

Jesus is Greater
Jesus brings us through what he's already been through
1/24/20

In previous weeks:

Hebrews 1:1–2

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,
² but in these last days **he has spoken to us by his Son...**

Chapter 1 – stresses the divinity of Jesus

Chapter 2 – stresses the humanity of Jesus

This week:

Hebrews 2:10–18

¹⁰ In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. ¹¹ Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. ¹² He says, “I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises.” ¹³ And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again he says, “Here am I, and the children God has given me.” ¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Two stories which are referenced in today’s passage:

From Psalm 22 – King David

1. David cries out for salvation in weakness
2. David expresses trust
3. David declares future generations will hear about God’s salvation and trust in God too

From Isaiah 8 – The prophet Isaiah

1. Isaiah speaks judgment as people trust in their own strength
2. Isaiah expresses trust
3. Isaiah declares he and his companions will be signs/symbols of the Lord’s salvation

Notice in these two accounts how the second and third part of each story is similar. The first part is quite different though. In David’s story, he is weak and alone and surrounded by his enemies. He wonders if the Lord is there at all. In Isaiah’s account, those in view are being tempted with power and seeking foreign allies along with pagan worship. It is as though, in referencing these two stories, we see the human experience as a spectrum ranging from strong to weak. In strength,

the people don't believe they need God. In weakness, David is tempted to despair thinking God doesn't care or is incapable of rescuing him. Across the human experience ranging from strength to weakness people are tempted to turn away from God, to trust in themselves.

¹⁰ In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered.

This ties in with verse 9. How can the Son bring sons and daughters to glory? Verse 9 says it is through the Son's "suffering of death" that he is crowned with glory and honor. What is more, it says that he tastes death for everyone. By his own death and his own tasting of death for everyone, he brings sons and daughters, all those who trust in him, you and me(!) to glory.

God, for whom and through whom everything exists (cf. Rom. 11:36)

The pioneer, or champion, or forerunner, or author of salvation is made perfect through suffering. This doesn't mean he was brought from imperfection to perfection, that he was sinful and somehow transformed into being sinless. It simply means that as a man, as a human being, just like us, he needed to experience the full range of the human experience. Infancy and childhood were insufficient measures to becoming like us in every way, being tempted in every way. It was only through living life into adulthood with the full range of human experiences that Jesus could demonstrate his faithfulness to the Father in all things. He is made perfect or shows himself faithful or fulfills all righteousness in any and every way, including trusting the Father amidst suffering. We will suffer and we can take heart that, like us, Jesus suffered. He knows what it is like (10:18).

¹¹ Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

Notice it does NOT say, "Both the one who makes people holy and those who *make themselves holy* are of the same family." It doesn't say that. We are not capable to make ourselves holy such that Jesus sees that and, consequently, receives us into his family. That's not what it says. It says those who *are made holy* by the one who make people holy—they are of the same family. Those who trust in the one who makes people holy are of the same family with Jesus. Incredible. Therefore, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

¹² He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises."

Here is the quote from Psalm 22 with King David.

¹³ And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again he says, "Here am I, and the children God has given me."

Here is the quote from Isaiah 8.

The “I” being referenced in original context of these passages is David and Isaiah. But in the use of these quotes in today’s passage, Jesus assumes the role of each figure.

King Jesus

1. Jesus cries out for salvation in weakness
2. Jesus expresses trust
3. Jesus declares future generations will hear about God’s salvation and trust in God too

The prophet Jesus

1. Jesus speaks judgment against selfish pride and power
2. Jesus expresses trust
3. Jesus declares he and his companions will be signs/symbols of the Lord’s salvation

Jesus in his humanity knows what it is like to have power and to have weakness. He knows the real life human experience of King David, does he not? As he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-46), his enemies advancing, sorrowful to the point of death, he cries out to the Lord three times, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”

Even then, even there, he ends by expressing trust in the Father’s will, “Not my will but yours be done.”

And this suffering unto death, his willingness to go to the cross, to bear the pain and penalty of sin, has secured salvation and been told countless times.

Jesus in his humanity also knows the experience of Isaiah, does he not? As one who has been given all power, was he not tempted to misuse his own power? When his disciples want to make him an earthly king? When he speaks judgement to the religious elites and political power players? Would he not be tempted, in their arrogance, to demonstrate his power over them? When weak in the desert, was not his temptations real? After fasting forty days, is he not genuinely tempted to turn stones into bread? When his opponents call out to him on the cross to come down from there, to show his strength, to show his power?

With all of his power and authority, he trusts his heavenly father. He does not cling to this. He does not misuse this. Instead, he makes himself nothing, he takes the nature of a servant. He is obedient even unto death.

His cross is arguably the most recognizable symbol the world has ever known. Every person who trusts in his work on that cross become symbols of grace.

¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

This to say, he was not partially human but fully human (this was a significant controversy in early church history). He enters into life and death(!) to come through BOTH. And as he come through both, he is able to help us come through both! Jesus brings us through what he’s already been through.

The great news this week is that Jesus, having gone through the very same things, is able to help us through! Jesus brings us through—fear, suffering, trust, loneliness, hopelessness, helplessness, desires for power, temptations to trust in worldly strength, worldly riches, worldly alliances, and more. Jesus knows what we know. Jesus has experienced what we experience. Jesus has gone through what we have gone through or what we are going through. Jesus brings us through what he’s already been through.

¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants.

This ties back to chapter one in regard to angels. He came for people, to serve us.

¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

These last two verses foreshadow where we will be going in future weeks. The idea that Jesus, as fully God and fully man, is the perfect priest, the best one to operate between people and God. Priests were viewed as intercessors. Jesus is our intercessor. In atonement. In forgiveness. In his suffering. In his death. In his mercy. In his faithfulness.

And on account of all of that, he can help us when we are being tempted. Recall the spectrum of human experience from David and Isaiah, from weakness to strength, and every point in between, he can help us in our temptations. When tempted to trust in our own strength or tempted to believe God isn’t strong enough, he can help us in our temptations.

Consider these, which Jesus experienced (several of which are depicted in David and Isaiah’s stories):

Jesus brings us through alienation because he’s already been through alienation.

Jesus brings us through fear because he’s already been through fear.

Jesus brings us through threats because he’s already been through threats.

Jesus brings us through mocking/insulting/scorning because he’s already been through mocking/insulting/scorning.

Jesus brings us through rejection because he’s already been through rejection.

Jesus brings us through temptations of power because he’s already been through temptations of power.

What would you put in the blanks below?

Jesus brings me through _____ because he’s already been through _____.

Do you trust he will do it?

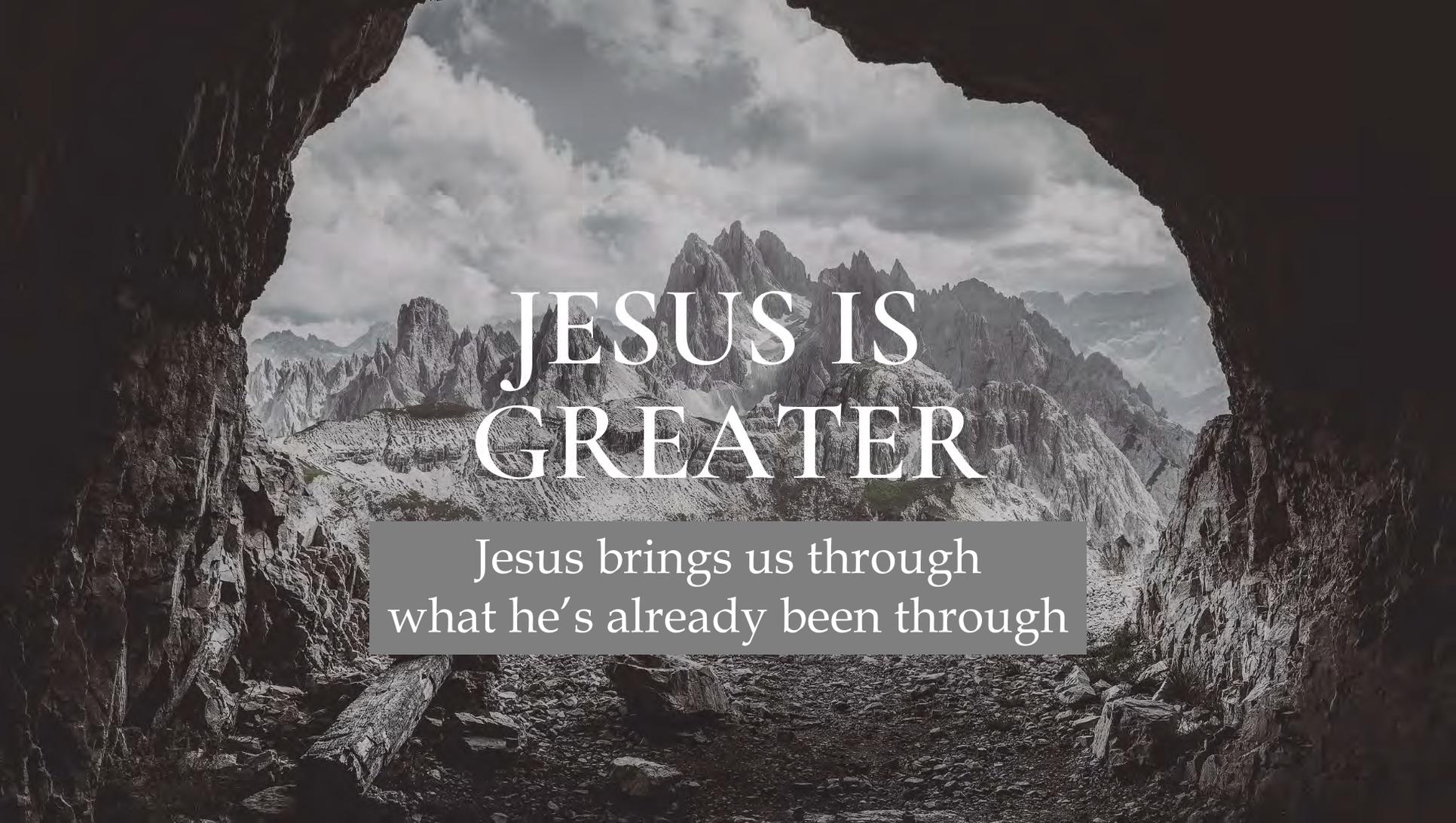
A black and white photograph of a mountain range viewed through a cave opening. The text "JESUS IS GREATER" is overlaid in the center. The scene is framed by the dark, jagged rock of the cave entrance. The mountains in the background are rugged and jagged, with some snow or light-colored patches. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds. The foreground shows a rocky path leading into the distance.

JESUS IS GREATER

BOOK OF HEBREWS

Hebrews 1:1-2

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...



JESUS IS GREATER

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Hebrews 2:10-18

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Story #1 -Psalm 22 (King David)

Part 1 – David cries out to be saved

Part 2 – David expresses trust in God despite not yet being saved

Part 3 – David declares future generations will hear about God's salvation and trust in God too

Story #2 – Isaiah 8 (The prophet Isaiah)

Part 1 – Isaiah speaks of judgment because God's people trust in their own might

Part 2 – Isaiah expresses trust in God despite not yet being saved

Part 3 – Isaiah declares he and his companions will be signs/symbols of the Lord's salvation

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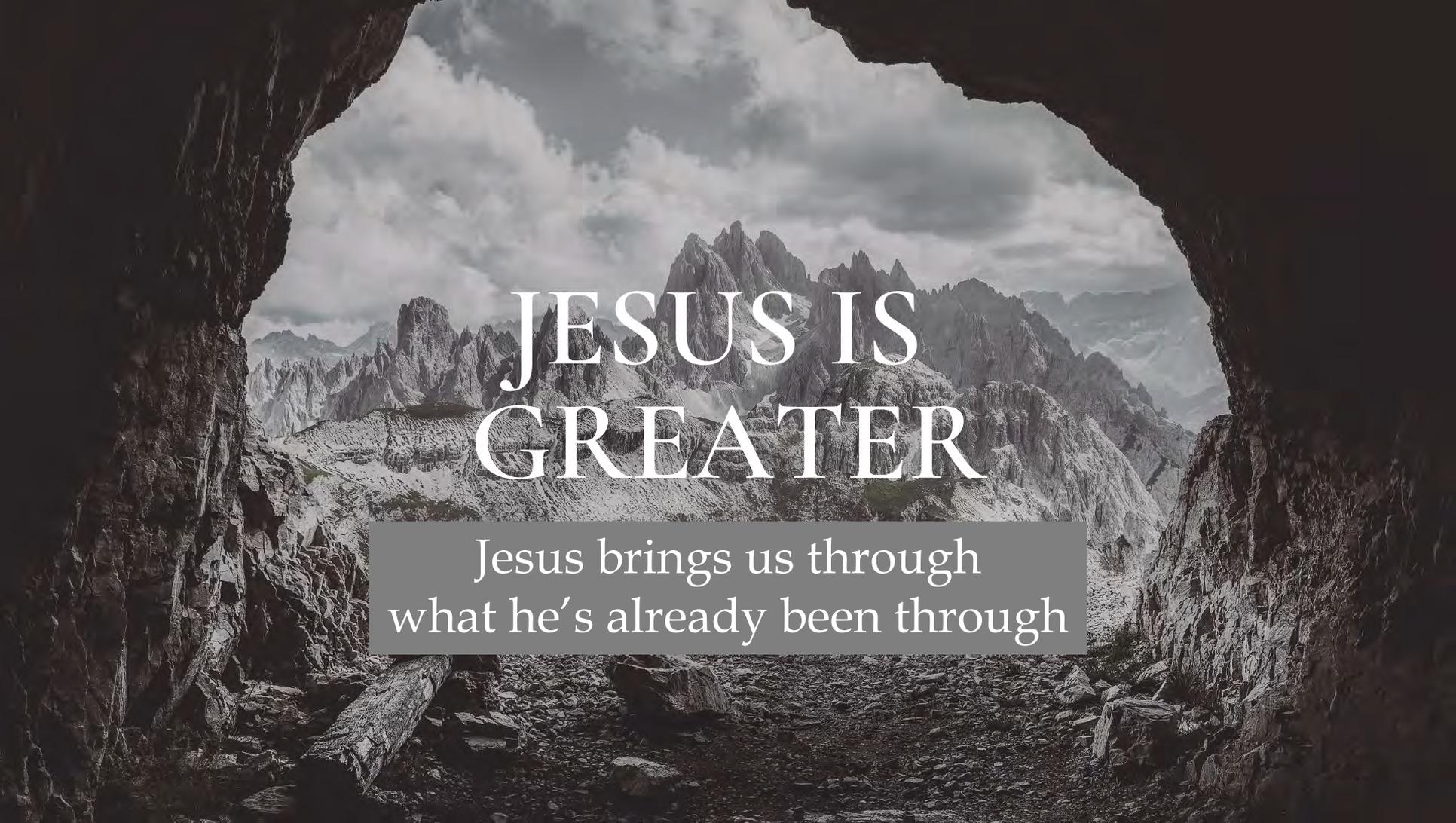
So what?

Who cares?

Have you ever experienced weakness, worry, alienation, isolation, hatred, attacks, rejection, suffering, anger, threats from “others”, judgment, fear of death, and temptations for power?

The great news this week is that Jesus,
having gone through the very same things,
is able to help us through!

Jesus brings us through--fear, suffering, trust,
loneliness, hopelessness, helplessness, desires for
power, temptations to trust in worldly strength,
worldly riches, worldly alliances, worldly powers.



JESUS IS GREATER

Jesus brings us through
what he's already been through

Jesus experienced what we experience

Jesus has gone through what we have gone through or what we are going through

Jesus can bring us through ALL
because he's been through ALL

Jesus brings us through alienation because he's
already been through alienation.

Jesus brings us through fear because he's already
been through fear.

Jesus brings us through threats because he's
already been through threats.

Jesus brings us through mocking/insulting/scorning because he's already been through mocking/insulting/scorning.

Jesus brings us through rejection because he's already been through rejection.

Jesus brings us through temptations of power because he's already been through temptations of power.

Jesus brings us through _____
because he's already been through _____.

Jesus brings us through _____
because he's already been through _____.

Do you trust he will do it?