

## Hebrews 2:14-18

“Your touch is what I longed for”

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### I. Introduction

We come now to the last two reasons Jesus became a man:

- A. First in verses 14-15 we see that, *Jesus came is to release us for our present bondage.*
- B. Second, in verses 16-18 we see that *Jesus came to restore us in times of failure.*

Summing these two truths up reminds me of the song “I will Serve Thee” where the lyrics go, “*Heartaches, broken pieces. Ruined lives are why You died on Calvary, Your touch was what I longed for, You have given life to me.*” Both of these last two truths are “*present day practical*” but are obscured in our day do to our societies presupposition against them.

- A. When it comes to the first truth of releasing believers from our present bondage *our society doesn’t recognize that we are under any bondage.* It’s an odd reality that most people believe in things that only a short time ago were considered “*science fiction*” while at the same time they mock the knowledge of an unseen evil that permeates society and influences mankind and the world system. This continues while the continual headlines and news are reporting the devil’s work in the world. You can see the problem as it relates to our society when they don’t recognize the existence of evil that is manipulated by the devil.
- B. The second, issue is equally obscured in our society because our society has become extremely adept at self justification and extreme narcissism. *The truth that Jesus came to restore us in times of failure has no value when our world doesn’t ever believe that it has failed!* And if perchance things appear like we have then clearly it’s not our fault but someone else’s!

### II. Vs. 14-15 The absence of life

Vs. 14 The writer’s starts with: “*Inasmuch then as the CHILDREN.*” is clarifies those who have “*partaken of flesh and blood*” as human beings. The word “*partaken*” in the Greek is the word “*koinoneo*” and we know that it means “*to share something in*

*common with someone else*". All humans have this in common with each other, the same human nature described as blood and flesh. What is interesting to note in regards to this being a letter to the Hebrews is that this phrase was a common rabbinical phrase to speak of the contrast of the human nature with that of God's nature. That is an important detail for two reasons:

1. First, it goes to the objection held by religious Judaism with regards to the incarnation and the Son of God sharing the human nature and still being God the Son. This was the issue with their rejection of Jesus and His deity. They held to the fact that God's nature has NOTHING IN COMMON with man's human nature, therefore God could not become a man!
2. Second, it is yet another clue as to the identity of who the original author of Hebrews was. We see that at very least he had to be very familiar with rabbinical Judaism or most likely a rabbi. Yet another point leading to the Apostle Paul, who was a rabbi.

Next we read that, "*He Himself likewise **SHARED IN THE SAME**, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil.*" The words, "He Himself" is an obvious inference to Jesus but it goes further to address the religious Judaism's rejection of the contrast with man kind's human nature to that of God's nature. The Greek word for "*likewise*" is made up of two words "alongside and nearby" and it is here the the writer begins to explain the incarnation:

- A. First by saying that the Son of God didn't have "*blood and flesh*" IN COMMON with man, instead He took His place "alongside or nearby" the human race!
- B. Second, the writer chose that words carefully in saying that Jesus, "SHARED IN THE SAME" with humanity in regards to "*blood and flesh*"! They are NOT the same words used to describe what all humans share in common (*koinoneo*) with regards to "*blood and flesh*", instead they are two Greek words that mean "TO HOLD WITH"! What this states is that Jesus the Son of God DID NOT share in common with humanity, their "*blood and flesh*" in the same manor all other humans do. But instead He "HELD TO HIMSELF" an "ADDITIONAL NATURE" and by so doing "ASSOCIATED HIMSELF" with the human race without its sin but with its blood and flesh! Jesus "took to Himself, something which He had nothing in common with, human nature." All humans share the same human nature in common with each other. "Jesus UNITED Himself with human nature that was NOT natural to Him." The phrase "SHARED IN THE

**SAME**” in the Greek speaks of the incarnation as a “**voluntary acceptance of humanity’s nature**”. This is the point that the writer will further make in Hebrews 10:5-9. What the author of Hebrews does in this verse is **reveal the truth about the dual nature of Jesus, Very God and true Man!**

Next in verse 14 the writer shares the purpose for this above stated uniting with humanities nature, which the writer says is that, “*through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil*”. Jesus “*took hold of humanity*” to DIE because through dying and raising Himself out from under death, He would break the power of death and the one who has the power of death.

Jesus had conquered death and brought to end the devils hold over it. The Greek word for “*power*” is a word that refers to “*power in the sense of dominion*” thus satan’s dominion over the human race in the form of death had been defeated. Notice the word “**HAD**” past tense not **HAS** present tense, which tells us that our victory has been won. The word “*destroyed*” doesn’t mean “*eliminated*” or has “*quit working*”. Instead what this means is that only for believers has the devil’s work in death been “**rendered inoperative**”.

Vs. 15 The Greek word for “*release*” is used in Greek literature to describe a person who is **released from a contract**. The writer is saying that Jesus by His death and resurrection has released believing sinners from the grip and fear of death, that held sinners in bondage. In Romans 8:6 Paul describes the “**carnally minded as death, but to be spiritually minded as life and peace.**” As such Paul describes “*death*” in terms NOT of being “**SOMETHING**” but rather in terms that describe it as the “**ABSENCE OF SOMETHING**”. When a doctor is called on to examine a body they are not looking for the “*evidences of DEATH*” they are looking for the “*evidences of LIFE*” which are missing if a person has died! In the truest sense “*death*” in all its forms is “*the absence of*

LIFE”, that’s what boredom is, distress, fear and worry. The contract is over even the “FEAR of death” which is the devil’s whip by which he keeps us in slavery and bondage. Non believers have no escape from this and have paid their therapist boat loads of money to help them escape the fear of death to no avail. Only in Christ do we have a way to escape the fear of death! We are assured that we will not miss out on “life” which is ironically one of the things that satan brings up to keep us in bondage. The great and glorious news is that Jesus incarnation has stripped away the devils hold over us that says that; “**Freedom is having what you want**” and it has been replaced with God’s truth that “**Freedom is doing what God wants!**” Jesus said in Matthew 16:25 “*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*”

### III. Vs. 16-18 Merciful Master

Vs. 16 The forth and final reason Jesus “**ASSOCIATED HIMSELF**” with the human race was **to restore us in times of failure**. The idea here is that Jesus’ work on the cross, didn’t provide for the salvation of fallen angels but did provide for the salvation of fallen humans. Jesus passed by fallen angels a superior creation to save an inferior creation and as such is worthy of greater praise.

Vs. 17 The word “*Therefore*” points back to that above fact and links it with the necessity of the incarnation due to the fact that Jesus didn’t give aid to angels but to the seed of Abraham. “in all things” is the Greek word that means that it was an “**obligation imposed upon Him by the consideration that He was giving aid to the seed of Abraham**”. In order to provide salvation for the human race He had to “**ASSOCIATED HIMSELF**” with the human race. The incarnation was a NECESSITY as He must “**voluntary accept humanity’s nature**” if He was to save it. The phrase “**like His brethren**” in the Greek is

asserted WITHOUT qualifications, which means that there was a real and complete likeness to the traces of the effects of fallen man, poverty, temptation, unmerited death, etc.

Next we are told that, “*that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God,..*” The incarnation made it possible for Jesus to become a “MERCIFUL” High Priest. The Greek word for “*merciful*” describes “**the ability for one to feel sympathy with the misery of another that leads them to act on their behalf to relieve their misery.**” It is this fact of the incarnation that leads Jesus to be both “merciful” as well as “faithful” in His sacrifice as humanity’s great High Priest! The idea of “compassion” as an attribute of a priest is nowhere to be found in the First Testament and was one of the faults of the priests as they lacked sympathy with the people. In Hosea chapter 4:4-9 the priests were described as eating up their people which in part was responsible for the people to continue to reject God’s ways. At the time of Christ and beyond the priests were unfeeling and cruel, so that the idea of a compassionate priest would be celebrated by the Hebrews who read this letter and had endured the lack of sympathy of the Aaronic priesthood. The phrase “*in things pertaining to God*” is a technical phrase in Jewish literature and speaks of the functions of worship.

We are given the specific service Jesus rendered as High Priest as “*to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*” The word “*propitiation*” refers to the act of Jesus offering Himself on the cross to satisfy the righteous demands of God’s justice so that mercy might be shown on the basis that justice has been satisfied.

Vs. 18 The emphasis in this verse is not upon Jesus suffering but upon the fact that He was tempted, the words “*in that He Himself suffered*” qualify the word tempted. It

explains what the temptation consisted of. The word “tempted” carries two ideas: First the idea the action of testing someone to see what good or evil is in the one being tested. Second, because none ever passed the test the word came to mean a “solicitation to do evil”. Both meanings are in view here. All of this was present at the cross as Jesus choose death to self rather than disobedience to the Father’s wishes. The cross is seen as the basis for cleansing and forgiving our regular failures. It is what John wrote of in 1 John 1:9 where we are told that *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* Jesus alone is able to do this because during His life he learned the necessity for compassion and faithfulness when He **“ASSOCIATED HIMSELF”** with the human race. The writer will again state as much in Hebrews 5:2 where we read that, *“He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.”* David wrote in Psalm 91:2 that, *“the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.”* This verse doesn’t merely say that Jesus is able to become that for us, it declares that He is our refuge and fortress!