What was accomplished from the first easter

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[0:00] If you have your Bibles with you this evening, if you turn with me please to the book of Hebrews. Hebrews chapter 2.

Hebrews chapter 2, and we're going to begin reading it at verse 5, right through to the end of the chapter. For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere, what is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little while lower than the angels.
You have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet. Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside of his control.
At present we do not yet see everything in subjection to him, but we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus.
[1:09] Crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

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.
For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation.
I will sing your praise. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, behold, I and the children God has given me. Since therefore the children share in flesh and in 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, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
For surely it is not the angels that he helps, but that he helps the offspring of Abraham. 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, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
[2:41] For because he himself had suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. We know that God will bless the reading of his word. We'll come back to that just after we sing this next piece.

I hope you all enjoyed your Easter holidays. Whether you had an opportunity to catch up with friends and family, a chance maybe to get a few bits and pieces done about the house, or a time where you can just have chocolate for breakfast and not feel guilty about it, or it was maybe just me, or just an opportunity to catch your breath before embarking on a final stretch before the summer. Whether it was two weeks or just a couple of days, I hope that you all got a chance to rest and recharge the batteries. But what I want to do this evening, just before we completely leave Easter behind for another year, just before we get stuck right into the busyness of life, before we put those good old resurrection hymns away for another year, what I want to do this evening is have just one last look back at Easter.
When it's all said and done, what was actually accomplished that first Easter? What was achieved by Christ's death and his resurrection?
What exactly was finished when Christ declared it still on the cross? Now, of course, we know that through Jesus' death and his resurrection, we can know forgiveness of sins and assurance of eternity in heaven.
[4:20] And praise God that's true. But if that's all we see is the accomplishments of Christ's work, then I reckon we miss out on so much of what it means and what it took to bring about.

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This evening, I'm going to look at our passage in two sections. Verses 5 to 9, the author of the Hebrews explains why Jesus had to come to earth.
And in verses 10 to 18, he details the results of Christ's work. In order here to explain why Jesus had to come, the writer here quotes from Psalm 8.
Now, within its original context, the psalmist extols the glory of the created order and that by comparison, man is woefully insignificant.
These verses refer further back still to the original creation account of Genesis 1, where God gives man dominion over creation, a position which the psalmist celebrates in Psalm 8.
[5:26] There is a dignity in man's original purpose. In spite of the vastness of God's creation, man is treasured and is given a status that is just a little lower than that of the angels.

This stands in stark contrast to the origins of man that are widely taught and accepted today, that we are here by chance, and that there is nothing after or beyond this life.
The biblical creation account gives man a value, gives man a worth, and more than that, the knowledge of knowing that we are created in the image of the creator.
The writer in Hebrews says here in verse 8 that presently we are not able to see everything in subjection to man as we should, as it was originally intended.
Why? It's because man's ability to fulfill the God-given command to rule over creation has been restricted by his sin. His dominion has been limited.
[6:31] But in verse 9, the writer, however, takes the words from Psalm 8 and applies them directly to Christ as well as humanity as a whole.

He sees Jesus as the true embodiment of humanity. This link isn't that far-fetched given the use of the name Son of Man in verse 6 to refer to humanity, a term that was frequently used by Jesus to refer to himself.
For instance, in Matthew 8, Jesus says, foxes of holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. After all, Jesus would not have been able to rescue mankind had he not come in human form.
In response to questions asked over Christ's humanity, it was Athanasius of Alexandria who once said, what has not been assumed has not been redeemed. The author here sees Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of the failure of humanity to fulfill the God-given call to rule over creation and that through his life and through his death he might now be seated in heaven, crowned in honor, in glory and honor, which stands in contrast to being made a little lower than the angels.
The writer recognizes here that his death was the ultimate purpose of his incarnation. It's worth noting that in verse 9 it says that he might taste death for everyone.
[8:09] The writer here cannot mean that he died for every individual on earth as that would be contradictory to the teaching of scripture and elsewhere and indeed contrary to the other verses within this letter.

For instance, 9 verse 15 says, therefore he, that's Jesus, is the mediator of a new covenant so that those who are called may receive the promise eternal inheritance since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.
Hereby implying that it is only those who are called received this promised inheritance. So what does the writer mean when he says the term everyone? At this point it's worth reminding or informing ourselves that this letter was primarily written to Jews and therefore the writer here is stressing that Jesus died for the Gentiles as well as the Jews.
Having set the background as to why Jesus had to come to earth, verses 10 to 18 give us three titles given to Christ that help us understand what exactly was achieved at Calvary.
Firstly, verse 10 tells us that Christ is the founder or the originator of our salvation. It says, 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.
[9:43] The author here points out that Jesus was with the Father in eternity past, was involved in creation and is involved in sustaining that creation.

John begins his gospel by saying, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him and without him not anything that was made was made.
In him was life and the life was the light of man. It's worth noting in passing that the phrase should make perfect through suffering doesn't mean that Jesus was imperfect before his sufferings and

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therefore perfected by suffering but rather that he would have been ineffective as a Savior without suffering.
The word perfect here gives the idea of completeness. In fact, in chapter 7 the writer says develops this further by saying that the Son is made perfect forever following his exaltation.
The term founder here gives the idea of one who cuts a path a file leader and when I was young I attended the Boys Brigade and as part of the program there was the drill.
[11:03] This involved us all lining up in order of height tallest to their right and making a right turn and following the tallest boy as he in turn followed the orders of the officer around the hall.

We marched in all kinds of shapes and formations across the floor but it was that lead boy who set the course. He set the pace. He set the footing for the rest of us to follow.
And this is how I see what Jesus has done. He is the lead boy as it were who is cutting a path for the rest of us to follow. So where is it that Jesus is leading us?
What path is he cutting that we have to follow? I heard it once described a bit like a parabola. There's a bit of a flashback to high school math you maybe weren't expecting this evening but Jesus left the splendor of paradise the glories of heaven where he enjoyed a perfect union with the father and he came down took on a human frame and entered into our time and space.
He was born as a baby he lived as a man and he died on a cross and he rose again and ascended to heaven and he is now reunited with the father in heaven seated at his right hand and it is this path that we are to follow.
[12:26] Yes that encapsulates that we are to endeavor to follow his example while we are here on earth but ultimately he has cut a path that leads upwards to glory and that we that are in him have the assurance that we will one day follow.

So firstly Jesus is our leader our captain of the faith. Secondly the passage tells us that he has become our brother. Verse 11 says for he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source that is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers.
Whether one source is the common descent to the Jewish recipients to Abraham or more likely the common descent for all mankind back to Adam he is not ashamed to call those who are sanctified brothers.
Chapter 13 12 tells us this sanctification comes only through the blood of Christ. But what does it mean for us that Christ calls us brothers?
Well in times when he feels distant when perhaps we are the only Christian in our family or our workplace when we wish Christ's presence was more tangible wondering where Jesus is in the daily grind of life.
[13:47] However this is rooted in a wrong thinking of Jesus. Thinking that we are too small that we are too insignificant that we are below him. And on the other hand our right thinking of Christ's presence with us is based on two factors.

Because of who he is and because of where he is. Well who is it? We've already chatted about that that he is the son of God. He is the creator and we are the creatures.
He is the redeemer and we are the redeemed. He is the leader and we are the followers. And while it is vital that we remain that we maintain these distinctions scripture and indeed Hebrews teaches us that it doesn't mean that he is inaccessible.
In fact as we have already seen he left heaven to take on human form. That the son of God would leave the splendor of heaven and involve himself in the struggles of this world demonstrates to us that he is not distant.
But in fact rather that he wants to be known by us. It's worth noting that the verse says that he is not ashamed to call us brothers. And while our sins have driven a wedge between us and God we have rebelled against our creator.
[15:06] We have failed in that God given responsibility to rule over creation. There would have been every reason for Christ to have been ashamed of us. Never mind to call us brothers.

So that's who he is. Secondly where is he? It's easy to read the gospels and conclude that it's easy for the people then to feel his presence as he was physically there.
But now he's ascended to heaven. Why would he take an interest in me? There are a couple of threads that run through this passage that help us answer this. Firstly as mentioned earlier that Jesus is now perfected through his suffering.

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And it is only now that he is fully equipped to help. The last verse that we read verse 18 says he himself has suffered when tempted. He is able to help those who are being tempted.
He is able to identify with us in our suffering and in our loneliness because he himself experienced the same human emotions. The second thread is his presence now.
[16:16] The writer's quote is taken from Psalm 22 in verse 12. It places Jesus right in the center of the congregation and this is what happened right now and indeed every time that Christians come together to worship.

Jesus' ascension to heaven signaled the arrival of the Holy Spirit given to manifest Jesus' presence and that a physical distance doesn't mean a relational distance.
John 14 tells us Jesus is speaking and he says and I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him or knows him.
You know him for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans I will come to you. It has been said that Jesus did not ascend because he was ashamed to represent us on earth but rather he wasn't ashamed to represent us in heaven.
So what does it mean to be brothers with Jesus? it means it means that we can approach him so much so much more now because of his sufferings it means that we should expect him as he's not ashamed and it means that we are to assume his presence whenever we come together to worship and because Christ is not ashamed to call us brothers it then follows that we can now call God our Father.
[17:52] the quote here used from Isaiah 8 and the words from verse 14 make this jump that because Jesus calls us brothers we are also the children of God.

Paul in Romans 8 tells us that you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry Abba Father the spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children then heirs heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ provided we suffer with him in order that we may be glorified with him.
We have now been adopted into the family of God Ephesians 2 tells us that we were once sons of disobedience enslaved by sin and now though through Christ we have been made children of God and therefore we share in his inheritance removing our sin and crediting us with his righteousness and though we suffer now one day we will share in his glorification I think it was Douglas Kelly who once said that in the gospel we learn that the son of God became the son of man so that the sons of men might become the sons of God verse 14 reiterates the point we've seen made back in verse 9 that the goal of the incarnation was his death and resurrection resurrection that he became flesh and blood so that he might die and there are two results of this death firstly that he might destroy death and secondly deliver those who fear who the fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery it's important to point out that the the writer here says that death is destroyed he doesn't mean obliterated nor when he writes that we are delivered from the fear of death that does mean that we are free from the hurt and the pain that death causes as it continues to be a reality which humanity must reckon but rather
Jesus through his death has defeated sin and death and as the hymn writer put it he breaks the power of cancelled sin he sets the prisoner free it's also important to remember what the writer said back in verse 5 that he is speaking of a world to come and within that context Jesus' death and resurrection will see the destruction of the one who has the power of death as Paul writes in 1st Corinthians it is written death is swallowed up in victory oh death where is your victory oh death where is your sting the sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law but thanks be to God who gives the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ Christ's death hasn't removed the presence of death and Satan from this life but it doesn't mean that if we're in him we don't have to fear but we know that death isn't the end so Jesus is firstly the founder of our salvation secondly he is our brother and thirdly verse 17 tells us that he is also our high priest the image of Jesus as a high priest is a key one throughout the book chapter 5 tells us that the role of the high priest was chosen among men to is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins the high priest is a human representative before God this is a role that Jesus now fulfills in heaven for us and while the priests had to continually offer sacrifices for the sins of the people
Jesus' sacrifice was a once for all as it tore the curtain of the inner presence of God meaning that we are free to approach God's throne in prayer and therefore bringing reconciliation to a broken relationship between God and man and now through his suffering Christ has been perfected he is

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now the final and perfect human mediator between a sinful man and holy God but his role as our high priest not only does he act as a mediator between us and God the verse goes on to tell us that he also makes propitiation for our sins this term communicates the idea of a turning away of God's wrath a wrath that is directed towards us for violating God's law and diverting that wrath upon himself so as we take a look back to Easter to the death and the resurrection of Christ we see that it was there that he became the founder of our salvation there that he became our brother and there that he became our great high priest we now have a freedom in Christ no longer enslaved by sin but rather we are children of God he rids us of our disappointments of the past failures and and our fears for the future the good news of the gospel creates an equality not just for the original readers for the letter but for us now too like now like now the world then was divided politically religiously and ethically the equality of God of the gospel sorry is not an equality of slavery but that of joint heirs women can have the full inheritance of sons of God the poor can also enjoy the riches of this inheritance minorities can become citizens of a heavenly kingdom slaves can be full members of the family of God it is a message that empowers the disempowered close just by quoting a few verses of a song that sums it up come behold the wondrous mystery
[24:04] Christ the Lord upon the tree in the stead of ruined sinners hangs the Lamb in victory see the price of our redemption see the Father's plan unfold bringing many sons to glory grace unmeasured love untold come behold the wondrous mystery slain by death the God of life no grave could ever restrain him praise the Lord he is alive what a fortieth of deliverance how unwavering our hope Christ in power resurrected as we will be when he comes Amen He■■ for■ Hislehem54 Join the Eltern about the years to meet sinners Moore

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