

We are on a journey through the Bible and today, we're in the book of Hebrews, and we are looking at chapter 2 in particular. So if you have your Bibles, please turn with me to Hebrews and chapter 2. The book of Hebrews is about Jesus. That's why we call this journey "Greater", because we are looking at the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Remember in chapter 1, we said that Jesus is greater than the angels, and that is why we need to listen to him. That's why we need to take heed and not neglect the salvation in Jesus. He is greater than the angels. Now, some of you might think, "How can Jesus be greater than the angels, because after all, he is man? Now, of course as God, he's greater than angels, but he also is man. So how can Jesus the man, be greater than the angels?" If you have asked that question, the author here today seeks to answer it, and his answer in a nutshell is very simple. It is simply this: Jesus is greater than the angels as man, because man is greater than the angels. The logic is very simple. Man is greater than the angels. You say, "How can this be true! I thought man will die, but angels don't! Angels are spiritual beings, we are such physically-bound beings. Surely angels are greater than man." No, the author says. Man is greater than the angels, and he's going to prove that again with the same method. He's going to prove that with the Bible. He turns us to the Psalm 8, or to the book of Psalms and Chapter 8, and in this Psalm, he's going to show us from the Scriptures, man is greater than the angels, therefore, Jesus is greater than the angels.

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 for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned him with glory and honor,
putting everything in subjection under his feet."

(Hebrews 2:5-8 ESV)

Look at these words, "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 for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet." Now this is a quotation from Psalm 8. Some things are not immediately obvious to you, you may ask yourself what is this talking about. Some things, however, are clearer. Let me start with what is clear. It is clear here that God is talking about the greatness of men in his economy, in his creation. God made man to be glorious. He says that the world to come, the future world that

is to come, is not subject to the angels, but subjected to who? Well, subjected to man. He goes on to say that man was crowned with glory and honor, and man was created to rule over everything, so that all things will be in subjection under his feet. So in a nutshell, the author is going to prove that man is greater than angels. Therefore, Jesus is greater than the angels, Jesus is the great Saviour, hear ye him. That's the idea, but today let's look at this story. This story about man's glory. Now, this is an absolutely interesting and fascinating passage for me as I looked at it. I mean, I was thrilled. Just look at man's story of glory, your story, my story, our story as humanity, that we are made for glory, you are made for a capacity for glory. You've a hunger for glory, and this story of man comes in three parts. It's a trilogy, like the Lord of the Rings. It's a three-part story, and let me start right off with part one. Part one is a beautiful start. Part one tells us that we had it all. The story of glory for man begins with this. Man had it all, we had glory, we had honour, we had dominion. This is what he says, "Putting everything in subjection under his feet, God made man to rule." This is not spoken only by the author of Hebrews. It's referred to by Moses in Genesis 1.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

(Genesis 1:26 ESV)

God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Now this is unique to men. No other creature has this same characteristic, that we are made after God's image, and not only that, we are to have dominion over all the creatures- birds, animals, sea creatures creeping things. We are to exercise dominion. We have dominion.

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You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

(Psalm 8:6-8 ESV)

That's why David, in Psalm 8, he also echoes that thought. "You have given him dominion over the works of your hands, over every creature." So man is made

crowned with glory and honour. All things in subjection to him, and we had it all. But part two of this story tells us things did not last very long that way. When Adam and Eve had all the world, all the fruits, all the animals to rule, they blew it very, very quickly because they felt that it was not enough that they should have this material world. They listened to the devil and said that we should be like God, we want to be like God. So they took of that forbidden fruit. And so, it was a dramatic fall from grace when they had it all, they lost it all. They lost it all because we are told, not everything now is under man. It's true that we today, don't rule over everything. We are scared of the lion, we are fearful of the tiger, we won't swim in the river infested with crocodiles, we can't say to the birds come down, and they come down. There is no real dominion today. Man has lost it all. When Adam and Eve took of the fruit, the world, the earth today is cursed, and we see that the ground is cursed, man's work is cursed. Now there is a lot of frustration, there is a lot of futility. There is no real efficiency in all that we do, why? Because we have lost it all. And to make things worse, man was made not to die, now dies. Angels don't die, but we do, we are mortal, because God said, "In the day you eat of it you shall surely die." And so, we are now made a little while lower than the angels. Angels don't die, I'm going to show a verse that proves that. But we do. We've lost it all.

GK Chesterton, he says, "Whatever else is, or is not true, this one thing is certain. Man is not what he was meant to be. Instead of having the mastery, he is mastered. Instead of ruling, he is enslaved. Instead of being characterized by strength, he is characterized by great weakness. Instead of being characterized by glory, he is characterized by shame." We've lost it, if you really think about it, and FB Meyer, he puts it even more graphically. "We see not yet all things subjected to him. His crown is rolled in the dust, his honor is tarnished and stained. His sovereignty is strongly disputed by the lower orders of creation. If trees nourish him, it is after strenuous care, and they often disappoint." I'm sure durians in those days will be much better and easier. "If the earth supplies him with food, it is in tardy response to exhausting toil." So much frustration to get just that little bit. "If the beasts serve him, it is because they've been laboriously tamed and trained in a circus, or in a zoo. Whilst vast numbers of animals roam the forest glades, setting him at defiance. If he catch the fish of the sea, or the bird of the air, he must wait long in cunning concealment." They are not subjected to men in every way. "So degraded man has become that instead of dominating, or ruling, he bows before the objects he is to command." He prostrated his royal form, because we're made in glory and honour, remember, and we "prostrate ourselves in shrines dedicated to birds, and beasts, and creeping things." Think about major religions today, and how man bows before animals, and you know how far we have fallen. We were supposed to rule it, but now we worship it. Man had it all but he quickly lost it all. "Now sin hath reigned, as the apostle says

most truly, and all who bow their necks beneath its yoke are slaves and menials and cowering subjects in comparison with what God made and meant them to be."

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How far we have fallen, how we struggle today with death, and decay, and futility, and brokenness, and stress. How we struggle today to make sense of life. How we struggle today to just make ends meet. It was never meant to be like this. We were supposed to rule with glory and honour, but we have lost it all because we have disobeyed God and strayed from him. Now, the kingdom of this world is lost. Who now takes over the rule of this kingdom? Who now rules this world? If man has lost it, who is it given to now, or who has wrestled it from man? Well, the Bible tells us there is this god of this world. Just in case you think this is Jehovah God, it's not Jehovah God. This god of this world is referring to Satan, the devil in 2 Corinthians 4:4.

.. the god of this world has blinded the minds..

(2 Cor 4:4 ESV)

Satan is called the god of this world, and he blinds man today. He doesn't want us to see that we're destined for glory, and that glory is found in God, so he blinds us. He wants to continue to rule and have glory and have dominion in this world. Satan is also called the Prince of the power of the air, and the Bible also tells us that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. So what the serpent did on that day when Adam and Eve met with him, was that he successfully usurped the throne by tempting man to sin. Man lost it all and Satan grabbed it all. This is the story of glory for men, we are now slaves to the devil. We are now slaves to sin, the Bible tells us. Man thought that his freedom is found in taking the forbidden fruit, not knowing that when he does this, he is now a slave to the devil. We walk according to the Prince of the power of the air. We are like puppets, he's the puppeteer, and we are controlled by invisible spiritual cords and strings that we were never aware of. He has blinded us. So we had it all, glorious start, and what a tragic result of that all when we sinned against God. We lost it all. But the story of glory is going to make a major upturn, because the Bible tells us that we are going to get it all. This is the great news of the Bible. This is what the good news, this is what the Gospel is about. The Gospel is going to restore to man, all that man was meant to have. You see, this is hinted and definitely told of in Hebrews 2.

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 for 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 his control.
At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.
(Hebrews 2:5-8 ESV)

Notice that God says that there will be a world to come, and this world to come, is not going to be ruled by angels. It's going to be ruled by men. This word "world" is an interesting word. There are several Greek words for "world", I'm sure you have already heard it from this pulpit. Number one is the word "Aeon", which means "ages", we looked at that in chapter 1. Then there's the word "Cosmos", which refers maybe to the system of thought and philosophy. And then there is this word here in the Greek that refers to the inhabited earth. So the author is very specific to say that there will be a future world inhabited by people, and we will rule. That's the idea. There will be a kingdom, and there'll be rulers, and it will be restored to men. Now, we are lower than the angels, but notice it is for a little while. We had it all, we lost it all, and it is for a little while. Now this "little while" has lasted for 6000 over years. I know, doesn't sound so "little while", but remember, a thousand years is a day with the Lord. And if you compare it with eternity, surely, 6000 is a little while. So for a moment, for this season, after man has plunged into sin and lost it all, we are now mortal, we die, we're a little lower than the angels. But it therefore tells you that there will be a coming day you are no more going to be lower than the angels. And then, lastly of course, at present, we do not yet see, meaning, there will come a day, we will see everything under man's feet.

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So, the Bible therefore tells us that there is this kingdom motif in the Gospel. The Gospel can be seen in so many different angles isn't it? About redemption, about how we're set free from the slavery of sin, how we are justified, these are great angles, or lines, or themes in the Bible, but is a great theme in the Bible called the kingdom motif that starts from Genesis all the way to Revelation. There's this kingdom battle going on. Satan has robbed man and robbed God of this kingdom, but there will be a day, man under the dominion and rule of God, will be restored to reign on earth. This is what the Gospel is about. And, on that day when God comes again to restore this world, those who are the sons of God, those who are the children, those who are believers and followers of Jesus Christ cannot die anymore, and you will be equal to angels. So angels don't die, and God's people will also not die. So the curse of death is reversed and removed in that coming day. Now, not only are you going to be equal to

angels in that you don't die, you're going to be superior to angels, and I think it is clear, in 1 Corinthians 6 where the Bible says we are to judge angels.

Do you not know that we are to judge angels?

How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!

(1 Corinthians 6:3 ESV)

Wow. This is the story of glory. That we will judge angels. We will be restored to have all things subjected to us, even the angels will serve. This is what Scripture teaches about this trilogy. You say, "Why is it that we can be restored to such a glorious state? Is it because man has achieved something? Is it because we would do something fantastic for God?" No. The only reason why we would have it all again, or we will get it all again is not because we worked for it, but because we're given it. We're given it by Jesus Christ. The only reason we will get it all is because Jesus paid it all, and now, he gives it all. This is the amazing grace of the good news of the Bible. Jesus paid it all, and he is going to give it all to those who will be his brothers. The Bible says in verse 9, we see him for a little while was made lower than the angels. Jesus was made man, and as man, a little while, in that he would die, lower than the angels, namely Jesus. But there will come a day, he will be crowned with glory and honour, and he was, in a sense, when he resurrected from the dead, and he was handsomely, in a sense, appropriately crowned because of the suffering of death. He died for his people. How did Jesus give it back to men? How could he do so? He did so because he died, he paid the curse of sin. He paid the full price that our disobedience demands, and with this payment, he could restore to man. And so the Bible tells us, it is by the grace of God, he tasted death for everyone. All those who would believe in him. So this is the beautiful story of the Bible- our first Adam, because of disobedience lost it all. The last Adam, Jesus Christ, because of his perfect obedience, got it back all and now he gives it all to you and to me. He will bring many sons to glory. You see, this is the motif of the Bible. This is the angle of the Gospel we are looking here. Man lost that glory, but Jesus will bring us back to glory. God has set his love upon his people in such a way that even when we blew it, he is going to restore us again. What amazing grace. He is our greater God, and this is accomplished when he casts out the ruler of this world. Who? Satan. So Jesus will come, and he will perform that judgment when this usurper, this deceiver, will be cast out into the eternal flames of hell, and the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

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It's crystal-clear when you look at the Bible. Now, let me say, I don't want you to miss the whole drift of the author because I think it's very important for us to be loyal to the intent of what God has in the Bible. The book of Hebrews has been talking about

how Jesus is greater. He is greater than the angels, and if you think that he cannot be greater than the angels because of his humanity, think again, because God's original intent for man is that he will be greater than the angels. So no difficulty there, not hard to grasp, because that's the destiny, creation, and the economy of God for man. But let me apply this as we close, to you, because it's one thing to know about this story, and it's another thing for us to have applications from this beautiful story of glory. There are three things I want to share with you, three simple applications. Number one, for me as I read this passage and I study it, I realize this is a story of hope, because this is a world that is very hopeless. Many of you seem to be going through very hopeless situations, maybe in your family, maybe in your health, maybe with your children, and the Bible is not a naive book that says, "there is no suffering for the Christian." The Bible is not a silly little thing that says, "Oh everything will be nice and easy when you follow Jesus in this world." No, the Bible is absolutely real from cover to cover it's full of pain and sorrow, and blood and tears. That's what the Bible is all about- sufferings. In fact, if you believe in Jesus, there will be plenty of sufferings, more than those who do not belong to Jesus. But whilst the Bible is full of sufferings, it doesn't minimize that. The Bible is also full of hope. The Bible points us to a future glory. That's why there's this phrase "present sufferings, future glory". The health and wealth preachers tell you today, "No present sufferings, everything is nice, you will be very rich. You will be very healthy. You will never go through pain." But no, the Bible says, you will, but you can endure. You can press on. You can persist. And yes, you can even rejoice, because the story has not ended in this world. We had it all, we lost it all, and we're going through that phase right now, but one day, we will have it all. So keep your eyes on me, keep your eyes on the future, keep your eyes on the Lord.

Remember that statement I shared with you anonymously quoted? "Everything will be okay in the end, and if it's not okay, then it's not the end." It's true, it's not the end. All your stresses, all your pains, all your difficulties, this is not your future. All your bondage, all your slavery, all your difficulties. This is not your future. This is not your eternity. If you believe in Jesus, if you are a follower of Christ, he, the author of salvation, will bring us to glory. He is the captain of our salvation. Our hope is in the Lord. We've lost it all, but we will get it all. No more pain, no more suffering. No more frustrations, no more futility, no more brokenness, but that you will reign. You'll be truly free in God, all things will be subjected to you, you will be crowned with honour and glory once again. That longing, that craving, that void in your soul will be met fully when God restores all things, and that's why, when we pray, we pray "Thy kingdom come." It's a kingdom prayer, you realize that? "Your kingdom come." Why? Because we're longing for the future glory that is to come. The saints of old have survived and gone through trials and tribulations, not because they simply

numb themselves to pain, but that they realized they're looking for a greater heavenly city that is to come, the glory that is to come. My friends, if you today are going through pains, and doctors can't help you, friends can't help you, and it seems that you have no hope, I tell you, there is a hope that is coming, that you won't even fathom to the tiniest fraction.

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It's a glory that is all surpassing, and my friends, you don't deserve it. You don't have to deserve it because you can never deserve it, but Jesus, out of his grace, God out of his grace wants to bestow it. And you'll be heirs and co-heirs with him. What an amazing salvation and story this is, isn't it? Our hope is in the Lord, who gave himself for me. The Bible tells us about this story of hope. And the Bible, I believe, in this story of glory, is also a story of happiness. Where can I get real happiness? This morning as I came to church, I was in the lift, I wonder if you have noticed it, there was this advertisement for some of their meals or their restaurant products, and it says "Money can't buy you happiness, but money can buy you sweets," and so they have a picture of a cake there, "and the two are the same." So he's saying, sweets equal happiness, and if you can't buy happiness, at least you can buy sweets and it will give you happiness. I sure think it is a very alluring thought, especially for ladies who love desserts. But I thought that is not true. Well, it can give you momentary, temporary happiness, but the lasting, supreme happiness is never apart from God. This story of glory is a story of happiness. Why? Because when man is with God, he is supremely happy. When man disobeyed God and plunged into sin, he is extremely unhappy. But there will come a day we will get it all and we will be really happy, because we will be with God. You see, real happiness is found in God. CS Lewis, he says, "Human history is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy." It's not just about your life. It's about human history from beginning of time, to now, since Adam and Eve said, "I will not be happy with this world. I want the forbidden fruit." Since that time, man has always sought happiness apart from God, and it is a long, terrible story. Absolutely frustrating and futile search. So often we say to ourselves, "My happiness is when I get my BMW. My happiness is when I have that seafront condominium. My happiness is when I hit the seven digit in my bank account, or the eight digit in my bank account." and it's a terrible history, if you think about it, because it never satisfies.

True freedom, true joy, true happiness is only found in God. That's what the story of glory is telling us. And I pray we will learn the history of man in this way. Augustine, he says, "God is the master, whom to serve is perfect freedom." Adam and Eve believed serving themselves is the path to perfect freedom. No, they've strayed from what true freedom is. There's this cartoon, Thomas the Train, and this episode which

shows Thomas falling out of the train tracks, lying on its side and Thomas is on his side shouting, "I am free, I'm free!" Can you imagine Thomas out of the train tracks saying, "I am free!" Maybe you will say to him, "You are a joke, you are stuck, you are not free!" Thomas was never meant to live outside of the tracks. Man is never meant to live apart from God. Man likes to say, "I want to get out of the tracks, I want to get away from God, I will be free!" But he doesn't realize he is now stuck, enslaved and in bondage to Satan and sin. Real happiness is not found apart from God. Satan wants you to think extramarital sex is free, premarital sex is joy.

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Satan wants you to think that chasing the things of this world will give you lasting happiness, "be free, why do you want to obey the Bible? The Bible is so restrictive, the Bible is so stick in the mud, the Bible is so irrelevant, forget it! This forbidden fruit, this lady, this money, this status is sweet!" Take a bite and you will ruin yourself. Take a bite, and you fall off the train tracks of your life. Take a bite and you'll shout, "I am free," but you soon realize, "I'm stuck." Human history is all about this story. Real happiness, folks, is found in God. Lastly, I say, this story of glory is not just a story of hope and happiness. This is a story about the very heart of God, you see that? The very heart of God. Those words ring in my mind when David says, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? That you would care for him." I can imagine David as a young shepherd boy lying in the fields in the middle of the night with the sheep. He looks up into the sky, sees the stars, the beautiful celestial bodies, and he thinks to himself, "How small I am. How small we are. How great you are, God. How majestic is thy name!" And that is the Psalm that we see these verses from. "How great are you, God, and yet you're mindful of us. And yet you set me over my sheep, over the animals of the field, over the birds of the air. Lord, how amazing this is. How much you love us. How much you love man." Now if David was stunned and amazed by God's establishing of men to be rulers, surely, we would be even more amazed when we realize that when man has lost that glory, God will give it back to us. We treacherously dealt with God, but God graciously returns it to us, and not without a heavy price, not without the death of His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the heart of God, friends. This story tells you how much God loves you. He didn't do this for the angels. He didn't do this for the gorillas. He did this only for man. He has set his love upon you. Would you today, turn back to your God, or will you spurn his love?

Maybe some of us today, you're new with us, first time here, there this story about this wasteful son, this prodigal son, who didn't want to be with the father. He just says, "Get lost. Give me all my goods, I want to live apart from you. Freedom is running far away from my father." And so he went. He wasted his life, he lived amongst pigs, absolutely shamed, absolutely down in the dumps. And then he

realized, he has been wrong. All that he ever wanted was already in his father's house, true freedom is not apart from the father, but in the father, and he thought to himself, I've really blown it. Maybe today you are someone like that you. You've thought that freedom and joy is found in everything apart from God. But really, it's all in God. The beautiful thing about that story is that the son mustered up enough strength to turn, to stop running from his father. He turned, and the Bible tells us the father, looking out of the windows of mercy, saw his son turn, and instead of waiting for the son to crawl back home, the father picked up his skirts, rolled up his skirts, and ran to the son, embraced him, and says, "Welcome home, my son." Maybe you feel today you are not worthy of God. I've blown it. I've sinned against God and he will never receive me again. No, your father looks out of the windows every day waiting for you to turn. And if you will, he comes, and he embraces you, because this is the heart of our father. My friends, this is where you belong. This is where home is. Home is not sin, home is not "my" freedom, home is found in God's heart, and if you'll return to God, he embraces you. This is where you should come to. My friends, let Jesus bring you home today. Let's bow for a word of prayer together. What amazes me about this story of glory is that God would love us so. I mean, there is absolutely no reason why he should love us so. We were absolutely unlovely. We rebelled against him. But the father has towards you. If you're here today, I say to you, your father is calling you home because his heart is where you belong.

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And he sent His Son to bring you home, when you have no strength to crawl home, he runs to you, his son. My friends, this is a story of glory. Why would we have it all? Because Jesus paid it all. Come home. Come home by repenting, turning around, and believing in Jesus, God's own son, who died and rose again to pay for all your sins. Come home. That's where you belong, that's where you are made for. That's where eternity is meaningful. Because if you don't come home and when the doors of time will shut, then there will be everlasting punishment and fires in Hell, and I pray that none of us in this hall will end up in that place. So come home. My friends, are you living in sin today? You think that you want to enjoy the momentary pleasures of sin. My friends, there's a trap, there's a bait. There's always that hook there. Satan is always actively working to destroy your faith, and draw you away from God. Is there something you need to repent of, sexually, morally, relationally? Is there sin that you need to turn from? My friends, I want to speak to those who today are going through absolutely devastating trials. There is a hope in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ in us, the hope of glory. You see that? What you're going through today is not the final scene in this whole human history, there is one glorious end, there is a glorious conclusion that will last forever, and that is, you will get it all. No more pains, no more sorrows.

God will wipe away all tears. This is the God you worship. This is the God who reaches out to you. Would you faithfully follow him all the days of your life? Jesus paid it all. Father, we thank You this morning, I'm stunned and amazed at all the various needs in our hearts today, but you know every heart. But more than that, we are so glad we see your heart today. Your heart for us, may your people rejoice, and praise, and labour in response to knowing your heart. Lord, bring us home, all of us, closer to your very heart this morning. I pray you'll bring comfort and joy for those struggling through life today. Thank you, Jesus paid it all. Bless your church, bless each one here. We ask all this now in Jesus' name, Amen.

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