

# Assurance of Faith and the Founder of Salvation

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[ 0:00 ] Verse 10. Hebrews 2 at verse 10. For it was fitting that he, for whom and by all things exist,! bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

! And so on down through the following verses. Experts in education will remind us that if we get the order wrong as far as skill and knowledge is concerned, then that we reap what we sow and we end up with those who are badly informed and who are not equipped to work or to serve.

In other words, they will tell us that we must lay the emphasis on knowledge before we lay emphasis on skill, because knowledge is the basis for skill. And it seems as we read this letter that the writer understood that well, because here was a people struggling with their faith, struggling with the assurance of faith, and struggling with the opposition that they faced in the world.

And the writer well understood that the way to address that was to increase their knowledge of the Lord Jesus as their saviour, and having done so, to apply that to them and to give them a better understanding of how that not only changes their lives, but sets their lives in motion.

And we want to think about that as we look at these verses together this evening. The importance and the centrality of Jesus in our lives.

[ 1:43 ] And of course, we are Christians who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and who do follow him. But we do want to think of what that means in the light of what Jesus has done.

And as we do read through these verses, it seems there is a clear sense of the background of two things. First of all, there is the sense of the world to come in verse five.

It's important that we have that perspective, that there is a better world to come. And along that, as we shall see, there is underlying these verses also the mission of God.

And the Bible, of course, is about the mission of God. And from these verses this evening, we want to think of the assurance of faith and the founder of salvation, which we have in verse number 10.

I want to see, first of all, the mission of God and redemption. And when we read through these words in verse number five, six, down to verse number eight, and we come into the second half of verse number eight, the writer speaks about subjection.

[ 2:52 ] And that subjection is in the context of the verses that he quotes from Psalm number eight. And subjection is about subordination. It's about willingness to be under control of.

And particularly in this Psalm, it speaks of the way in which God created man in his own image and after his own likeness in order to have dominion over everything in the world, to subdue creation and have dominion over everything that moves.

And when we read back into Genesis chapter one, that's where we see the mission of God set out for Adam at the point of his creation. And we can summarize the mission of God given to Adam in two different ways.

First of all, he is to fill the creation of God with the image of God. His children, his offspring, are going to be the image of God. And secondly, he is going to spread the garden conditions to cover the whole of creation.

So the paradise that is confined to the garden of Eden is a paradise which will cover the whole of creation. That's the mission of God, simply put.

[ 4 : 06 ] And Adam is set out into this creation to begin that extension of the garden conditions and to fill the world with people who are in the image of God.

And the writer here says in Roshnabarat, we don't yet see everything in subjection to him. In other words, something has gone wrong.

Not that the mission of God has failed, but there has been a failure on the part of Adam who was going to fulfill that commission. And we know the story in Genesis 2 and Genesis 3, if ye to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall surely die.

And we read through the account in Genesis 3, and that's exactly what happened. Where are you, says God?

Have ye eaten of the tree that I told you not to eat of it? And the outcome is that Adam is sent out of the garden because of the way in which he has failed God and broken God's covenant.

[ 5 : 14 ] There is a great failure. And once we think of that, humanly speaking, there's such an impasse that there is no possibility of the mission of God ever now being accomplished.

That is until we begin to see that there is redemption. And that's what the writer here wants them to notice. We don't see everything yet in subjection to him, but we see him.

We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for a little while. We're going to understand the mission of God, with a focus on the passion of the Son of God, as the passion has come to work out a way of redemption, to rescue humankind from the way in which Adam has led us into death because of his sin, to rescue us from that.

But God prepares a way of redemption. And we see Jesus. He is the focus of our faith. He is the center of our salvation.

And here he is, for a little time, made lower than the angels. As I mentioned, he was born in the manger, the Son of God came into the world. He was brought up on his mother's breast.

[ 6 : 35 ] He is Jesus, made lower than the angels for a little while. for the great purpose of redemption. So that by the grace of God, he might taste death for everyone.

The movement of God's heart for the salvation of his own people and for the purpose of his own mission, that he sent his Son to taste death for, on behalf of, as a substitute for everyone.

And tasting in the sense of experiencing all that death meant. And in the work of redemption, to think of the death that he did taste.

And we can describe death in so many different ways as we are familiar with it. But unless the death that he tasted is the same death that Adam endured in the Garden of Eden when he was sent out of it, then there is no redemption.

So when I see Jesus on the cross dying for my sin, dying for the sins of the world, I need to be sure that my understanding of his death corresponds to the failure of Adam in the Garden of Eden.

[ 7 : 53 ] And when I capture that and see the death that I can see through the lens of the prophets and of all the experience of Moses and the children of Israel through these lenses, looking back to see the death that Adam endured, that here is Jesus abolishing death.

At the end of this chapter, that here is Jesus who through death destroy the one who has the power of death. He is our Redeemer.

And tonight, we need to continue to think more and more about what the death of Jesus meant. Our salvation depends upon it.

We remember the death of the Lord Jesus. His blood is the new covenant. But we remember that his death is at the center of the redeeming work of God because of the grand mission of God.

And the more my faith engages with that, and the more my faith begins to see the riches of these connections, then I begin to see the purpose of God for humankind.

[ 9 : 15 ] So that my salvation is not individualistic, which it is, and I may share, but that especially, it's part of the big thing that God is doing to rescue humankind.

So there is the mission of God and redemption. Jesus died for our sins. Secondly, there is the mission of God and realignment.

if something goes off track, something needs to take place in order to bring it back on track and bring it back on course. And so as surely as we see the death of Jesus redeeming us from the penalty of death and because of Adam's sin, then we see the resurrection of Jesus as the realignment of the mission of God, bringing it back firmly on course so that what he purposed to do in the Garden of Eden will be realized in the new heavens and in the new earth.

And in verse 9, the writer goes on to speak about the way in which he is crowned with glory and honor. Sit at my right hand. We read in Psalm 110.

God made that same Jesus you have crucified, Lord and Christ, in Acts chapter 2. He is crowned with glory and honor. And part of that glory is the glory that Adam was promised in the Garden of Eden.

[ 10 : 51 ] There is that experience of glory. There is that place of glory. He is crowned with personal glory and honor. But he enters into the place of glory.

glory. And that's where we see the realignment. Because we are reminded in this verse 10, it was fitting that he for whom and by whom all things exist in bringing many sons to glory.

Here is the realignment. Here is what Adam failed to do to bring the whole of humankind as posterity into the paradise of God to be confirmed in that place of commune with God.

Instead, Adam led us into the death and the darkness of separation from God. But here is this Jesus.

He is the founder of our salvation. That does mean he's the pioneer who goes first. that means he's the groundbreaker.

[ 12 : 02 ] Nobody has done this before. But being the founder also means that he is representing others and taking others with him.

Adam took us into death. Jesus, the son of God, leads us into the glory of God, bringing many sons to glory.

that's why he says in version number 13, behold, I and the children God has given me. What will Jesus say at the end when we're all gathered in glory with Jesus?

Behold me and the children that God has given to me. At the very beginning I mentioned the way in which the grace of God creates motion in the life of the Christian.

we're not static, we're not sitting in the same place going nowhere. The picture clearly is that since the day that Jesus rose and since the day we're united to him is that he is leading us on a triumphant journey through this world until at last triumphantly we enter into through the gates of glory and there to be forever more with Christ.

[13:24] The realignment they needed to be encouraged to think above what was happening around them to think above the persecution the suffering all that living the life of faith meant they need to think above that and not just above that but beyond that so they will see that this is what their journey really is him leading them triumphantly more than conquerors through him who loved them until at last he brings them into glory and surely tonight that's a huge encouragement for your faith and mine in our struggles perhaps today itself we all have our individual struggles our heads go down to think of motion that's bringing us closer to glory as perhaps the furthest thing in our minds but it is in these moments that the

Bible that God wants us to remember that as Moses took the children of Israel across the Red Sea and the people of God wondered at the majesty of God that we should never lose sight of the fact that we are on a similar journey but a far greater and significant journey to be with Christ in glory and tonight no matter where we are or what we're going through that's the journey that we're on we're on together we worship together we pray together we hear what God has to say to us together because we are on this journey to certain victory to be with Christ in glory the mission of God and the realignment God's purposes cannot fail and he puts everything in place to ensure that his mission will be firmly on track and will be realised and thirdly we want to think of the mission of God and the

Redeemer who is this passion Jesus what has he actually done what has he done for us what is he doing for us now the mission of God and the Redeemer and through these verses there's the clear picture that he's the perfect Redeemer we see going back to verse 10 it was fitting that he for whom and by whom all things exist the God whose mission it is it was suitable and appropriate for him to make the founder of our salvation perfect through suffering the plan fitted exactly what is required in order to keep the mission on track it was fitting God in his wisdom has the plan no other plan would have would have helped the situation no other plan would have rescued us it was fitting and suitable and right and appropriate in accordance with God's design for his design in his mission that the person of his son would be made perfect through suffering and perfection not in the sense that he had any imperfections but made perfect fully equipped to reach the intended goal as somebody who was called into the mission of God himself that he was fully equipped to complete the task through suffering and we read in chapter 5 that he learned obedience through what he suffered though he was a son he learned obedience and that learning process was discovering every step that he took what obedience meant until he looked into the cup in the garden of Gethsemane until he was crucified on Calvary's cross discovering is this what obedience means and the more he suffered the more he discovered yes this is what obedience means he was made perfect through suffering everything that he endured was absolutely necessary every step that he took in life suffering at the hands of others tempted by the devil working day by day as the perfect holy son of

God he was made perfect through suffering the mission of God and the perfect saviour but I want us to think as we close of the mission of God and the perfect priest because everything that is introduced in this chapter sets the writer off on a marvellous exposition of Christ Jesus as our great high priest in this in verse 17 here itself therefore 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 he was appointed as God's high priest and when we think of the high priest in his appointment in the Old Testament we see there is a service of consecration of setting apart and of anointing and we see that in Exodus chapter 29 and the late

Professor John L. Mackay who was a revered Old Testament lecturer in Free Church College in my own time helpfully explains what consecration means and it means at a simple level filling the hands of someone I ask somebody to go and do something and I don't equip them to do that thing they're not going to be able to do it I need to fill their hands with the things that enable them to complete that task and I want us to think of the mission of God and the Redeemer and the perfect high priest whose hands were filled by God so that he could complete the whole task and to think of that filling of the hands of the perfect high priest in four ways just to skim over and the first is the priest needs an offering and in chapter number 10 the writer putting the words as it were in the mouth of the

[ 20 : 41 ] Lord Jesus in verse 5 sacrifice and offerings you have not desired they have no value they can't do the work what does Jesus say a body you have prepared for me so when I see the son of God as Jesus in the manger taking our nature becoming one of us becoming like us as the writer says through these verses I think of God filling his hands with a body which he was going to sacrifice for our sins it's a body that he gave he gave himself he offered himself his hands were filled with a perfect sacrifice and he goes to Calvary's cross and he offers himself the perfect priest with a perfect sacrifice with which God filled his hands the second thing in the way in which

God filled his hands is that he gave him the help of his Holy Spirit and we read in chapter 9 verse number 14 how much will the blood of Jesus Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself Jesus could not offer himself without the support of God and as surely as God provided for the high priest in the tabernacle in the temple in the Old Testament so here he is giving his Holy Spirit to his son and that's why John says in John chapter 3 he did not save the Spirit without measure he was filled with the Spirit in order to give the obedience and in order to give strength to sacrifice himself filling of the hands body for sacrifice filling of the hands the Holy Spirit for strength thirdly filling of the hands with his own blood in the presence of

God and that symbolic way again in chapter number 9 he enters into the presence of God for us with his own blood in a symbolic way when Jesus appears before God to intercede for us he goes with his blood in his hands and we know that literally that's not what happens but in the symbolic language of this letter itself his hands are filled with his own blood and so when he intercedes for me and father I will that they whom you have given me be with me where I am keep them through your word that prayer of John 17 here is the basis on which it is prayed his hands are filled with his own blood his redeeming blood and on that basis he is the perfect priest who intercedes for us finally there is the filling of his hands with the spirit which he gives to us and that's what completes the realignment he promised to the disciples through

John 14 15 and 16 that he would send the helper the Holy Spirit and we read in Acts chapter 2 that he received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit in verse 33 and he has poured out this now which you see and hear that changes people that transformed that gathering at Pentecost that brought people to repentance and to forgiveness of sin that brought people to know the power of God in their own lives hearts the hands of Jesus were filled the moment that he sat on his throne so that he would send a spirit into the world and complete the realignment by changing your heart and changing mine but being about by reversing all of the ways in which sin has destroyed our relationship with God at the moment that the Spirit of God comes to dwell in our hearts all things are made new all things have passed away we are a new creation in

Christ and as those who are a new creation in Christ we are on our way to the new heavens and to the new earth he gives us of his spirit and as we close is that not what fills our own hands that God gives to you and to me his!

[ 25 : 28 ] Spirit to equip us to serve him we cannot do it without him but we can certainly do it because he has given us his spirit my grace he says Paul my grace is sufficient for you my power is made perfect in your weakness and don't let's ever consider that we can do nothing don't let's ever consider that we sit back and wait for something else to happen or somebody else to do it let's remember that he has filled our hearts so that we are equipped to serve him and that spirit is the spirit of obedience the spirit of holiness the spirit of love the spirit of sharing it is the spirit that enables us to do everything that God requires of us and let's rejoice that that is the outcome of all that Jesus did and let's rejoice that tonight we are part of that motion picture that takes us from here to the glory of God and that as surely as his hands are filled with the way in which he is equipped for the task that so are you and mine and why should we fear why should we fear the world temptation why should we fear our own sense of feeling and weakness why should we fear because God has given us the equipment he has given to us the power of his Holy Spirit may God bless these thoughts to us so we're now going to sing in Psalm number 132 in the Scottish Psalter on page 423 and we're singing