Why God became a Man

Hebrews 2:5-18
1-24-2021

*** Why did Jesus (the Son of God) become a man?**
(Why did the One superior to Angels, become "a little lower than the angels"?)

Jesus became a man to...
I. Regain man's lost dominion (v.5-9a)

Jesus became a man to...
II. Experience death for every man (v.9)

Jesus became a man to...
III. Identify with sanctified men as "brothers" (v.10-13)

Jesus became a man to...
IV. Remove man's fear of death (imposed by Satan) (v.14-15)

Jesus became a man to...
V. Mediate between God & Man as "High Priest" (v.16-17)

Jesus became a man to...
VI. Encourage & Assist men through their temptations (v.18)

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Introduction:

Whereas chapter one expanded on Christ's deity, chapter two expounds His humanity (during His incarnation).

Having demonstrated Christ's superiority over angels [both in His person, works (1:4-14), and words (2:1-4)], God now explains why Christ for a time ***"was made a little lower than the angels."***

When Christ became a man, He voluntarily took on limitations that would confine Him, limit Him, and make Him dependent. When Christ became a man, He took upon Himself some of the limitations of flesh and blood.

Christ's changes during incarnation:

a.A change in His dwelling-place
(from the presence of the Father to the presence of men - Jn. 6:51)

b.A change in His possessions
(from riches to poverty - Luke 8:59; II Cor. 8:9)

c.A change in His reputation among men
(from glory to obscurity - Jn. 17:5; Phil. 2:6, 7)

d.A change in His position
(from equality with God [in authority] to servanthood - Mt. 20:26-28; Phil. 2:6, 7)

e.A change in His form (bodily appearance)
(from the form of God to the likeness of men - Phil. 2:6-8)

Note concerning these changes: All the changes were temporary

1)Jesus returned to His dwelling-place with the Father (Jn. 17:11).

2)Jesus reclaimed His riches with the Father (Jn. 16:10; Rev.5:12)

3)Jesus has been exalted to a place of glory among spiritually-minded men (Jn. 17:5), and will soon be honored by all men (Phil. 2:9, 10; Rev. 5:12)

4)Jesus is again occupying the place of rulership (authority) over all creation (Col. 1:15 - "the first born of all creation"; Mt. 28:19)

5)Jesus will appear in a glorified human form throughout eternity (Acts 7:54, 55; Rev. 1:17, 18; 5:6; 22:16)

When Jesus became incarnate, He took upon Himself a genuine human nature. NOTE: Although Christ became total man, He did not become sinful man. He had a human nature but not a sin nature (Heb. 4:15, 7:26; II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 2:22).

He had the identical nature which Adam had before the fall. Christ is called "the last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45).

Scriptural evidences of Christ's humanity:

1)Christ possessed the essential elements of human nature.

a)Jesus had a body (Heb. 2:14, 16; I Jn. 4:2, 3)
b)Jesus had a soul (Mt. 26:38)
c)Jesus had a spirit (Lk. 23:46)

2)Christ expressly called Himself, and was called, "Man."

John 8:40 - "Ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth."
Acts 2:22 - "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God . . ."
I Timothy 2:5 - "One mediator . . . the man Christ Jesus."

3)Christ frequently called Himself "the Son of man" (Lk. 19:10) - a title which identified the eternal son of God with the mortal sons of men.
By the term "Son of man," Jesus clearly and fully identified Himself with mankind.

4)Jesus exercised all the attributes of human existence.

a)Birth (including pre-natal development -Lk. 2:6, 7)
b)Growth and development (Lk. 2:40, 52)
c)Physical appetites
(1)Hunger (Mt. 4:2)
(2)Thirst (Jn. 19:28)
(3)Sleep (Mt. 8:24)
d)Emotions
(1)Anger (not sinful anger) (Mk. 3:5)
(2)Sorrow (Jn. 11:35)
(3)Compassion (Jn. 13:23)
(4)Anguish of soul (Jn. 12:27)
e)Human restrictions and limitations
(1)Fatigue (weariness - Jn. 4:6)
(2)Exhaustion (Lk. 22:43)
(3)Time/space limitations (Mk. 11:13)
(4)Death (Jn. 19:30)

The Mystery of mysteries involves the eternal Creator of the universe, who had all power,

all authority, and all honor; and yet humbled Himself so low in order to become man and take upon Himself man's limitations (SEE I Tim. 3:16).

Philippians 2:5-8 describes the self-emptying ("kenosis") of Christ.

The word "kenosis" comes from the Greek word "kenoo" (Phil. 2:7), which means "to empty."

The doctrine of Christ's Kenosis (self-emptying) is succinctly stated as follows: "Christ voluntarily surrendered the independent exercise of certain of His divine attributes while He was on earth."

Note concerning this statement:

1)Christ was and is fully equal with God the Father (v. 6) (cp. John 5:18, 10:30).

2)Though equal with God, Christ humbled Himself voluntarily (v.7)

3)Christ did not empty Himself of His deity, but rather He emptied Himself of the display of His deity.

He deserved the recognition of God, yet "He made Himself of no reputation" in the eyes of men.

The most dramatic result of Christ becoming man is that through He was God, He would no longer be immediately recognized or honored as God by men.

4)Christ did not surrender any attribute, but rather the independent use of certain attributes.

In the Kenosis, Jesus the Son became perfectly subservient to the Father (John 8:28, 29; Heb. 10:7) and perfectly dependent upon the Spirit (Acts 1:2; Heb. 9:14).

5)Christ only surrendered the use of certain divine attributes.

Jesus never surrendered an attribute of His inner nature or character (EX: holiness, righteousness, truthfulness, faithfulness, love, mercy, grace, patience).

Jesus did surrender the independent use of His attributes of ability to the leading and will of the Father.

EX:the ability to do all (omnipotence; Mt. 28:19)
the ability to know all (omniscience; Mk. 13:32)
the ability to decide all (omnisapience; Lk. 2:52)
the ability to be everywhere (omnipresence; Jn. 14:28)

Christ surrendered the use of His "omnirelative" attributes, not His "immanent" attributes.

6)Christ's self-emptying was limited to the time He was on earth before His resurrection and glorification.

Today, Christ has all authority (Mt. 28:19) and all glory (Jn. 17:5) and full exercise of all of His "omnirelative" attributes (Rev. 1:13-18; 5:12, 13)

*** Why did Jesus (the Son of God) become a man?**
(Why did the One superior to Angels, become "a little lower than the angels"?)

Jesus became a man to...
I.Regain man's lost dominion (v.5-9a)

V. 5

"The world to come" - The inhabited earth which will be ruled over by Christ and His saints in the future 1,000 year Kingdom (Rev. 20:1-6).

Angels will not be in charge of that Kingdom, but Christ (the son of man) and redeemed mankind will be.

V. 6

"In a certain place" = SEE: Psalm 8:3-9

V. 7

"A little lower" - Both in degree and time (both in quality and quantity, man is lower than angels).

In the present, man has limits that angels do not have (we need food, sleep, shelter; function by five senses).

In the future, glorified man will be superior in nature to angels.

Man was set over God's creation in Gen. 1:28 - *"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."*

V. 8

"Not yet all things put under him" - Man, via the Fall, lost his complete dominion over creation.

"But we have a serious problem here, for it is obvious that man today is <u>not</u> exercising dominion over creation. Certainly man cannot control the fish, fowl or animals. In fact, man has a hard time controlling himself" (Wiersbe, p. 28).

V. 8b

The curse on the ground, and the fear of man in animals, has made the dominion of man over nature a difficult task. At the present time, nature is *"subjected to futility"* (Rom. 8:19-20). In the future Kingdom, however:

<u>Man</u> will be changed (Is. 2:2-4)
<u>Animals</u> will be changed (Is. 2:2-4; 11:6, 8-9)
<u>Plants</u> will be changed (Is. 35:1-2)

V. 9a

What the first "Adam" lost to Satan, the second "Adam" regained for us.

"But we see Jesus" - "He is God's answer to man's dilemma. Jesus Christ became man that He might suffer and die for man's sin and restore the dominion that was lost because of sin. When our Lord was here on earth, He exercised that lost dominion. He had dominion over the fish (Lk. 5:1-11; Mt. 17:24-27; Jn. 21:1-11), over the fowl (Lk. 22:34, 60), and over the wild beasts (Mk. 1:12-13), and the domesticated beasts (Mk. 11:1-7). As the Last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), Jesus Christ regained man's lost dominion. Today, everything is under His feet (Eph. 1:20-23)." (Wiersbe, p. 28)

Jesus became a man to...
II.Experience death for every man (v.9)

Christ had to temporarily become lower than the angels because angels cannot die.

"By the grace of God" - we did not deserve our Lord to humble Himself so low as to die a shameful death to pay for our sins.

"Grace" = **G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense

"Taste death" -

God became man so that He might die for men.

*Since God is eternal, and since He is pure Spirit (Jn. 4:24), He could not die.

Therefore, He subjected Himself (in the person of Christ) to a temporal and mortal body so that death might be possible.

--Matthew 20:28 - "...give His life a ransom for many."
"The Son of God became the Son of man so that we--the sons of man--might become sons of God."
--I Tim. 1:15 - "...came into the world to save sinners"
--John 6:51 - I will give my flesh..."for the life of the world"

The main purpose of Christ's incarnation was ***"for the suffering of death."***

Christ was born to die. "Those tiny hands fashioned by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb were made to take two great nails. Those little feet were made to climb a hill and to be nailed to a cross. That sacred head was made to wear a crown of thorns, and that tender body wrapped in swaddling clothes was made to be pierced by a spear" (MacArthur, p. 63).

"Taste death" - to fully experience death.

"For every man" - for all people (lit. everyone); not a select few. The Bible does not teach a Limited Atonement. (it is limited in its application but not in its provision).

Christ's death is sufficient for all, but is only efficient for those who believe.

Jesus became a man to...
III.Identify with sanctified men as "brothers" (v.10-13)

V. 10

"It became Him" - It was fitting for God the Father.

"For whom are all things" - God is the goal of creation (we were created for Him)

"By whom are all things" - God is the cause of creation (we were created by Him; cp. Col. 1:16)

"Captain" - (*archegon)* - author, head, leader, pioneer

It was necessary that Jesus, the Pioneer of our salvation, be qualified to provide salvation by suffering to pay the price necessary.

"Perfect" - complete or adequate

Jesus could not be an adequate Savior if He hadn't become a man to suffer for man's sins.

"*Perfect*" = complete; to finish the full course.

God became man so that He might completely know human life & suffering by personal experience.

[NOTE: Knowledge is cognitive and experiential - Christ "learned obedience" (Heb. 5:8); that is, He learned by experience that which He had only known cognitively previously.]

Because Jesus experienced human life & suffering:

a. He is able to encourage those who are troubled (Heb. 2:17-18).

b. He is able to strengthen those who are tempted (Heb. 4:15-16).

V. 11

"All of one" = Both the Holy Lord Jesus Christ and saved saints are united to the same Heavenly Father.

--He as the *"only begotten Son"* (Jn. 3:16)

--We as adopted Sons (Ro. 8:15-16; I Jn. 3:1)

This unity and oneness as joint heirs gives Jesus Christ the opportunity to call us "brothers." Because we share the same Father [Jesus via His eternal relationship with the Father and we via our new birth experience], Jesus is not ashamed to call us ***"brother."***

He is not ashamed to call us brothers; are we ashamed to call Him Lord? (Wiersbe)

V. 12

"The Church" - the "called out ones" (both New Testament and Old Testament saints - *ekklesia* here refers to that future congregation which will be assembled in Heaven).

By citing Psalm 22:22 and Isaiah 8:17-18, the writer of Hebrews looks forward to the ultimate prophetic fulfillment of those texts, which we who are saved will realize in God's future Kingdom, as Christ stands in the midst of His *"brethren"* and praises God the Father for giving us to Him.

Jesus became a man to...
IV.Remove man's fear of death (imposed by Satan) (v.14-15)

V. 14a
"The Son of God became the Son of man, so that we, the sons of man, might become the sons of God."

Christ took upon Himself human flesh and blood so that He might die to free us from death.

V. 14-15
Satan was defeated at the cross in that he no longer can taunt us and provoke us to fear death because we know that Christ's death brings eternal life to us.

V. 15
We don't need to fear death. We don't need to dread what lies beyond the grave!

When you realize the love of God for you (as demonstrated at Calvary), you no longer have to live in torment, because God's love casts out all fear! (I Jn. 4:18).

Hezekiah feared death (Is. 38:10-12, 18); Stephen did not (Acts 7); Paul did not (Phil. 1:21 - *"to die is gain"*).

Do you know with 100% certainty where you will spend eternity?

EX: The Hymn: "Then Jesus Came"

Jesus became a man to...
V.Mediate between God & Man as "High Priest" (v.16-17)

V. 16

Jesus didn't just become a man; but He became a Jew, entering the human race through the line of Abraham.

V. 17

"It behooved Him" - It was absolutely necessary. For Christ to be a mediator as a High Priest and to make reconciliation, He had to become a man.

The <u>two</u> natures were absolutely necessary in order for Jesus to be a <u>Mediator</u> between God and men (I Tim. 2:5).

Job 9:32-33 - Job looked for a "<u>daysman</u>" (or arbitrator, who understands both god and man and can bring them together in harmony -- Ryrie Study Bible note).

Hebrews 4:14-16 - In order for Jesus to be our "<u>Great High Priest</u>" in heaven, He must be God and man.

Hebrews 7:24-26 - Christ is our intercessor as high priest. Being God and man, He can bridge the gap between the mortal and immortal, between the human and the divine.

I John 2:1 - Jesus can be our advocate (defense attorney summoned along side) because He is the God-man.

"Reconciliation" - Christ fully satisfied the just demands and wrath of God and has made peace between sinful man and a holy God.

The two natures were absolutely necessary in order for Jesus to be an adequate sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Jesus had to be God in order to be an infinite sacrifice - To satisfy the just demands of God (I Jn. 2:2 - "Propitiation . . . for the whole world"; cp. Rom. 3:25; Is. 53:11).

Jesus had to be man in order to be a suitable sacrifice - to die for men, He had to become man. Otherwise, His sacrifice would not have equaled the payment which men were required to pay.

Jesus became a man to...

VI.Encourage & Assist men through their temptations (v.18)

Angels cannot feel what we feel. They being pure spirit beings cannot identify with us in our weaknesses and needs. But Jesus can. (Wiersbe, p. 30)

How real was Christ's temptation?

Because of Christ's divine attribute of holiness (absolute separateness from all sin and impurity), sin was an impossibility.

If this is so, was the temptation legitimate (real)?

Yes, because it is possible to attempt the impossible.

Though Christ was not able to sin, His temptation was nonetheless real and awful.

[Important principle: "Only the sinless Individual can know the power of temptation in its full intensity, because only that individual endures until the temptation is broken. We who fall never know the full power of temptation, simply because we yield before we experience the full measure of the demonic onslaught. Christ knows all there is to know of Satan's power to tempt, simply because He withstood the full measure of such temptation." --Bookman, notes, p. 25]

"Succour" - to come to the aid of one in need, and to help. (SEE: Heb. 4:15)

HYMN: "There's Not a Friend Like the Lowly Jesus"