

THROUGH THE BIBLE

HEBREWS 1-2

The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who had embraced Jesus as Messiah, but were struggling to follow Him. At the time, *the Temple was standing, sacrifices were offered, feast days were observed* – the religion of Judaism was at its zenith.

Jewish friends and family were scoffing out-loud at these *crazy Christians*. Why would anyone leave behind the security blanket of ancient traditions and institutions to follow a no-name preacher from Galilee?

And mounting pressure was being applied... Some of these Hebrew believers had been *banished from their families - their land and property were confiscated - they'd been excommunicated from the synagogue*.

The heat was on!

The message was renounce Jesus, or be barred from the community. The temptation was to deny Christ and return to the cozy confines of Jewish religion.

The book of Hebrews was written to affirm and strengthen the teetering faith of these shaky believers.

Hebrews explains how **Jesus is better than Judaism!**

He's better than *the OT prophets, the angels, the Law, Moses, Joshua, the Jewish priesthood*. He works in a *better Temple, makes better promises, establishes a better covenant, offers a better sacrifice*. **God has replaced the fixtures of Judaism with faith in Jesus.**

The Hebrew believers who receive this letter were right to leave behind their Jewish traditions and embraced a better way of relating to God. The book of Hebrews warns them not to retreat - don't go back - hold on to their faith. **Jesus is better than Judaism!**

In fact, Hebrews says to all of us - you and me - *that Jesus is better than any other way of life!* **Be proud of Jesus!** Don't ever back down from what you believe!

One sidebar before we plunge in - the question always arises - *who wrote the book of Hebrews?*

And the various suggestions are fascinating...

Scholars have argued for Timothy, Philip, Barnabas, Apollos - even Aquila and Priscilla. Some suggest Paul wrote it in Hebrew, and Luke translated it into Greek.

Who wrote Hebrews? Only God knows for sure. But here's the important point - it really doesn't matter who held the pen, for it was the Holy Spirit who inspired what was written. *Ultimately, the author was God.*

Hebrews begins, **"God..."** Understand, here's the most fundamental fact in the universe - **God is.**

This is a truth that's self-evident. The symmetry and order seen through the universe testifies of a Creator. *Design* necessitates a *designer*. You don't get order and symmetry from randomness and chance. *God is...*

The founder of modern astronomy, Johannes Kepler, once wrote, **"The undevout astronomer is mad."**

Simple laws of probability explain how ludicrous it is to suggest the universe sprung up out of chance and chaos... Take ten quarters - and number them 1 through 10... The odds of pulling out #1 is 1 in 10.

But the odds of pulling out #1 and #2 in order - is 1 in 100... The odds of pulling out #s 1, 2, and 3 in order would be 1 in 1000... And the odds of pulling out #s 1 through 10 consecutively would be 1 in 10-billion...

Now realize the simplest living cells consist of strings of 55 amino acids assembled in exact sequence. Thus, the odds of these chemicals emerging by chance from a primordial soup *in order one through fifty-five* to form a living cell... is beyond any responsible speculation.

Our planet, and its burgeoning life, can only be explained by the existence of a Creator. The psalmist says, **“The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.”**

God is... but verse 1 also holds the second most fundamental fact in all the universe... *God has spoken.*

“God who at various times and in various ways spoke...” The God who exists is not silent. He’s spoken into time and space. He’s declared His will to humanity.

Philosopher, Christopher Morley, once wrote, **“My theology, briefly, is that the universe was dictated, but not signed.”** In other words, God exists, but He remains incognito. He refuses to play his cards. He stays mum.

An atheist denies God exists. *An agnostic* refuses to believe He’s spoken. But the writer of the book of Hebrews assures us, **“God is AND He has spoken.”**

Verse 1 in a Greek Bible uses the terms **“polumeros and polutropos”** or *many portions* and *many ways...*

God spoke through many mouthpieces and by many methods “in time past to the fathers by the prophets.”

In the OT God’s revelation unfolded bit by bit - a portion at a time - like the unrolling of a scroll. Each of the prophets penned a successive line in the unfolding drama... **Isaiah**, the salvation of the Lord. **Jeremiah**, the judgment of the Lord. **Ezekiel**, the glory of the Lord. **Daniel**, the Lord’s sovereignty. **Hosea**, the love of the Lord. **Zechariah**, the faithfulness of the Lord.

God revealed Himself *in many portions*, but also *in many ways*. The prophets were versatile in their deliveries. Some preached - others acted out object lessons - or did miracles - or interpreted dreams...

In times past, God spoke through *many mouths and methods*, but He “has in these last days spoken to us by His Son...” God’s revelation is no longer coming to us piecemeal. Today, God has summed up all He’s wanted to say - put it into one package - rolled the entire divine message into one revelation. In these last days God has spoken to us by His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus is God’s complete and final word to man!

If you want to hear what God has to say to the world today, and understand His will - *then behold His Son!*

“Whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds...” The creation came through Jesus, belongs to Jesus, and is His in the end.

And here in verse 3 is an explanation of His nature, “who being the brightness of His glory and the express and image of His person...” This is why Jesus is superior to the OT prophets... *examine His nature...*

He is “**the brightness of (God’s) glory...**” Jesus is to God’s glory what a flash bulb is to the light in this room.

He is the full blaze or concentration of God’s glory.

Psalm 72:19 shouts, “**Let all the earth be filled with God’s glory.**” But take that glory - the glory spread over “*all the earth*” - glory the universe can’t contain - and compress it into a single life - and you’ll see Jesus.

Our Lord is “***the brightness of His glory.***”

He’s also “**the express image of (God’s) person.**”

Jesus isn’t just God’s reflection - He’s the “**express image**” - or exact reproduction of God. Prophets were representatives, but Jesus is a reproduction. He’s not just of similar form - He consists of the very same stuff.

Take a waxed apple. Appearance-wise it resembles an apple, but bite it and you’ll quickly conclude that it’s not. But take a bite of Jesus, and you’ll realize He really is God - ***not just in shape, but also in substance.***

And He’s not only Creator of the universe - Jesus is also its Sustainer. Verse 3, He is “**upholding all things by the word of His power...**” Jesus is the atomic glue!

The nucleus of the atom is a mystery. What keeps its bundle of protons from splitting? The laws of Physics teach that like charges repel - yet something, *or better yet someone* - is stronger than molecular mechanics.

Hebrews tells us it’s Jesus that upholds all things!

By the power of His word He keeps the universe from unraveling. *And closer to home... It’s the power of His Word, the Bible, that keeps my fragile life intact!*

And as if upholding all things were not a big enough job - Jesus also had a mission to accomplish. Verse 3 tells us He came to save what He'd always upheld.

For **“when He had by Himself purged our sins...”**

I love this verse! Notice, Jesus purged our sin **“by Himself.”** He needed no one's help! He blotted out all our sins **“by Himself.”** Jesus paid the price all alone.

Have you heard the joke, **“How many amoebas does it take to change a light bulb? One. No, 2. No, 4. No, 8. No, 16. No, 32...”** The point is, amoebas multiply.

Well, it may take a lot of amoebas to change a light bulb, but **our salvation was a one man job!**

Without the Father's intervention - or angelic assistance - or the stupefying narcotic the Romans used to deaden the pain (*no, performance enhancing drugs for Jesus*) - our Lord endured the cross, purged our sins, and then conquered death - *all by Himself!*

And now God has rewarded and exalted Jesus. He has **“sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels...”**

The angels hover around God's throne, but Jesus occupies a seat. Apparently, God's throne is a two-seater. There's a place at God's right hand for Jesus!

His nature makes Him better than prophets, and His exaltation makes Him better than the angels! *And I'm not talking Anaheim Angels... Everybody's better than those Angels this year... I'm talking real-deal angels.*

In Judaism, angelic beings were highly revered - *my, they were practically worshipped*. Since angels lived in God's presence, and helped convey the Law to Moses, they were often elevated to divine status.

And it's not just the Jews who've made that mistake.

People today, in our pseudo-spiritual culture become preoccupied with angels and angelic visitations, when they should be concerned with obedience to God.

Everybody wants to be touched by an angel - but Hebrews says it's far better to be touched by Jesus!

And verse 4 tells us why, "as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You?" Here's a quote from Psalm 2:7. "And again (this time it's 2 Samuel 7:14): "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?"

Here are two OT passages where *God the Father* addresses *God the Son*. Apparently, God has a Son.

The doctrine of the Trinity, and the deity of Jesus, the Son of God, is taught in the OT, as well as in the New.

Remember in Hebrew culture the son of a goat is a goat - the son of a man is a man - and the phrase "Son of God" meant that Jesus is God. To refer to Jesus as the "son of" was to ascribe to Him equality with God.

The point of this passage is that angels are *servants of God*, but Jesus is His *Son*. Nowhere is an angel ever referred to as a child, or offspring of God. This puts Jesus in His own category - better than angels!

Verse 6, “But when He again brings the firstborn into the world...” And remember the term “*firstborn*” doesn’t always mean “*born first*.” Solomon was David’s 10th son, but Psalm 89:27 refers to him as his “*firstborn*.”

It was a title of honor and authority in a family. Jesus was firstborn, or *head and heir* of God’s Creation.

Here we’re told when Jesus came into the world, the Father said, “Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

Not just the angels who appeared to the shepherds on the outskirts of Bethlehem, but all the angels in every corner of the universe, stopped in their tracks, and rose up to worship Jesus on that first Christmas.

And here’s the point for these Hebrews, *why worship angels when angels worship Jesus?* Angels are servants, messengers, but Jesus is *the hero of angels!*

Verse 7, “And of the angels He says: “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.”

But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.” Again, angels are heaven’s helpers - they wait on God and the saints of God.

Angels *serve before the throne*, but it’s the Son, the Lord Jesus, that *sits on the throne!* Why get all excited about *busboys* when you can hangout with the *Boss?*

Verses 7-8 are great verses to recall the next time you talk to a Jehovah’s Witness. These misled missionaries claim Jesus was once the angel Michael.

But here Jesus is placed in juxtaposition to angels. He's a different order of being - greater than angels.

The psalmist says, *"to the Son He (or God) says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;"* God calls Jesus God. That's a pretty strong proof-text for the deity of Jesus. Show this verse to the cultist at your door.

Verse 9, *"You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions."* Here's a verse that gives us a glimpse into the personality of Jesus while He was on Earth...

Jesus was a passionate, fiery person. He *loved* and *hated*... He loved what was right and hated rebellion.

And God anointed or doused Him with an extraordinary measure of gladness. I believe Jesus was a fun person to be around. Some of the movies made about Him portray Jesus as straight-laced, stoic, somber - like His face was chiseled out of granite.

But verse 9 tells us He was anointed *"with the oil of gladness more than His companions."* He was the most fun-loving, jovial, upbeat, grin'n guy in the crowd.

Verse 10, *"And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed."*

The birth of a human being is their beginning. That's true of all humans, but one. Jesus' Bethlehem birth wasn't His first rodeo. He'd been to this Earth before.

The Bible teaches the pre-existence of Jesus. In verse 10 we're told, Jesus *"laid the foundation of the earth..."* - *"the heavens are the work of His hands..."*

Jesus played a role in the Father's work from the creation. And He'll be at the Father's right hand in the end - when the universe is packed up like an old coat.

Amazingly, verse 12 sounds like it was written by a modern day physicist. Astronomers tell us we live in an expanding universe, but eventually the galaxies will slow down and the gravitational force will take over.

The universe will collapse in on itself. In the words of Psalm 102:26 the heavens will fold up like an cloak.

"But You are the same, and Your years will not fail."

One day the physical universe will be no more, but Jesus Christ will remain forever. Hebrews 13:8, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever..."*

"But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool?"

The Father promises His Son dominion over all His enemies. *The angel's know service, not conquest!*

Jesus alone will hold God's scepter and rule!

Verse 14, *"Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?"*

God never ordained angels to rule. There's only one angel who wants to rule, and that's Lucifer, the devil.

Dominion is our destiny. The Bible promises that one day you and I will reign with Jesus. Angels were created to serve and minister to us - heirs of salvation.

There're verses that promote the idea of *guardian angels*... That an angel gets assigned to each believer.

Psalm 91:11, "He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all you ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone." Angels are assigned to protect God's children.

Last Sunday news from New London Missouri reported that firemen worked for over an hour to free a young lady trapped in her smashed car. When Katie called out for prayer, a priest appeared out of nowhere.

He anointed the girl with oil, and assured the firemen their efforts would succeed. Eighty photos were taken of the crash scene, *but not one showed the priest*...

After Katie was airlifted several of the rescue workers went to find the priest to thank him for his intervention.

The priest was nowhere to be found. The highway had been blocked. There were no bystanders, no parked cars, nowhere for the priest to go, but he was gone. Fire chief Ray Reed told USA Today, "I'd say whether it was an angel sent to us in the form of a priest or a priest that became our angel, I don't know. Either way, I'm good with it... I think it's a miracle."

Was it really an angel? Who's to say, but it could've been! I do believe in guardian angels, and when I get to Heaven I'll thank mine for all the overtime I cost him.

But I don't trust in angels. I trust in their Boss.

The angel who ministers to you doesn't love you. He's just following orders. It's **"The God of Angel of Armies that's always by my side."** God might send an angel to show His compassion, but it's Jesus who cares! Always remember, *Jesus is better than angels!*

We need to trust Jesus, which is why the author warns, 2:1, **"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away."**

It's hard to believe, but the Hebrews were drifting from faith in Christ. Jewish relatives, and religion, and tradition, and superstition, and social entanglements were all acting like a powerful undertow that was taking the tiny raft of faith further from their hope in Christ.

These believers were drifting. It's time to wake up!

"For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward..." A reference to the OT Law.

In Acts 7, Stephen pointed out that the Law of Moses was mediated through angels - and God took seriously this angel-delivered covenant. The Jews who violated God's Law ended up dying in the wilderness.

But if God enforces the covenant conveyed by angels - and Jesus is the Lord of the angels - how much more seriously will He take the covenant instituted by Christ Himself - the covenant of faith?

This is why the writer warns in verse 3, **"how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation..."** Our Savior and His salvation make for a relationship with God the OT Jews could only dream about... What a crime it is for us to neglect that salvation and opt for alternatives!

And he clarifies the salvation of which He's speaking, "which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord..."

The Gospel that sets us free was delivered - not just by prophets, or angels or busboys - but by the Boss Himself! "And was confirmed to us by those who heard Him..." Eyewitnesses staked their integrity on their testimony of Jesus. Angels appear and then vanish. But there were men willing to die for the Gospel's sake.

And God too testified of the Gospel, verse 4, "God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" The Gospel of grace is a covenant on which God Himself placed His own stamp of approval.

Signs, and wonders, and miracles, and supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit all accompanied the spread of the Gospel wherever it was preached.

And nowhere does the Bible speak of the ceasing of these miracles and spiritual gifts. The *Spirit of God* still confirms the *truth of God* through supernatural means.

The salvation we have in Christ is a masterpiece!

God's wisdom, and righteousness, and mercy and grace combine like paints on an artist's canvas.

The Gospel of Jesus is superior to the Law of Moses in every way - *and if you can't neglect the lessor and escape its consequences, how can you neglect the greater and expect any different?* The Hebrews' initial step of faith was not enough, they had to continue in their faith. Abandon your faith and you'll drift away.

In Chapter 1 Jesus is superior to the angels because He's God. In Chapter 2 He's greater than the angels because He's man. Angels aren't God - but Jesus is. And no angel ever became a man - but Jesus did.

And here's why he joined the ranks of humankind, verse 5, "For (God) has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying..." And here the author of Hebrews quotes the David in Psalm 8...

Picture a young shepherd boy, lying in the open field, curled up in his bedroll, next to a dwindling fire.

David gazes into the heavens. Out in the countryside, away from the city lights, you can see 5000 stars with the naked eye. With a 4-inch telescope you can see 2 million stars. With the 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar you'll see 1 billion stars.

David is admiring God's handiwork - the beauty and enormity of creation. He's pondering God... *when suddenly he's struck with an unexpected realization...*

God sits on the precipice of heaven... who knows what vistas are in his sights, *yet what captivates his attention?* It suddenly hits David, while he sits on earth thinking of God - God is in heaven thinking of him!

David is amazed, "What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him?"

You have made him a little lower than the angels..."

In terms of our physical composition humans are not much. Purchase the raw materials that make up a human body and you'll get change back from a \$20 bill.

Yet the value of a human being is not wrapped up in what he is - but in what God intended him to be. As David says, **you have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet.**" Man was made in God's image, and given dominion over nature - *animals, agriculture, angels...* until he sinned.

Verse 8, **"For in that (God) put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him."** For the moment, the human race remains in its fallen state.

As Augustine put it, **"Man is a good thing spoiled."**

Humorist, Will Rogers once said, **"God made man a little lower than the angels and he has been getting a little lower ever since."** *Isn't that the truth!*

Today the glory of mankind - both *his origination* and *his coronation* - is almost completely hidden from view.

This is why babies get aborted... This is the logic of wicked men who attempt ethnic cleansing... We lose sight of the value of human life. View mankind apart from God's ultimate intentions and we're just another herd of animal who's population should be thinned out.

But there is one place where you can get a glimpse of what man was meant to be. Verse 9 tells us, **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone."** Jesus chained Himself to the plight of all humans in order to break our chains, and set us free to be all that God intended for man to be.

Jesus was God stooping down and man standing up.

The Son of God was *God setting us free*, and *man as he was meant to be!* When you experience the life of Jesus, then you cannot help but become pro-life!

You see the value of all men. You see God's image in them. You become a lover of other human beings.

Verse 10, *“For it was fitting for Him (God), for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect (or complete) through sufferings.”*

Some truths aren't fully discerned until experienced.

Take the sensation of pain. I can read descriptions of what pain is like. I can attach electrodes to a person's body and measure pain's effects - but when I'm done, what do I really know about pain until I've tasted it?

The *invincible God* made Himself *vulnerable*. He drank from a cup of suffering intended for us. He bore the pain of our sin in His own body. He wanted to experience our dilemma from an insider's point of view.

The word *“captain”* in verse 10 can be translated *“trailblazer or pioneer.”* Jesus blazed a new trail. He broke new ground. He established a new way to live...

He was the first to achieve glory through suffering, bring life from death, snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat. He pioneered a new attitude. Now He stands on the glory-side and beckons us to follow. Are we willing to lay down our life, and trust Him to lift us up?

If we become vulnerable, He'll insure we overcome!

“For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren...” Jesus is the sanctifier. He’s working to make me holy and pure. I am the sanctified. But amazingly, He considers us one!

The King of Creation calls us His *“brethren.”*

The whole time growing up I wanted a big brother. In my family I was the big brother, and I saw the benefits.

When Ken got to High School the coaches already knew his name - he had a ride to school - kids who didn’t want to mess with me, didn’t pick on him.

A kid brother has it a easier than a big brother!

I would’ve loved to had someone older, stronger, wiser who’d look out for me, teach me the ropes. And after 20-plus years I got my big brother. The day I pledged my life to Jesus, *He became my big brother!*

And now I’ve got it made. God knows my name. Jesus carries me where He’s headed. And you better not pick on me if you don’t want to mess with Jesus!

Sometimes big brothers pick on their siblings, but not Jesus. He picks us up! Even if you act goofy and do stupid stuff to embarrass Him, Jesus still loves you.

We’re told in verse 11, *“He is not ashamed to call (us) brethren...”* Jesus always wants you by His side!

Saying: (in verse 12... here’s a quote from Psalm 22:22) *“I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”*

Notice where Jesus hangs out? He's in the assembly of the church - with us - singing praise to the Father!

That's why we need to worship God like we mean it.

You wouldn't be lethargically, lamely mouthing words to God if you know Jesus was standing right next to you. *Well, He really might be standing right next to you!*

Verse 13, "And again: **"I will put My trust in Him."** Jesus is trusting in the Father as He intercedes for us.

And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me." Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same... Jesus took on our mortality so we could share in His immortality, and "That through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Jesus took on a human body to die for all humans.

Ironically, through death Jesus destroyed the **"power of death"** and freed us from the **"fear of death."**

Did you hear about the man suffering from severe headaches? He tried Aspirin, Tylenol, Motrin - Extra Strength - nothing worked. Finally, he went to the doc.

The doctor did a brain scan and X-rays. A couple of days later, the man went back in for the results.

The doctor announced, **"I've got awful news. Your condition is terminal."** The patient was shook up, **"Doc, say it ain't so!"** **"No, I'm afraid the results are conclusive. There's**

no doubt." The man asked, "How much time do I have left?" The doctor answered, "10..."

The patient wanted to know, "10 what? 10 years? 10 months? 10 days?" The doctor continued, "9, 8, 7, 6..."

Hey, like that patient, unless the Lord returns, we'll all die. And it's the fear of death that haunts us most.

Like a ominous cloud hovering over a picnic - even if it never rains - the mere threat of it spoils the fun.

That's the way it is with death. It's the fear of death that steals the joys of life... *The thrill of a baby's birth is tempered by the realization that one day the body you lay in the bassinet will be laid in a grave... The joy of a wedding is dimmed by the inevitable separation death will one day create...* Death is the great spoiler. The grim reaper sees to it nothing in this life lasts forever.

For centuries the fear of death ruled the hood. It's tyranny went unchecked – until Jesus moved onto the block. Jesus beat Satan at his own game. We're told through the death of Christ, Jesus destroyed the power of Satan. The Greek word means "to render useless."

Jesus declawed and de-toothed the tiger of death.

Jesus stripped death of its fear element. Through His death He paid sin's penalty, and united us to God.

Death no longer means the cessation of life... Death no longer robs us of what matters... It separates us for a time, but not forever. In Christ, death is no longer a

punishment for sin. Its a graduation to greater blessing, higher glory, a deeper awareness of God's presence.

Verse 16, "For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham."

God gave blessings to Jesus and those who follow Him by faith that He would never dole out to angels.

"Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren..." Here's another reason Jesus became a man... that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God... God appoints men as priests, not angels - and Jesus is our High Priest!

The Latin word for "priest" or "pontif" means literally, "bridge-builder." And Jesus the God-man was the ultimate intermediary. He was a bridge with pylons on both shores - He was both fully God and fully man.

And God had two requirements for a good priest. He was to be *faithful to God*, and *merciful toward man*.

A priest had to represent God's truth, clearly and boldly; yet he also had to empathize with man's needs.

Most people tend to go toward one or the other. They stand for truth, and become judgmental - or they empathize with men, and soften up God's demands.

But not Jesus! Here is where Jesus qualified perfectly... *He is faithful to God and merciful to man!*

And Jesus came, **to make propitiation for the sins of the people...** The word **“propitiation”** means **“a place of mercy.”** The Hebrew word is **“kipporeth”** or **“mercyseat.”**

The mercyseat was the gold lid that covered the Ark of the Covenant in the Temple’s innermost sanctum. Over this mercyseat the glory of God rested. This was where the priest applied the blood, and atoned for sin.

God’s truth and mercy kissed and were reconciled at the mercyseat. In this one place, at one time, God’s righteousness was satisfied. His compassion realized.

And today Jesus is our mercyseat. He is the one place in the world where sinful men can find mercy.

Verse 18, **“For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”**

What angel knows what it’s like to tire, or get sleepy, or feel pain, or bleed, or be rejected by a friend? Yet Jesus was tempted in all these ways! *And why?* So He can help us when we encounter the same temptations.

The words **“able to aid”** is the translation of a Greek phrase which means **“to run to the cry of a child.”**

Jesus has been where you’re at - He’s known similar trials, heartaches, difficulties. He’s as sensitive to your hurts as a mom is to her baby’s bumps and scrapes.

We have a priest who will help us where it hurts!