

The 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
October 3, 2021

“In our flesh, Jesus destroyed the devil and death...for everyone!”  
(Hebrews 2:9,14-15)

By Rev. Ed Weber

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,  
Today’s text for this 19th Sunday after Pentecost is from our Epistle reading – Hebrews 2:9,14-15.

**“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. Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, 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.**

Here ends our text.

I. His brethren were born to die eternally because of sin

It’s that time of year again. It’s that time of year when we go to the stores and we see all types of Halloween things, like creepy hands coming out of tombstone, skulls and skeletons. Every day at Immanuel Lutheran School, the students wear their light blue uniform shirt, except for Fridays. Every Friday is fun Friday and the kids get to pick their own outfits. A brother and sister came dressed on Friday with skeleton shirts. Yes, It’s that time of the year that we’re reminded of our mortality in a fun type of way. We poke fun at death and laugh at it.

We just finished the book of James in our epistle readings. And now we’re beginning the book of Hebrews. We jump right into chapter 2 which speaks about the High Priest who was born to die. (v.17) As verse 9 of our text says,

**“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.”**

He was made lower than the angels. Yes, God brought His firstborn into the world we hear in chapter 1. The Jesus we see was made lower than the angels for He was given flesh, like His brothers He came to save. And yet, we read in chapter 1:6 that even though He was made lower than the angels, “He is worshipped by the angels.”

Why? Because Jesus is God!

**“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;” (Hebrews 1:8)** And the very next verse calls Jesus Lord for... Jesus made the heavens and the earth.

**“You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.” (Hebrews 1:9)**

Why would the Son of God be made lower than the angels? Become like His creation with flesh and blood? Allow Himself to suffer and die?

Because His creation had been infected by sin and death. The devil was reigning over His creation and kept it captive, unable to escape from this awful reign of real goblins, and ghouls and demons, destined for eternal death as we heard last week in our Gospel from Mark 9, **“where their worm doesn’t die and the fire is not quenched”**. Three times Jesus repeats these words to drive home the point that hell is real. And that one’s repentance for sins should be so real and serious that it would be better to cut off one’s hand, foot or pluck out one’s eye than spend an eternity in hell!

Yes, Hebrews tells us in chapter 1 that this beautiful creation which Jesus made will perish and be folded up like a garment (Hebrews 1:11-12). Why? Because of sin!

I watched some of game #162 between the Angels and the last night. It’s the second to the last game of the season in Major League Baseball and there’s a lot that’s being decided in the American league for who is going to be the wild card team in the playoffs. 42,000 fans screamed their loudest in Seattle to cheer their team on. It was do or die time. Win or go home. Their team hadn’t been to the playoffs for 20 years and it took a bases loaded two out, full count single to drive

in the winning run and keep their playoff chances alive. It was a very exciting game as you can imagine.

In between innings, you were also graced with a bunch of save the planet commercials. How this generation is so fixated on saving the planet that will perish and be folded up and only be saved by the One who created. Oh, how mankind likes to think they can play God!

But we know that only the one True God, Jesus, is eternal as we hear in Hebrews chapter 1. The world will perish **“But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.” (Hebrews 1:12)**

Indeed, this was spoken to us by the prophets begins the book of Hebrews, but God now speaks to us through His very Son, **“in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:2-3)**

Born to die. Jesus had to purge the sins of the world, our sins, by His death to and uphold all things by the word of His power!!

Our Old Testament reading from Genesis 2 doesn't speak of the need to restore creation. There is no sin or death in Genesis 2. Only life. The verse before our Old Testament reading says,

**“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)**

And life was given to woman who was made from Adam's rib. Death enters the picture in Genesis 3. After the fall of man, God tells them,

**“In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:19)**

## II. Jesus became like His brethren to give eternal life

But there is also the promise of life in chapter 3!! The Seed of the woman will destroy the head of the serpent, the devil!

**“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”  
(Genesis 3:15)**

And that’s what our text brings us to hear in all its glory!

**“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, 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.”**

The Offspring of the woman partook of her flesh and blood. Jesus, the Son of God, shared the same. He became like us! And He did so to destroy the devil and release mankind from the power of death and eternal bondage!

What a comforting thought is that every time we hear it! He became like us to save us! Verse 17 of our epistle says it so clearly!

**“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” (Hebrews 2:17)**

Of the people! Jesus appeased the wrath of God. He made atonement as the High Priest by becoming the sacrifice Himself...not just for some, but for everyone our text says. This is the universal atonement that gives us so much comfort! Your sins and my sins have been purged once and for all! By the grace of God, Jesus tasted death for us all! All glory to Jesus!

You know, in sports, it’s a very common thing, whatever sport it is, football, baseball, soccer... that the fans of their team, wear their team’s jersey. You’ll see lots of Jose Altuve jerseys among the Astros fans. You’ll see Dak Prescott jerseys among the Dallas Cowboy fans. Whether its high school, college or the pros, the fans will wear their team’s colors.

In the most remarkable way, Jesus wore our colors. He identified with us. He became like His us. He calls us His brothers and sisters. We’re brethren to Him

because He became just like us. Jesus has flesh and blood...everything like us...except sin. He was perfect. Hebrews 1:8 puts it this way.

**“A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness”**

Righteousness. He freely gives His righteousness to His companions, and they become part of team Jesus! Jesus is our Captain, and He brings His sons not to death, but to glory!

**“For it was fitting for Him, 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 through sufferings.” (Hebrews 2:10)**

He brings us to a perfect blessed end by giving us eternal glory. Jesus is not ashamed of us for He has given us His righteousness in our baptism. He gives us His very body and blood for our forgiveness. Yes, Jesus indeed took on our flesh to redeem us!

**“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, saying: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.” (Hebrews 2:11-12)**

Not ashamed to call us brothers! Remember that often! My brethren! Oh, how Jesus loves us!

As I watched the Angels/Mariners baseball game last night, one word was on everybody's mind. One word kept flashing on the huge jumbotron in capital letters. What was that word? “Believe”. Almost every fan was holding up a poster with this word on it. “Believe” in your team that they can win it all. Put your trust in your team. If everyone believes hard enough, it will happen. Of course, this is something that many underdog teams like to do. People wear t-shirts and paint the word “Believe” on their faces. And people go crazy doing this for something that is just pure entertainment.

Acts 16:31 says, **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”**

Believe in the Captain of your salvation, who became like you, true flesh and blood, to purge your sins. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, and your household, all the olive plants around your table as we heard in Psalm 128.

Believe and you will not need fear death. No fear! For Jesus has risen from the death and has destroyed the devil and the power of death... for you and me and everyone! Don't fear death! See Jesus! Amen!

**The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**