

What Christ Is To The Elect

If we are to understand this passage from Hebrews before us today, we must do a little biblical interpretation. The best way to interpret Scripture is to practice what is called Historical-Grammatical Interpretation.

Historical: What this means is that you look at the text under consideration from an historical perspective. You are basically asking the question, “How would the people who first heard or read these words have understood what the writer intended to say?” One attempts to determine what the writer meant when he wrote what he wrote. The original hearers were Hebrews converted to Christianity. Their culture and society was telling them that Judaism is superior to Christianity. I am sure they were being told things like, “Why would you ever serve this carpenter’s son from a back water town like Nazareth who was crucified with criminals? Why would you leave the traditions of the fathers to follow this dead man?” These new believers and churches were breaking away from the old traditions that had moved over the centuries from worship of God to man-made system of religion. They were following the New Covenant given by God through Christ. It must be remembered that to Jews the idea of a suffering Messiah was abhorrent for they were expecting a conquering Messiah who would be king. The Christian claim that it was fitting for Jesus to die for the sins of mankind must be viewed against this background.

Grammatical: Why does the author use the particular words he uses? Out of all the words in the Greek language why did God inspire him to choose these

particular words to communicate to people whose heart language was Hebrew? Why? This text today is full of Hebrew imagery. If we can catch what the writer meant when he wrote these specific words, we will see another powerful image of our Great Deliverer, Jesus Christ.

The primary assertion the writer of Hebrews is making in this text, goes like this; *Christ became human and by doing so became our brother. As our brother, He did not sin but suffered in order to deliver us from slavery to sin. As our Deliverer, as God incarnate, He goes before God the Father on our behalf, He is our High Priest.*

Let us go to prayer to prepare us to better understand God's Word today.

Our Brother (v. 10-13)

Our text begins with “[For it was fitting](#)” in other words, there is a certain way, there was a set plan for salvation to be established. Paraphrasing in modern language it could have read, “It was just like God to bring about salvation the way He did. The method was in keeping with God's character.” Salvation was the plan of God before creation and was meant to bring God glory through His only Son and show the world the perfection, greatness and amazing Creator and give mankind a profound sense of awe of God. Reading at verse 10, “[For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.](#)”¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. *To show Christ is of God, the writer quotes the Old Testament from both Psalms and Isaiah, continuing with the 2nd half of verse 11. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,*¹² [saying, ‘I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation](#)

I will sing your praise.’ (Psalm 22:22) ¹³ And again, ‘I will put my trust in him.’ (Psalm 18:2; Isaiah 8:17, 12:2) And again, ‘Behold, I and the children God has given me.’ ” (Isaiah 18:8)

Verse 10 goes on to say it is through God and His plan that salvation comes; His plan brings many sons and daughters to worship Him. He brings them. He leads them out of darkness and into light. He leads the way. Here we have Jesus Christ referred to as the author of salvation. What the writer is getting at is that Jesus is the One who established the path back to God. Jesus is the “trail blazer” that leads His people to God; He is the only path to God. As Jesus made clear, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”** (John 14:6) **Everyone** who trusts and believes in Jesus as the Christ, He will lead into a relationship with the Triune God and bring salvation. My beloved, understand this straight forward truth that the writer wanted these Hebrews that were now Christians to understand; through Jesus’ suffering, God’s plan of salvation was perfectly completed. ***Jesus was not perfected through suffering, He was and has always been perfect, but the plan, God’s will, was perfectly completed through the passion of Christ.***

Verse 11 begins the emphasis on the fact that part of the reason Jesus became a man was so that He could identify with humanity and as a sinless human He would restore what Adam forfeited. Jesus is not ashamed to be counted as a human as well as God. He calls us brothers. We have become His brothers and sisters. He is leading us as one of us. Yet, Jesus remained God; this was a difficult concept for the Hebrews. The writer of Hebrews uses some Old Testament quotes to highlight the fact that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the promised Messiah and was therefore, both man and God.

The first quote comes from Psalm 22. The writer of Hebrews wants us to see that Jesus is our brother. He took on flesh to identify with our weakness. Reading Psalm 22, were King David shares of his difficulties and tells of the difficulties Jesus will also suffer as the Messiah and as a man, ¹“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? ²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest. ... ⁶But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. ⁷All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; ⁸‘He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!’ (Psalm 37:5 & Proverbs 16:3) ⁹Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother’s breasts. ¹⁰On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother’s womb you have been my God. ¹¹Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help. ... ¹⁴I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; ¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. ¹⁶For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet— ¹⁷I can count all my bones— they stare and gloat over me; ¹⁸they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. ... ²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. ²⁸For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. It shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; ... ³¹they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a **people yet unborn**, that he has done it.”

As David experienced serious times of weakness and doubt, the writer of Hebrews wants us to see that these very words were experienced by Christ in a much greater way. If you have ever felt as if God was far away, Jesus the man has

also experienced those feelings. If you have ever been overcome with trouble, you are not alone, so has Jesus. He partook of flesh and blood to identify with us and yet remained perfect.

The next two quotes come from the Book of Isaiah. They have as their context God's people waiting on God to move on their behalf. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus stands with us as we wait. Jesus not only identifies with us but stands at our side while we wait. He is our Brother but He is One who is closer than a brother, He is our Redeemer.

Our Deliverer (v. 14-15)

Just as God led the Hebrews out from the slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land, so too, Jesus leads His brothers, His believers, out of the slavery of sin and into a right relationship with God. Reading verses 14 and 15, “[Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,](#) ¹⁵ [and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.](#)” Jesus is the one who establishes our faith and as our Commander and Chief, He leads us into battle with the fallen world and He leads us to home eternal for He destroyed “[the power of death](#)”. These Hebrews who were now Christians would have understood the imagery the writer used here; they would have been transported in their mind back to Exodus. Reading from Exodus chapter 6, verses 1 to 8, “[But the LORD said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.’](#) ²[God spoke to Moses and said to him, ‘I am the LORD.](#) ³[I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.](#) ⁴[I also established my covenant](#)

with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.’ ⁶ Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and **I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.** ⁷ I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.’ ” The land of salvation, the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is not a physical location but the eternal kingdom of God.

The writer paints a picture of Jesus as our Deliverer in a similar way God revealed to Moses, He would deliver the people out of Egypt. God led the Hebrews out of bondage and into peace, as long as they worshipped and followed Him. Jesus Christ is the eternal Deliverer; He is our brother and Captain who has broken the bondage of sin and leads us into God’s kingdom as sons and daughters. The nation Israel was God’s children, now, for those who believe in Jesus as their Savior we are the sons and daughters of the Living God.

Our High Priest (v. 16-18)

Joyce and I have a dog, named Chewie. He is a good and loyal dog, but at times communication is difficult – like when he barks in the middle of the night. Chewie mostly likely looks at Joyce, his primary caretaker, and thinks she is god because she provides everything he needs. We do not have a cat, but for those who do – you care and provide for the cat and give them everything they need. But the

cat's personality shows us they think differently than dogs. They think, these people provide me with everything I need, they serve me – I am their god. Communication can be difficult with dogs and cats and teenagers. God has the same problem with people – people often think like cats. People saw God as a far-off God who did not relate directly with people. When God provided everything the nation of Israel needed, they looked at God as their servant. Now comes Jesus with the message that people live for God's glory.

If Jesus is going to be the High Priest and Redeemer of people, He needed to communicate clearly, so He became a man in order to do just that. People then could see Jesus and become loyal and worship Him like the attitude of a dog, Jesus gave everything they needed for salvation and they need to live in worship or remain arrogant and think of Jesus as the cat does, He came to serve them.

Let me read verses 16 to 18 and think of how you view Christ. ¹⁶“For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” The writer is very clear – it was not the angels Jesus came to help, but He came to help us. Jesus came to save the “offspring of Abraham”. By this phrase what the author has in mind is a certain number of people. Jesus came to save those the Father had given Him from before the foundation of the world. The ones God knew before time began. The Lord made a covenant with Abraham. Let me take us back to Genesis chapter 12, “Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a

blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**” Who are those whom God had in mind when He made this promise to Abraham? God was thinking about the elect. He was thinking about Abraham’s true descendants. Not physical descendants but spiritual descendants.

Paul made this clear in his letter the Galatians, ⁶“just as Abraham ‘believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness’?” ⁷ Know then that **it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.** ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that **God would justify the Gentiles by faith,** preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘In you shall all the nations be blessed.’ ⁹ So then, **those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.**” (Galatians 3:6-9) We have a Great High Priest who comes to our rescue. Every generation since Jesus died, rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, those who believe in Him are the descendants of Abraham that the writer has in mind and that includes you and me. Jesus identifies with our weaknesses and sympathizes with us. As the High Priest, He goes to God on our behalf and God the Father sees us through the perfection of Jesus. A priest’s job is to speak to God for the people. The priest acts as the go-between. Without the priest the people are spiritually dead. ⁵“For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.” (1 Timothy 2:5-6) We no longer need a human priest to intercede with God. Jesus made it possible for us to communicate directly with God and live in relationship with God.

The Hebrews thought they had to have a priest stand between them and God and they did not have direct access to God. This gave leadership control of people spiritual lives. The people identified with their ancestors, ¹⁸“Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet

and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off¹⁹ and said to Moses, ‘You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.’²⁰ Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.’ ”

(Exodus 20:18-20) Jesus stands as our Priest and we need not fear God. Jesus goes to God on our behalf and presents to God a perfect life and a perfect sacrifice. The high priest had to take much care in preparing himself to go into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Jesus goes to the Father with a perfect righteous life and stands before God to present us as His brothers and sisters free from the guilt of sin because of His perfect sacrifice. Jesus did not die for angels. He died for the children of Abraham, God’s chosen elect for every believer in Jesus as the Christ who has and who will live.

In keeping with the character of God, He sends Jesus, the pioneer of our faith, to lead His people out of bondage of sin and into glory. Because of His humanity, Jesus relates to us perfectly. He knows what it is like to struggle. He knows what it is like to have Satan try to tempt. He knows and because He knows and has experienced these as a man, as God, He shows us mercy. Jesus is a merciful and faithful High Priest, He is God, He is our Savior.

Christ became human and by doing so became our brother. As our brother, He did not sin but suffered in order to deliver us from slavery to sin. As our Deliverer, as God incarnate, He goes before God the Father on our behalf, He is our High Priest.

My beloved if you believe in the Word of God, the writer of Hebrews and in Jesus as your Lord and Savior – stand – and with me shout Amen! So be it or So it is.
Amen!