people.

And yet Moses was but a type of Christ in His faithfulness to the Father.

This was a good argument to present to the Jews who held Moses in high regard.

And to follow this argument further, Christ, Who had been shown to be superior to angels, was now shown as superior to their great leader Moses.

The proof being in V 3-6: **"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded**

the house hath more honour than the house.

⁴ For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

⁵ And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

⁶ But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Christ was the maker of the house, while

Moses was only a *member* in it.

V 4 says, "**but he that built all things is God.**"

John 1:3 presents Christ as the Creator.

"All things were made by him; and

without him was not any thing made that was made."

And so here Christ is presented as the builder of all things, and especially He was the builder of the church.

Both were miracles.

The world was made out of nothing, and the church was made of materials altogether unfit for such a building.

Through the sacrifice of His own blood, He provided the stones of this holy building, and proclaimed "-- **the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**"

V 6 " **But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.**"

Here we have the first Word of warning: "**if we hold fast the confidence and the**

rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

The Hebrew believers receiving this epistle were addressed in verse 1 as **"holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling."**

Indeed this was true, as this letter was written to a Christian assembly.

However, there was no doubt in the mind of the writer that there were at least some in their midst who were only nominal Christians.

Consequently this epistle was mainly written to those Hebrews in the assembly to caution them against the perils of stopping short of faith in Christ.

Yes, it is very possible, and it is possible still, that some might mingle with a Christian company and find a certain

amount of fellowship and joy springing from an intellectual acquaintance with Christianity, but who are not truly born again.

So when the writer says, **"But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we,"** he adds the solemn words-- **"if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."**

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As we continue on in Hebrews 3, we find a further warning against unbelief. This time it is illustrated by their own history which was so familiar to them.

V 7-11 **" Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,**

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the

provocation, in the day of temptation
in the wilderness:

⁹ When your fathers tempted me,
proved me, and saw my works forty
years.

¹⁰ Wherefore I was grieved with that
generation, and said, They do alway err
in their heart; and they have not known
my ways.

¹¹ So I swear in my wrath, They shall
not enter into my rest.)"

Their fathers had left Egypt as a great
multitude, yet many (in fact, the
majority) failed to enter the land
because of unbelief.

In the early church, many Jews had become
obedient to the faith, and were soundly
saved, but there was always the danger,

for some, that their conversion to Christianity was merely intellectual. So this epistle calls upon them to examine themselves in the light of God's Word, and be diligent to **"make their calling and election sure."**

And there was also much ahead in this epistle that was profitable to the true Christians of that day.

But the benefit was not just local.

In this epistle, the Holy Spirit takes advantage of this local situation to enrich and deepen the lives of Christians of all ages, and to exalt the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the church.

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I look forward to continuing our study next week of this most enriching portion of

God's Word.