

HE KNOWS THE FEELING

Hebrews 2:5-18

Ever feel like throwing in the towel?

Over the years, people have told me they're struggling with that; they're ready to quit fighting. They aren't sure it's worth it.

I know that feeling! I *often* wonder whether it's worth it!

Let's just throw in the towel!

Do YOU know the feeling? Who CAN know what it feels like?

Hebrews is written to Jewish believers, suffering for their faith.

They're considering throwing in the towel.

They're ready to go back to Judaism.

The writer reacts strongly to the thought.

Judaism has nothing to offer. –It's bankrupt!

If they go back, they'll suffer even more.

That generation's about face judgment for rejecting God's Son.

Going back solves nothing.

He urges them to hang in there and endure the affliction.

JESUS IS BETTER THAN JUDAISM 1-10:18

He's greater than the significant *people* of Israel's history. 1-7

HE'S THE BEST REVELATION OF THE FATHER 1-4

He's a better revelation than the prophets could offer. 1:1-3

He's a better revelation than the angels could offer. 1:4-14

2:1-4 contains parenthetical warning

... based on fact that God has revealed Himself in the Son.

After injecting warning to pay attention to superior revelation Jesus

brought, he goes back to discussing Jesus' superiority to angels.

Jesus is better revelation of Father than angels...

--...Because He is like God. He's the SON–He IS God!

...Because He is like man.—He IS a man! 2:5-18

Contrasts with preceding verses where His greatness is exalted:

He is superior to angels because He is the eternal God.

He is superior to angels because He identifies with MAN.

He is both God & man. inexplicable mystery, yet it's true.

He is exalted as the eternal GOD.

He is identified with men because He *is* a MAN.

God of universe has become One with us.

JESUS RECEIVED MAN'S PROMISES 2:5-8 2:5 *"For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking."*

"For" connects 2:5 with what went before. It looks back to 1:14.

Angels are sent as *servants* to those who inherit salvation, i.e., they serve humans.

They aren't sent to *rule*; they're sent to *serve* the heirs,
the people God appointed to rule the world.

Logic: God established men to rule earth. Jesus is a man.

Therefore, *angels serve men* Therefore, Jesus is superior.

God promised *man* dominion over creation 2:5; Gen. 1:26 *"God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea & over the birds of the heavens & over the livestock & over all the earth & over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'"*

In 2:6-8 the writer looks back to Ps. 8 (3-8)

Psalmist is impressed, not by the greatness of *creation*—though he notes its majesty.

What blows him away, is that the One Who created it,
would give such a prominent role to man.

He's amazed that God should remember *us*.

Why should God of the universe give 2nd thought to us?!!

He has so many more important things to do & to think about!

Why should He remember or care about us?!!

Have you thought about how quickly we lose sight of people when we go up in an airplane. People are out of sight before we hit 10,000 feet!

How can God keep *us* in *His* sight?!! Why *would* He? From perspective of heaven & eternity, how could He notice us?!!

Yet even within the vastness of the universe, He picks us out.

He sees me! He cares what happens to me!

In fact, He has chosen to place people like us over it all.

This has to refer to the future—“*the world to come*” (2:5)

We certainly don’t see it that way now! 8b

“Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.”

Because of sin, man isn’t able to exercise this authority — YET!

People have higher *destiny* than angels.

But we look around and see that it’s not true yet.

For a while we serve under authority of angels.

“A little lower than” can, and in fact, *must* refer to a time span.

Man is *temporarily* lower than the angels.

Due to the fall we don’t have dominion.

BUT we are made for dominion! That’s our destiny.

Jesus is the only person thus far to receive it.

But it’s still man’s destiny!

Man pursues a ***never-ending quest*** to rule the world.

We want control over it all! But we never quite make it!

People are always looking for new mountains to conquer.

Selfish power-seeking is a perversion of original plan.

Animals don't exhibit this quest. It's a human trait.

It's *frustrated* human trait. In spite of our quest, we don't rule

There's reason we put bars between humans & animals in the zoo! It isn't *just* to keep them from running away!

Only 1 man's able to exercise authority until now.

Only *Jesus* has received fulfillment of that promise.

Jesus, perfect man, has received authority God designed for us

It's authority which hasn't been given to angels.

JESUS IDENTIFIED WITH MAN 2:9-18

Main thought in presentation of Jesus as man:

Angels can't identify with us.

Their experience is totally foreign to ours.

Jesus, on the other hand, having become a man, knows what it's like to live as a man.

He has endured same suffering we do.

He's able to help *us* when we go through hard times.

Jesus became a man 9a "*We see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory & honor because of the suffering of death*"

That's how God chose to exalt Him.

Jesus, became like us—temporarily lower than the angels.

Jesus suffered as a man 9b "...so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone."

He became our substitute by dying in our place.

Therefore, He's been crowned with glory.

...through His death, *many* sons are brought to glory (v. 10).

Jesus identified with us. 10-14a

2:10 calls Jesus: "the **Author (founder) of our salvation."**

More graphic rendering would refer to Him as “**trailblazer**” of **our salvation**.

Like experienced leader on jungle trail; He goes ahead of us, swinging his machete to remove obstacles that disrupt or endanger our path.

Jesus has gone down the trail ahead of us, removing obstacles & cutting path for us to follow.

Since He knows the way, He can safely lead us through it.

God saw fit to “perfect” Jesus, through suffering.

Was He not perfect previously?

He lacks nothing to satisfy holy requirements of just God.

He was already perfect morally.

Spurgeon: “He was not made perfect in character by His suffering, for He was *always* perfect—perfect God, perfect man ...”

He fulfilled role God assigned to Him, by suffering.

Job wasn’t completed—perfected—without suffering.

He became perfect “source of salvation”—*perfect trailblazer*—by suffering.

For Jesus, as for us, the road to glory is through suffering.

Only way He could be trailblazer for those who suffer is through suffering.

He can now serve as our high priest. He’s been there!

Jesus, by becoming man, has become *family* with all who trust Him. 11 There’s *family* unity between *the* Son and “*many sons*” He’s leading to glory.

The holiness He provides makes us part of one holy family.

He isn’t embarrassed to identify with *us* as brothers & sisters.

12 Messiah identifies with family, his “brothers” in congregation.

13 Isaiah 8 refers to his family as those who serve the Lord.
They hang together as people who trust God in an unfaithful community.

The family sticks together around their united faith.

They're symbol because of common family bond.

That common bond unites our family with our Lord also.

We're one family with the rest of the saints.

Jesus is able to help us. 14b-16

As family, we're made of flesh & blood;

we share common humanity; we receive His help,

His death frees us from slavery fear of death produces.

Angels share in none of this.

Readers, as Abraham's descendants, & we as humans, share this heritage.

Jesus is able to serve as our priest 17-18

Since He identified with us, He's able to help & function as our High Priest.

You can only sympathize with someone

when you've been through what they're going through.

Jesus has been there. That's why He's the perfect High Priest.

Angels couldn't do that.

Jesus understands those who're tempted; He's been there!

He's experienced temptation we face—to throw in towel when suffering.

He could have taken the easy way out.

Satan tried to get Him to do that. *He knows that pressure.*

He can help in any temptation

because He was tempted like we are.

Demonstrates you can be loved by God and still face “pressure cooker of life.”

Demonstrates that it’s possible to endure pressure without giving in to sin.

Jesus never knew internal desire of flesh we struggle with.

He was perfect.

He’s tempted beyond what we bear

—*without* giving in to pressure.

It’s like testing the tensile strength of a wire.

Some break with 10-15 pounds of pressure.

Others break at 200 pounds.

Others at thousands of pounds.

Which knows more about enduring pressure?

Jesus was under far more pressure than we could ever endure!

At whatever point we break, He’s been there and beyond.

Only sinless person can know full intensity of testing.

Therefore He can come to our aid when we need it.

6 VERBS EXPLAIN WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR US:

1. He tasted death for everyone. 2:9

Taste is common metaphor which means “to experience.”

Doesn’t suggest sip or sampling, but full experience of eating.

“Everyone” indicates atonement was made for every person.

He who knew no sin, became our substitute.

He took on Himself our sin; took penalty we deserved.

He went through death so that we don’t have to.

2. He rendered powerless the one who has the power of death, the devil. 2:14

He doesn’t *destroy* him. —makes him ineffective.

He renders him *useless*—stops him from accomplishing purpose

Satan had in his grasp the power of death.

Jesus rendered him useless.

He took away fear of death. That power, became useless.

3. He ***delivered*** those who through fear of death were subject to slavery

2:15 Fear of death holds people in slavery.

Latin America: that fear provides entry point to the gospel.

People are *terrified* of death!

Modern, deliberate **Satanic strategy to defuse fear of death.**

Doctrines of reincarnation, tales of near-death experience –relatives assure people afterlife is wonderful, doctrines of 2nd chance after death, **all assure people they don't need to fear death.**

Heb. 9:27 God says it's our destiny "*to die once & after that, face judgment.*"

That's where built-in fear comes from.

People know there's reason to fear!

That fear holds people enslaved.

Jesus has delivered us from that fear!

4. He ***gives help*** to the seed of Abraham. **2:16**

Literally means "*to take hold.*"

Used when Peter was sinking at end of walking on sea;

Jesus *took hold* of him.

He *took hold* of blind man, & man with dropsy, to heal them.

Jesus doesn't *take hold* of angels to help them,

He *takes hold* of [spiritual] seed of Abraham, who trust Him.

Writing Jewish believers, his point: Jesus came to fulfill the promise to Abraham, that through Messiah, God would *take hold of* His people to help them.

This promise was given to men, never to angels.

5. He made propitiation for sins of the people. 2:17

“To expiate” sins of the people—deals with God’s wrath.

His wrath, as the offended God, must be dealt with.

Jesus has dealt with our sin problem; satisfied just demands of a holy God.

6. He comes to the aid of those tempted. 2:18

Verb is a compound from “cry” + “run” => “to run to the cry”

When we’re tempted, when pressure seems unbearable,

Jesus hears our cry for help and runs to our side.

He knows from experience what Satan’s attacks are like;

He knows pressure from the crowd;

He knows the suffering;

He knows what it feels like to fight desire to throw in towel.

When we cry out for help, He runs to our side to help.

No angel could do these things!

All this is possible because the One who was greater than angels, Whom we worship because He is God, was willing to make Himself for a while less than angels, willing to suffer, willing to be tempted, so that He might minister on our behalf!

We can come to Him because He’s been there.

He’s been through it all!

How does Jesus’ experience affect us?

Disease, poverty, loss of loved ones, loneliness, hopelessness, abandonment, betrayal, false accusations!

He knows them all!

Spurgeon: “*You cannot cast human suffering into any shape that is new to Christ! If you feel a thorn in your foot, remember that one once pierced His head!*”

Never can we cry out in discouragement, opposition & pain, “But God, You sit secure in your heavenly sanctuary, with supernatural resources, *what do YOU know about our human struggle?* What do YOU know about living in human stench & decay? What do YOU know about MY suffering?”

He understands our affliction.

He was perfected through suffering—*human* suffering!

He knows how to perfect us through suffering.

He understands the desire to throw in the towel.

But now He’s there for us, to give us the victory.

Joe Bayly wrote:

“I’m alone Lord—alone—a thousand miles from home.

No one knows my name except the clerk—& he spelled it wrong!

no one to eat dinner with—laugh at my jokes—listen to my gripes
to be happy with me about what happened today—**No one cares!**

Just this lousy bed—& slush in street outside between the buildings.

I feel sorry for myself—& I’ve plenty of reason to!

Maybe I *ought* to say I’m on top of it—*praise the Lord!*—things’re great! **but they’re not!** Tonight it’s all gray slush.”

Jesus knows about “life in the gray slush!”

When we’re all alone and everything seems against us, . . .

When we’re tempted to throw in the towel, . . .

He reminds us, **Jesus is the trailblazer.**

He’s been there ahead of us.

He knows about path ahead. He’ll run to our cry. **Trust Him!**
He’s done all these things for us. We don’t have to do anything.

He just wants us to cling to Him.
To trust the Son who tasted death for us,
so that we might taste life. ***Trust Him!***
Hang in there! Don't throw in the towel!
In the end we'll triumph with Him!
If you're living with the pressure, He wants us to cry out to Him,
so He can come running to our aid.
He knows the feeling! He wants to help.
Dial 9-1-1! Call Him!
He's able to come to the aid of those who are tested!