

THE GREATNESS OF JESUS; HEB. 1:2b-3 (Ed O'Leary)

TODAY, WE HAVE BEEN CELEBRATING OUR GREAT LORD'S RESURRECTION.

▶▶ And I thought that a great way to celebrate during the message portion of our service would be to look at the greatness of Jesus.

▶▶ And to help us do that, ~ we are going to look at [Heb. 1:2b-3](#), ~ in which the author gives a six-fold description of Jesus that shows His greatness. ~ ~ *Con. begin @ vs. 1.*

▶▶ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ^{2a} but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, ^{2b} whom he appointed the heir of all things, ^{2c} through whom also he created the world. ^{3a} He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, ^{3b} and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. ^{3c} After making purification for sins, ^{3d} he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

IN VERSE 2b, ~ HE SAYS THAT THE FATHER HAS APPOINTED JESUS AS THE HEIR of all things.

▶▶ Referring to Jesus as "the heir of all things" gives Him the highest honor and position.

▶▶ There is absolutely nothing that will not finally belong to Jesus in the fullest sense.

▶▶ Paul talked about this as well, ~ in [Eph. 1:10b](#) where he says that God's plan is ~ "to unite all things in him ~ [i.e., ~ Jesus], ~ things in heaven and things on earth.

▶▶ Both Paul and the author of Hebrews are saying that God the Father's plan is to place everything and everyone, ~ both visible and invisible, ~ under the righteous reign of His beloved Son.

▶▶ God uniting all things in Christ also means that sin's disorder and all the powers of evil will be removed forever ~ and universal peace and righteousness will be established forever.

▷▷ As Peter says in [2 Pet. 3:13](#), ~ "But according to his promise ~ we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth ~ in which righteousness dwells."

▶▶ God's plan will "be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment," ~ as Paul says in [Eph. 1:10a](#). ~ ~ I.e., ~ when human history has run its course.

▶▶ In one sense, ~ Jesus rules and has authority over all now. ~ ~ In [Matt. 28:18b](#), ~ right before His ascension back to the Father, ~ Jesus said, ~ "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." ↴ ↴ 1/7

▷▷However, ~ in His sovereignty, ~ He is temporarily allowing the curse of sin and the powers of evil to continue.

▷▷But that will change. ~~ When the times have reached their fulfillment, ~ i.e., ~ when human history has run its course, ~ He will return and exercise His full sovereignty and usher in His righteous kingdom.

▷▷Daniel pictures this day in Dan. 7:13-14. ~~ Daniel wrote, ~ "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ~~ ¶¶

↪↪And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; ~~ ¶¶

→→his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."

IN VERSE 2c, ~ THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS STATES THAT JESUS IS THE CREATOR, ~~ underscoring the fact that Jesus is God, ~ for only God is the Creator.

FROM THE VAST UNIVERSE AND ALL IT CONTAINS ~ DOWN TO THE MICROSCOPIC world and all it contains ~ to the spirit world and all it contains.

▶▶Jn. 1:3, ~ "All things were made through him [Jesus], ~ and without him was not any thing made that was made."

▶▶And Paul declares in Col. 1:16, ~ "For by him [Jesus] all things were created, ~ in heaven and on earth, ~ visible and invisible, ~ whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things were created through him and for him."

▶▶In divine partnership, ~ God the Father and God the Son together created everything.

▶▶There is nothing in existence that Jesus has not created: ~ no planet, ~ no star, ~ no creature, ~ no vegetation, ~ no mineral, ~ no element, ~ nothing.

IN VERSE 3a, ~ THE AUTHOR SAYS THAT JESUS "IS THE RADIANCE OF THE GLORY of God and the exact imprint of his nature."

THAT IS TO SAY, ~ JESUS HAS ALL THE BRIGHTNESS OF GOD'S OWN GLORY AND IS exactly like God the Father in every way.

▶▶In sending His Son, ~ God the Father has, ~ in effect, ~ sent Himself. ~~ In Jesus, ~ the invisible Father is made visible. ¶¶ 2/7

▷▷ In Jn. 14:9, ~ Jesus said, ~ "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

▷▷ To see Jesus is to see the Father. ~ To know Jesus is to know the Father.

▷▷ Want to know what God is like? ~ Look at Jesus. ~ Want to know what God thinks about you? ~ Look at Jesus. ~ Want to know how much God loves you? ~ Look at Jesus.

▶▶ Now, ~ we should point out here that no one can have a relationship with God the Father apart from Jesus.

▷▷ 1 Jn. 2:23, ~ "No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also."

▷▷ To reject Jesus is to automatically reject the Father. ~ To hate Jesus is to automatically hate the Father. ~ To dishonor Jesus is to automatically dishonor God.

▷▷ To reject the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," ~ to reject the only "name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," ~ is to reject your only hope for salvation.

▷▷ On the other hand, ~ John says in 1 Jn. 2:23, ~ "Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also."

↪↪ The conscious and open confession that Jesus is the Christ, ~ the eternal Son of God who came in the flesh to die for sin and rose from the grave ~ automatically results in a personal relationship with the Father.

→→ Jn. 1:12, ~ "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

▷▷ It is quite clear: ~ Only through Jesus can people have a relationship with God.

NEXT, ~ IN VERSE 3b, ~ THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS TELLS US THAT JESUS "upholds the universe by the word of his power."

BY HIS MIGHTY WORD HE CALLED THE UNIVERSE INTO EXISTENCE.

▶▶ But not only did He call the universe into existence by His powerful word, ~ the survival of the universe depends on His mighty word. ~ Because he holds the universe together by it.

▶▶ Now ~ as I've noted before, ~ the Greek word for "upholds" means "holding and carrying from one place to another." ↯↯ 3/7

▷▷ The meaning of upholds involves both maintaining ~ and movement toward some goal.

▷▷ What we are saying is that Jesus sustains the universe in its existence and operation, ~ and is carrying it forward, ~ or guiding it, ~ to its divinely appointed end, ~ **the time when He will receive it as His inheritance.**

▶▶ Because Jesus holds the universe together by His own mighty word, ~ nothing in creation is independent of Him, ~ or out of His control.

▷▷ Nothing passes out of his oversight and direction. ~~ He has no alarm system in heaven for emergencies or surprises, ~ for there are none with Him.

▷▷ No plunging stock market, ~ terrorist attack, ~ or troubled Middle East threatens His administration or hinders it in the least.

▷▷ No matter how bad things seem to get, ~ He is still in control.

▷▷ And He is still moving everything forward to its divinely appointed end, ~ the day when, ~ as **Rev. 11:15** says, ~ **77**

↪↪ "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, ~ and he shall reign forever and ever."

IN VERSE 3c, ~ THE AUTHOR SAYS THAT JESUS MADE "PURIFICATION FOR SINS."

THE MAIN PURPOSE FOR JESUS' FIRST COMING WAS TO MAKE A SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

▶▶ In **1 Jn. 3:5a**, ~ John writes, ~ "You know that he appeared in order to take away sins." ~~ And He do so by becoming that sacrifice!

▷▷ He is the one who died to cleanse us and clear our record of all sin.

SIN IS THE #1 GLOBAL PROBLEM FOR HUMANITY, ~ NONE OTHER COMES CLOSE.

▶▶ It affects ~ and infects ~ everyone. ~~ **Rom. 3:23**, ~ "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

▷▷ None are immune to its ugly, ~ destructive force. ~~ Ever since Adam and Eve fell, ~ sin has been the central problem in people.

▷▷ The destructive nature of sin has affected all of us physically, ~ mentally, ~ emotionally, ~ socially, ~ and spiritually. ~~ We feel the effects in body and mind. **11 4/7**

▷▷ Ultimately, ~ sin separates us from God and leaves us condemned before Him ~ and destined for His wrath and eternity in hell.

▶▶ But Jesus made it possible for people to be cleansed from sin, ~ to be reconciled to God, ~ and to be given eternal life.

▷▷ He did it by taking our penalty for sin upon Himself on the cross.

▷▷ Is. 53:6, ~ "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

▷▷ And in 2 Cor. 5:21, ~ Paul writes, ~ NIV ~ "God made him ~ [Jesus] ~ who had no sin to be sin for us ~ [i.e., ~ He became the offering for our sin], ~ ¶¶

↳↳ so that in him we might become the righteousness of God ~ [i.e., ~ so that through Jesus we could be made right with God].

IN THE OT SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM, ~ WE CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS AND a preview of Jesus' sacrifice.

▶▶ Briefly put, ~ once a year, ~ on the Day of Atonement, ~ the high priest sacrificed a bull and a goat, ~ and would sprinkle some of the blood in the holy of holies.

▷▷ These bloody sacrifices help us to see that what was necessary to purify us from our sins was costly.

↳↳ Heb. 9:22b, ~ "and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

▶▶ Now, ~ the repetition of that act by the high priest year after year declared, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ as Heb. 10:4 says, ~ "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

▶▶ Each sacrifice pointed to one, ~ extremely costly, ~ final, ~ and God-satisfying ~ sacrifice.

▷▷ Heb. 9:11-12, ~ "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption." ¶¶ 5/7

▷▷ And Heb. 10:12, ~ "But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God."

↳↳ "sat down" . . . signifies that Jesus' work is completed and accepted by God the Father.

→→ "It is finished!" was his victory shout from the cross.

JESUS MADE PURIFICATION FOR SINS.

▶▶ I.e. ~ He provided the way for people to be made pure from sin, ~ to have a relationship with the Father, ~ and to live forever in the Father's presence.

FINALLY, ~ IN VS. 3d, ~ THE AUTHOR TELLS US THAT "[JESUS] SAT DOWN AT the right hand of the Majesty on high." ~~ {Refers to Father}

JESUS DIED FOR OUR SINS AND WAS BURIED. ~~ BUT HE DIDN'T STAY DEAD.

▶▶ Up from the grave He arose, ~ With a mighty triumph o'er His foes ~~ He arose a Victor from the dark domain, ~~ And He lives forever with His saints to reign.

▷▷ He arose! He arose! ~~ Hallelujah! Christ arose!

▶▶ As Paul says in Eph. 1:20b-21, ~ God the Father "raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

▷▷ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come."

"HE SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH," ~ THE AUTHOR OF Hebrew says.

▶▶ This is the place of highest honor.

▷▷ Jesus sits today at God's right hand, ~ because it is the highest honor God could give his Son.

▷▷ The "right hand" of God the Father is the highest honor in the universe. ~~ That's where Jesus is today and will be forever.

▷▷ We may therefore say with confidence that Jesus is at the very center of the universe. ~~ He is the "King of kings and Lord of lords." ↯↯ 6/7

▶▶ In Phil. 2:6-11, ~ Paul puts it this way. ~~ He says that Jesus, ~ "though he was in the form of God, ~ did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped ~ [i.e., ~ Jesus did not consider equality with God ~ something to be used to his own advantage], ~ 77

▷▷ but emptied himself ~ [put simply, ~ He gave up his divine privileges], ~ by taking the form of a servant, ~ being born in the likeness of men. ~~ 77

↳↳ And being found in human form, ~ he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, ~ even death on a cross ~ [the most cruel and disgraceful of deaths].

→→ Therefore ~ [i.e., ~ as a result of doing this] ~ God has highly exalted him ~ [means that God raised Jesus from the dead and placed Him on the loftiest height, ~ there is no one higher] ~ and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

↳↳ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, ~ in heaven and on earth and under the earth ~ [no exceptions], ~ 77

↳↳ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord ~ [no exceptions], ~ to the glory of God the Father ~ [i.e., ~ to bring glory to God the Father]."

▶▶ Jesus is Lord! ~~ Jesus is Lord! ~~ Praise Him with hallelujahs, ~ for Jesus is lord!

CONCLUSION.

"Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; ~~ his greatness no one can fathom."
(Ps. 145:3, NIV)

LET'S PRAY 7/7