

Heb 2:14-15 (NIV)

¹⁴Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--

¹⁵and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

(optional—

“Hostages,” a poem by Alma Barkman of Winnipeg, Manitoba:

Hostages
in the hands
of an evil captor
yearn for freedom.
At the appointed hour
a loving Father
leaves the ransom:
a bundle
wrapped in swaddling clothes
lying in a manger.)

58-02-01-The Battleground of the Incarnation
atonement, incarnation, Satan, bondage, fear, Advent

Heb.2:14-15

Jesus took on human life to defeat the power of human death.

INTRODUCTION: (Scripture Reading: **Rev 5:5-10**)

–“*Mary had a little Lamb... named Jesus, the King of kings.*” God’s Son became our human King by defeating human bondage to fear and death. **Heb 2:14-15** aptly summarizes this: “*Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*” Summarizing it more succinctly: **HOM.idea.** Let’s look at Jesus our human King...

I. The King Who Came to Die– v14a. *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death...*

- A. “**Cur Deus Homo** [Why God-man]?”— an ancient question answered prophetically by **Gen 3:15**, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” (This verse was only understood after fulfillment, when God had personally gotten involved in our redemption.)
- B. *Human mortality came from moral bankruptcy*—sin created a debt we couldn’t live with: we pay off the debt at the cost of our lives!
1. *THAT IS*, unless a next of kin pays the debt for us [just as the kinsman redeemer of the OT would step in a pay off a relative’s debt.]
 2. That’s cur Deus homo [why God became man] (Jesus is our “friend... closer than a brother,” for “*Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity*” so He could become a *kinsman redeemer!*)
- C. Christ’s *incarnational embodiment* is the basis for our salvation.
1. But there’s skepticism about the idea that God became man.
 - a. Skeptics say, “*Absurd!*” [**It came upon a midnight in the ER**, when a lab tech, after a car crash, had to be cleared for Xrays by a urine pregnancy test. She said, “*If that comes back positive, a Star will be rising in the East.*” It was negative, but 3 of us *prankster-nurses*, arm-in-arm, came to her waving a yellow lab slip, singing, “*We Three Kings of Orient Are.*” Her joke and ours only worked because of the incredibility of the Xmas story.]
 - b. *Virgin birth seems impossible*, but it was the miracle our hearts longed for– Mat 1:23, “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “**God with us.**”

(On our own, we can't get to God, so He came to be "with us.")

2. Satan also hated the idea of God becoming man, because of what it allowed the incarnate Christ to do—He bit into death and took the bite out of it—Heb.2:9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

TRANS: The King Who came to die had to become human so that He could enter the domain of human death, because He was...

II. The King Who Came to Conquer— v.14b, so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil

A. "Mary had a little Lamb...who was the Lion of the tribe of Judah?"

Jesus is the real Lion King!— Rev. 5:5-7. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne. [In the Narnia stories, the Witch thinks she defeated the *Lion Aslan* when he gave his life for a boy who broke a law of the deep magic, but Aslan knew the law of the deeper magic: if someone innocent dies for a traitor, it would undo death.]

B. That's like the mystery by which Christ defeated Satan....

1. First, there was the history of humanity's loss:
 - a. In the beginning, we had dominion— Gen1:26. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, **over all the earth**, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."
 - b. In our Fall, we lost dominion to Satan (called "the prince of this world" by Jesus)— Luke 4:5-6. The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to." (Jesus knew it was true.)
 - c. The cause of our loss enslaved us— John 8:34. Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.)
2. But then came the mystery of the Incarnation— 1 Tim 3:16 (NKJV). And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifested in the flesh**, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.
 - a. That was God's liberation plan— 1 John 3:8, He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.
 - b. But it included a secret strategy-- 1 Cor 2:7-8. No, we speak of

God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

- c. By this "secret wisdom," Christ led "captivity captive" (Eph 4:8) and made a major transfer of human assets— Col.1:13-14. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

TRANS: Jesus took on human life to defeat the power of human death by His *Cross and Resurrection*, because He was...

III. The King Who Came to Rule— v.15, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

A. Christ the King's rule frees us from the fear of **losing life**:

1. The big one: losing physical life [Capital punishment is universal!]
2. The little ones: losing our time [through tiny *parcels of death* that come by poor health; thefts (*time is money is possessions*); waiting in lines!]
3. His rule undermines a fear of loss— Mat 16:25. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

B. Christ the King's rule frees us from having to **do our own thing— 2 Cor 5:15a. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.**

C. Christ the King's rule brings freedom **forever!**— Rev 1:18. "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades." (When Christ sits on the throne of our lives, fear is turned to faith, terror is forever replaced with triumph!)

CONCLUSION:

—[Julius Caesar said, "*Veni, vidi, vici!*" (I came, I saw, I conquered) but only about his temporary victories]. But **Jesus came as one of us; He saw the human condition's** "fear of death"; and **He conquered by defeating death!**
 —Satan has legal rights, if we keep doing our own thing! Jesus thwarted Satan's will, but not ours. (He grabbed "the keys of death and Hell" from Satan's hand, but *He won't force us to hand over the key to our hearts.*)
 —The Incarnation was a battleground: Jesus took on human life to defeat the power of human death, and yielding to the King's rule in our lives gives us the same victory.
 —"Mary had a little Lamb, Who came to die for us, to defeat our worst enemy, and to be our King. Let's let Him reign in our hearts today!"