

Image & Need: I don't like to lose. But the fact is that I am weak. No matter how much I win in this life, there's a Goliath out there that I have no chance against, just waiting. death. *Story of death in Baghdad*. We have come a long way in our medical advances...to beat death. But no matter how far we've come, we just can't beat it. You know, it's hard to see the victory in Jesus' humanity, isn't it? It sure seemed like the most crushing defeat in human history. We know He's God, but where's the win in it all? What did Jesus' humanity accomplish for us? Why did He have to take on flesh?

Context: Here's where we've been in Hebrews. Again, his audience here had taken hold of Jesus, but because of persecution, they were tempted to retreat back into Judaism. He tells them don't...there's salvation in no one else. Jesus is God's final Word, you can't do better. His message is ultimate because He is ultimate. So the exhortation is to stay close to Jesus no matter what happens. He IS exalted right now, even though it doesn't always look like it in this world. Verses 5-9 were a commentary on Psalm 8. In verses 10-18, here, we're going to see our author's reflection on verse 9 – the exalted Christ made human...the incarnation.

Preview: He's going to show us why it was necessary, what it meant, and what it did for us.

I. The Incarnation was necessary (v. 10)

A. Jesus' suffering was fitting God's justice and mercy

1. God's justice demanded that sin be paid for.
 - a. His suffering in obedience completed the job for which He was sent. It “**perfected**” Him...not morally...but in sense that it accomplished His divine purpose for being here.
 - b. His suffering made Him adequate because of His obedience to lead the way to salvation. In that sense, He is our “**leader, pathfinder, trailblazer, and head.**” He led the way.
2. God's mercy led Him to pay it Himself.
 - a. Jesus as God paid the penalty through His suffering
 - b. It is in this act that God's heart of love and mercy is laid bare (**2 Cor. 5:19**).

B. He did this so that we might be destined for glory

1. We needed someone to bridge gap between humanity and divinity...sinfulness to holiness.
2. In becoming bridge, Jesus altered our destiny. We are now bound for life (**Eph. 2:1-10**).

C. In the incarnation, Jesus has become our champion. It was fitting God's justice that someone would pay for our sin. It was fitting His mercy that it would not be us.

II. The incarnation identified God with humanity (v. 11-13)

A. We are now brothers because we are both from the same Father (11)

1. Both Jesus and us have the same Father – God.
 - a. “**Both from one...**” This can be understood as origin, nature, Father. Father is probably best because God was in view in v. 10. Still, the argument is that because we have the same Father, we are brothers. So, Jesus shared in our nature.
 - b. A spiritual family is in view. NB “**ones being sanctified.**” Spiritual family of believers.
2. Again, since we have the same Father, we are brothers. We live on the basis of our association with our spiritual brother, Jesus...the Good Son.

B. In verses 12-13, he's going to defend this with 3 OT texts. (v. 12-13)

1. **Psalm 22** – (v. 12) earliest testimony of the Church is that this is Messianic .It begins with words echoed by Christ on cross – “**my God, my God, why hast thou...**”. It is a Psalm of someone in great distress. Jesus, in His humanity, had to trust in God. This Psalm makes a couple of points here in Hebrews.
 - a. The reference to “**brothers**” relates to the establishment of a spiritual family. Incidentally, to declare the name of God is to reveal His character. Jesus revealed God's character to those in His spiritual family.
 - b. “**Presence of congregation**” relates to Jesus' presence on earth in the midst of those who follow. He was one of us and even now is in our midst.
2. **Isaiah 18** – (v. 13) Just like us and Jesus, Isaiah the prophet had to trust God

- a. **“Trust in Him”** – Isaiah had shared his prophecies from God but no one was listening. So, he decides to bury them and trust God until He chooses to fulfill them. Then he can say “told you so.” Again, this is related to Jesus to demonstrate that He too had to trust.
 - b. **“I and the children”** – from the very next verse, Isaiah and his family continued to live among the Israelites who had rejected his words. They were living testimonies...he and his family as one. In fact his kids’ names were reminders to the people of what they had rejected. **“Shear-Jashub: remnant shall return; Maher-Shalal-Hash-Bez: swift is the booty speedy is the prey...God will get His.”**
3. In the incarnation Jesus has become a brother. We’re family. We share a unique bond.

(This takes on an even deeper meaning when we think about what the incarnation accomplished for us. Let me give you four things)

III. What the incarnation accomplished (v. 14-18)

- A. It destroyed the ultimate weapon of the devil (v. 14)
 1. To destroy is to render useless, inoperative, ineffective. The devil still fights hard but his ultimate weapon of death has been conquered. *He went from shooting rockets to rocks.*
 2. Death followed after sin (**Rom. 5:12**) and through Jesus’ death sin has been paid in full. Therefore, death no longer has a sting (**1 Cor. 15:54-57**). *Bees and wasps.*
 3. And so we can have courage in the face of death
- B. It liberated us from fear (v. 15-16)
 1. We were prisoners to the fear that the prospect of death brought. Fear of the unknown, separation, loss of control, failure and incompleteness (“*pencils down, time’s up*”). We were never free from that fear...**“all their lives.”** *Kids don’t worry but parents do.*
 2. But we have been freed. The strongman has been defeated. The doors have flung open to us captives. And there’s our champion to lead us to freedom. **Verse 16, “give help”** to lead by the hand. *Used of God’s leading of Israel in the Exodus. Emma grabbing our hand when she needs help.* So Jesus liberated us when we needed liberating...by becoming one of us.
 3. And so death and the fear that it engenders have become irrelevant. We have freedom.
- C. It paid for sin and provided a perfect Mediator (v. 17)
 1. In becoming like us, He could become our High Priest and Mediator. Since a priest must be like those he represents, so He became like us in all things – *Lucado quote.* He is merciful in that He is a sympathetic intercessor. He is faithful in that He is perfectly obedient.
 2. He mediated by paying the penalty for our sin. He did in real terms what the OT sacrifices could only do as tokens or symbols. He actually accomplished a full payment for sin. Incidentally, this notion of Jesus as High Priest is the main theme of the book. It’s the focal argument of **4:14-10:25**. The perfect Son became the perfect priest by enduring suf. & death.
 3. So that through His service, we can come to God in confidence
- D. It aids and encourages us in our own present struggles (v. 18)
 1. He was, as fully human, tempted as we are. Tempted to circumvent the plan of God by taking the path of least resistance. *essence of His temptations in the wilderness.*
 2. He was not only ready to suffer, but He actually did suffer. He can relate.
 3. And so we can have sympathetic help when we struggle with temptation.

Conc.: How can we redeem what looks like the greatest loss in human history? Why the incarnation? In short because we couldn’t do it ourselves. I hate to lose, but in this one, I was beat. *I needed a ringer...a pro to come in and play for me. But to play for me, He had to wear my uniform.* In the incarnation, God put on our uniform in order to play the game for us...what looked like a certain loss became the greatest victory ever.

David & Goliath: 1 Samuel 17. Impossible foe. v. 11, 24 the people are dismayed and greatly afraid. They have no chance. But then an unlikely man appears – David – and he does the unthinkable...kills Goliath. In v. 52, they people arise, take courage, and rejoice in their great champion.