OVERCOMING DEATH THROUGH THE DEATH OF THE MESSIAH | HEBREWS 2:14-18

- Jesus took on flesh and blood nearly (not likewise) as we did. The Greek precisely conveys that he partook of flesh and blood but His incarnation was not like that of man. This is a testimony of the virgin birth.
- His purpose in doing so was to remove all the strength of the devil, and thus conquer death.
- The help of the Messiah (v. 16)
  - "Give help to" is, more literally, "take hold of."
  - Since it is in the 3rd person singular it is either "he takes hold of" or "it takes hold of." To determine which it is, one must look to context.
    - The "fear of death" is the best possibility for "it takes hold."
    - Christ is the most likely for "he takes hold." However, the devil is also a possibility.
  - Thus, the options are:
    - The fear of death assuredly does not take hold of messengers, but does take hold of the seed of Abraham.
      - If messengers are angelic beings, it makes sense.
      - If messengers are prophets, it makes sense in light of Hebrews 11:32-38
      - See Young's Literal Translation
    - Christ does not take hold of messengers, but does take hold of the seed of Abraham.
      - This only makes sense if messengers are angelic beings.
      - See King James Version
    - The devil does not take hold of messengers, but does take hold of the seed of Abraham.
      - This makes more sense for prophets than for angelic beings, since 1/3 of the angels went with the Devil, yet the prophets, in comparison with Israel, held firm in faith.
      - There is also the possibility that "Seed of Abraham" is Christ, and the verse would then say that the Devil doesn't take hold of the messengers, but does take hold of Christ (in warfare, since take hold does not necessitate victory).
  - My personal preference: the fear of death (as in Young’s), but both Young’s translation and the KJV translation are accurate theologically.
Verse 17 should begin with “wherefore” not “therefore.” It is a word describing the location, not the foundation of the action. The location of this action is “in flesh and blood” (v. 14).

Propitiation: In contrast to the Old Testament sacrificial atonement system, propitiation is a complete payment, once for all.

In the flesh, the Lord was "tested" in that which He suffered. He therefore is able to come to the aid of others who are tested.

Verse 18: Notice that this "come to the aid" (literally, "to help") is a different word than NASB's "give help" in v. 16. This word is help, v. 16 is "take on."

THE PROPER STUDY OF JESUS | HEBREWS 3:1-6A

- The "holy brethren" are Jewish believers. These believers are "partakers," literally "sharers" or "companions" (as in Heb 1:9).
  - I maintain that hagios is always used in the New Testament as reference to 1st Century Jewish believers of the Apostolic age or before.
  - In this case, they are Christians (Hebrews being written after the revelation of the mystery and the proclamation of Paul’s Gospel) but they also have the distinction of living in national Israel and being of the stock of Abraham, thus they have a part in both the calling of the church and the calling of Israel.

- Of this calling, note that
  - It is irrevocable (Heb 11:29)
  - It is to be contemplated (1 Cor 1:26)
  - It is to Jew and Gentile (1 Cor 7:18-20)
  - It demands a pure life (Eph 4:1, 2 Thes 1:11)
  - It has rewards (Phil 3:14)

- The job of these holy brethren is to consider Jesus. (v. 1)
  - The word katanoeo is on the root neos (to think), with the prefix kata. This prefix means "take the following word to its ultimate degree."
  - If one is going to have a Biblical understanding of Jesus, it is going to take thinking, studying, and reasoning. The Jesus of your feelings is likely a false Jesus.
  - The KJV has the better word order and uses the Textus Receptus wording of "Christ Jesus."

- Jesus had a two-fold role in our faith: the One Sent (apostle) and the High Priest.
  - Moses will be presented as the type of Christ, yet a type which was broken because Moses insisted on Aaron's help. However, Aaron was never considered "High Priest" until after the deliverance of the Hebrew nation. Even so, Christ was not called our High Priest until after He had become the propitiation of our sins.
  - The High Priestly role in the Hebrew Scriptures was one of maintaining fellowship between God and people, not enabling fellowship. The modern "Christian Priest" is a misnomer, for, "a man might as well call himself a Christian infidel!" The Priesthood did not come about until after the Passover and the Covenant sacrifices had been given. In the same way, Christ became propitiation, and then began a priestly role.
  - Jesus was the High Priest of our confession. The word homologeo is literally "to speak the same things as." Our confession is the same as our calling, and in this sense it is used of our doctrine.


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The illustration of Moses:
- The text does not clearly state which house Moses was faithful in. In all God's house (as NASB implies with the capitalization) or in all of Moses' own house?
  - If faithful in his own house, is this the House of Israel or the family of Moses?
  - Was Moses faithful to his family in spite of the amazing change of life that came when he moved from Egypt? (Consider the disdain that Aaron and Miriam had toward Moses in Numbers 12:1 for evidence).
  - Was Moses faithful to Israel in spite of her disobedience? (Consider Exodus 32:32).
  - Either picture could be used to display faithfulness.
    - In making comparison with Moses, the writer ensures that the reader cannot construe an equality between Christ and Moses (v. 2).
- The faithful servant hood of Moses was a testimony to something that would only later be spoken, namely, Christ.
  - That is, Moses (in his faithfulness) was a type and Christ the antitype.
  - Once again, the house of Moses is not clearly defined, but the point of the sentence is in his faithfulness, so nothing is lost.
  - Note that the fact that Moses was a servant in the house does not eliminate his own family house as a possibility, because this is not doulos but therapon, which "approaches more closely the position of oikonomos (manager)" [Zodiahtes] than doulos (slave).
- The comparison is of Moses as therapon of his house, but Christ as uios (Son) of his house. The Son inherits the house, the attendant does not.

THE NECESSARY JEWISH RESPONSE TO JESUS | HEBREWS 3:6B-11

- "We are His House." (v. 6b)
  - If one takes a standard Christian interpretation of this verse is "we, the church."
    - In such an interpretation, Moses would of necessity have to be a servant of his own house, not Christ's house, since Moses was not an attendant of the church, but of Israel, being under the Law (which the church is not).
  - However, using a more faithful interpretation, "we are His house" does not refer to the church, but to the Hebrews, thus either "house" of Moses still fits the grammar and theological structure, since Israel is both the house of the Messiah (in potential) and of Moses, with Moses being the attendant and Christ being the Son.
- "If we hold firm to the end" (v. 6)
  - An "if" conjunction with a subjunctive verb is a true "if/then" statement, not a declaration of actuality, but a contingency.
  - Two things were to be held unto.
    - The parresia, a freedom to speak, thus, by extension, a confidence.
    - The kauchema, a boasting --not any boasting (compare 1 Cor 5:6), but a boasting in "our hope firm until the end."
  - If this is a message to the Christian concerning his or her personal faith, then "once saved always saved" cannot be true (or some creative interpretation must be given, one that ignores the plain sense of words). Furthermore, it contradicts with John 10:27-29.
If this is a message to Israel, it says to them, "We will be the house of the Messiah if we have a freely spoken confidence and boast in our "until the end" kind of hope." That is, if we will confess Jesus as our Messiah, then His House will be established, and thus we will be established. (See Matthew 23:39). Note: if this interpretation is correct, we would expect an instruction to call upon Jesus as Messiah to follow.

The quote from Psalm 95:7-11 is a call to do what was called for in the contingency of v. 6--speak confidently and boast--and if this is done, there is a promised rest. Read Psalm 95:1-11 in light of the confidence and boasting instructed in v. 6.

**THE CONTINGENT PROMISE OF ISRAEL | HEBREWS 3:12-14**

- **"Take care"** is literally, "see" or "LOOK!" This is an imperative.
- "Falls away" is not a good translation. Literally it is "to stand off from God."
  - This is a willful act, not an accidental occurrence.
  - A search of the 14 times this word is used in the New Testament will display the willfulness of this word.
  - This is part of the last warning to the Hebrews not to walk away from the promise of the Kingdom.
- The instruction to the Hebrew believers was not only to “see” but to “encourage” (v. 13)
  - The word (parakaleo) does not imply tenderness, as a quick search of the 109 uses of the word in the New Testament will display.
  - Sometimes "encouragement" is in the form of imploring, beseeching, urging, appealing and even begging.
- Being hardened by sin (v 13) -- People of any dispensation can be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. If sin wasn't deceitful, it would lose its power. We need a group of people around us who will be faithful to encourage us (in any form) so that we are not deceived.
- **Partakers of Christ (v. 14):**
  - Not the distinction between v. 1 ("partakers of a heavenly calling") and v. 14 ("partakers of Christ.")
    - Verse 1 is secure, v. 14 is potential.
    - To the Hebrew nation, speaking through the believing Jews, the writer is begging that the nation become partakers of Christ (the Messiah).
    - Note that gentiles are "partakers of the promise in Christ" (Eph 3:6), but this is a word to Israel, which can be a "partaker in Christ."
  - The promise of partaking clearly involves a requirement outside of grace and without assurance for the Jewish nation. It required works (hold fast), it is not a free gift.
    - THE PROMISE OF THE KINGDOM WAS NOT AND IS NOT A GRACE PROMISE.
    - What are they to hold fast to? "Our assurance" (v. 14)
      - Though this word, by extension, can mean assurance or confidence (KJV), it literally means "of standing," that is it is foundational, and thus means "substance" or something in which we can have confidence.
      - In Heb. 1:3, this word is used, saying that, "Christ is the express image of His person," or, more literally, "of His substance."
      - The Jewish nation was being instructed that if they would "hold down" from beginning to the end "the substance" of their Messiah, they would partake in Him. That is, they must accept the truth of their Messiah in totality in order to partake in Him.