



12.

I'm so tired... Where do I find Rest?

Setting the Stage: Hebrews and the Supremacy of Christ

As I read through chapter 4 of Hebrews, I paid close attention to the nuances of each word, since I'm currently studying this book in a Bible study. Two verses stood out, which we'll explore in depth later. But first, there is a need to lay the foundation for my greater point. You may wonder where I'm headed – but stay with me; it all connects.

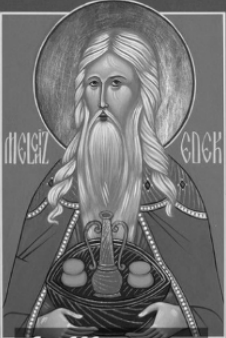
The writer of Hebrews presents a detailed dissertation as to *how* to enter into the rest of God. As we begin, chapter four starts out with "Therefore..." — so, therefore, we should study chapters one - three to see what the "therefore" is there for.

In the opening chapters, the unknown author of Hebrews affirms the supremacy of Jesus Christ. The text says He is greater than angels and Moses, for He is the Creator of all things. He is also declared our High Priest — having entered the heavenly Holy of Holies, and there made atonement for our sins.

Please read chapters 1–4, of Hebrews in full. I’ll be referencing key verses while only describing the surrounding content.

Jesus and Melchisedec: A Foreshadowing

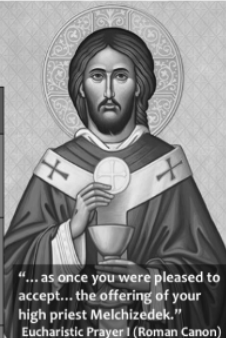
In chapters 5, 6, and 7, the writer of Hebrews draws a typological connection between Jesus and Melchisedec — a similitude understood for generations. Following is a chart that outlines the striking parallels between the two. Melchisedec, bears the title “King of Righteousness, at the same time functioning as the King of Salem which means “peace.” Melchisedec was a type and foreshadow of the coming Christ. His position and other monikers ascribed to him align with the attributes of God; some of which we discussed in chapters 6–8 of this book.



See CCC 1333, 1544.

TYPOLOGY

MELCHIZEDEK	JESUS
1. Name means “Righteous King” or “King of Justice”. [Heb. 7:2]	1. The Messiah is the anointed King of Righteousness, our justification. [1 co. 1:30]
2. King of (Jeru) Salem (“City of Peace”), later the City of David, home to God’s presence. [Heb. 7:2; Ps. 76:2]	2. Welcomed as King of Kings & Prince of Peace in His ancestor David’s capital, Jerusalem. [Is. 9:6; Matt. 21:5; 1 Tim. 5:15]
3. Gentile priest of the only “Most High God”; his mediation between God and man was superior to the Law & Levites. [Heb. 7:1]	3. Jesus, of the tribe of Judah, is the supreme High Priest who connects all nations to the Father in everlasting covenant. [Heb. 7:26]
4. No recorded genealogy or hereditary ties, without beginning or end. [Heb. 7:3]	4. Jesus is the Eternal Son of God, the Alpha and Omega. [Heb. 7:28; Rev. 22:13]
5. King David proclaims God’s Messianic oath: He will be “a priest forever after the order (manner of offering) of Melchizedek.” [Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6; 7:17]	5. The risen Jesus is the Eternal Priest, the living mediator between God and man, whose pure sacrifice is greater than all Old Testament sacrifices. [Heb. 5:7-10; 7:23-25, 27]
6. He offers a sacrifice of bread and wine in thanksgiving to God for Abraham’s victory over enemies. [Gen. 14:18-20]	6. Jesus changes bread and wine into His Body & Blood to offer his life in thanks and praise to the Father for man’s redemption [Matt. 26:26-28].
7. Abraham (and future Levi) offers a tenth of His spoils, recognizing that Melchizedek is a superior intercessor who blesses him & God’s people. [Heb. 7:6-10]	7. Christ’s perfect self-gift atones for sin. He unites us to himself to return the Father’s love in thanksgiving for our salvation. [Heb. 9:14-15; 10:12-14; Rom. 12:1]



“... as once you were pleased to accept... the offering of your high priest Melchizedek.”
Eucharistic Prayer I (Roman Canon)

“This ‘Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High,’ ‘met Abraham as he returned from his defeat of the kings’ and ‘blessed him.’ And Abraham apportioned to him ‘a tenth of everything.’ His name first means ‘righteous king’, and he was also ‘king of Salem,’ that is, ‘king of peace’. Without father, mother, or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life, thus made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.”

– Hebrews 7:1-3

“Also in the priest Melchizedek we see the Sacrament of the Sacrifice of the Lord prefigured... who, when He offered sacrifice to God the Father, offered the very same which Melchizedek had offered, namely bread and wine, which is in fact His Body and Blood.”

– Cyprian of Carthage († 258) “Letter to Cecil”

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The High Priest and Final Atonement

The High Priest's primary duty was to enter the Holy of Holies annually on the Day of Atonement. According to Hebrews 10:10–12, 14, and 19–23, Jesus fulfilled this role perfectly. After His death and resurrection, He entered heaven placing *his shed blood* upon God's altar thereby making atonement for our sins. This act cancelled the penalty of our sin debt (eternal separation from God), once and for all.

Heb 9:24-26—

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, [which are] the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. [Emphasis mine]

Redemption: A Completed Work

Despite this, some still believe salvation can be lost if one sins after being saved, implying Christ's sacrifice was insufficient to conquer sin and death thus "put [ting] away" sin forever as it states in Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Since we *have been* redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, let's survey some verses which state we are freed (past tense, already accomplished) from the bondage of sin and death. And then, we will dissect the meaning of the word 'redemption':

—Gal 3:13—

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law [for the wages of sin is death] being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree:

—1Cor 1:30—

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

—Eph 1:7, 13-14—

*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; ...
13 In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

—Rev 5:9 —

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

Strong's G1805 - to redeem i. e. by payment of a price (Jesus' shed blood) **to recover from the power of another** (Satan), to ransom, buy off (Parenthesis mine)

Because Jesus bore the world's sin as the innocent sacrificial lamb, we have been *made* righteous to God's perfect standard. How is that possible? Because we are in Christ. Think about that!

—2Co 5:21—

For he hath made him (Jesus) [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (Parenthesis and emphasis are mine)

Notice the word “made.” It is an action verb, describing something done *to us*. We take no part in this change of position:

Strong’s G4160

1. to cause to be ("gen"-erate)
2. (reflexively) to become (come into being)

Whose Power Were We Under?

Since we *are* redeemed, the identity of the “other,” who previously had power over us, has been established to be Satan.

—Jhn 8:44—

Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Only two options are given from scripture as to who our father can be; we either belong to Satan, or we belong to God (Acts 13:10). Before believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, we belonged to the devil; he was our father. But, by Christ’s shed blood sacrifice and resulting atonement, we have been redeemed unto God the Father, and we became His children.

—*Jhn 1:12*—

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name:

Once we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, *His righteousness* is imputed to us (Rm. 4:24). We are either in God's family or not. It isn't a sliding scale.

—*Rom 8:14-16*—

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Nowhere in Scripture does it say righteousness can be "un-imputed" or revoked. The Bible tells us over and over that the position of the Christian is "in Christ." This is not achieved by merit or works, but rather, by what was done *to us* when we believed. For that matter: Nowhere in Scripture does it tell us we possess any righteousness of own.

—*1Co 1:30*—

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

People that do not believe in a "once and for all" redemption, must conclude that though they become a child of God (adopted), they revert back to being a child of Satan (adoption revoked), only to be brought back into the family when they confess their sin (adopted, again), to fall prey again to Satan because they sinned (adoption revoked, once more).

There is so much more that I could say on this subject, and I will post it to ourpetsheavenbound.com free for download, if you are interested in an expansion of this topic. But for now, let's get back to the text to see the assurances God laid down in His word as to his intention for the creature entering His rest.

Entering God's Rest

Hebrews 3 and 4 gives a strong exhortation: "Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation... when your fathers tempted me... and saw my works forty years" (Heb. 3:8-9). God said that generation "erred in their heart" and had "not known my ways."

They had witnessed God's power repeatedly, but remained in unbelief. As a result, **they were not allowed to enter His rest**. The writer *pleads* with the Hebrews to "**take heed**" — meaning discern, observe, understand — so they would not be like those with "an evil heart of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12), departing from the living God.

At this point, it's appropriate to insert a Scripture for those who struggle to believe. Notice the immediacy and intensity of the father's response — he recognized his weakness and cried out to the only One who could help. Let this become your ongoing prayer until your heart is fully settled in the eternal security you have in Christ:

—*Mar 9:24*—

And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

Chapter 4 makes it clear that **belief** is the only way to enter God's rest. By mixing the gospel message with faith, one enters into that rest. Verse 9 of Hebrews 4 affirms, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

Believers are urged to cease striving and trust in the finished work of Christ, their High Priest. However, let's keep in mind the eternal implications of "rest" as well.

Strong's G4520 rest: the blessed rest from toils and troubles looked for in the age to come.

Hebrews 4:12 — The Word of God

Now, this is where it gets interesting... Verses 9-11 summarizes how to enter into God's rest:

—*Heb 4:9-11*—

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his. 11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

The next verses' (v. 12) deep, rich content describes the **precision** of the Word—cutting so exceptionally fine that it separates soul and spirit; two distinct entities so closely related they often seem like one. Similarly, when we are "in Christ," where do we end and He begins? But, I almost missed *the subject* of the text, which is foundational to the entirety of chapter 4. Note how verse 12 starts: "**For the word of God...**" This isn't merely referring to printed scripture.

—*Heb 4:12*—

For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Look at how Strong's defines "word:"

Strong's G3056 word - Logos: reason, thought, divine mind, pervading and noting all things by its proper force.



The definitions ascribe particular characteristics a person would possess—it's talking about **Jesus**, the living Word.

—*Jhn 1:1-5*—

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Jesus is the Logos, the divine intelligence infused throughout the entirety of the Bible's 790,678 words. He is powerful, precise, intuitive, exposing all things—motives, intentions, light or darkness. He judges justly and is the ultimate discernor of the heart.

At this point, it may have crossed your mind, "What does all this have to do with the creature?" I'm glad you asked!

Hebrews 4:13 — The Creature Appears



Up to now, Hebrews has focused exclusively on man and the supremacy of Christ: He is our Peace, Righteousness and great High Priest. Then suddenly:

—*Heb 4:13*—

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

And, just as abruptly, in verse 14, the text returns to man's ability to boldly approach the throne of God because of Christ's redemptive act. So why this sudden, seemingly out-of-place verse?

We understand God has purpose for every single word written in the Bible, whether large or small. We know His inspiration is specific, and that not one jot nor tittle is irrelevant. God inspired the writer of Hebrews to start the sentence with the word 'neither' which is a correlative conjunction. What is a correlative conjunction, you might ask? A **correlative conjunction** connects grammatically equal ideas. In context, its message is: **Just as man can enter God's rest, so can the creature.**

We've shown how man enters into the rest of God. But with the addition of verse 13, we now can add the creature to that narrative. The blood shed on Calvary, which was placed on the mercy seat in heaven, not only ransomed man but the creature also. A 'buy off' was made recovering the creature from the power of another. Jesus redeemed both.

This out-of-the-blue verse is like a "kiss on the head" to the believer, as it provides assurance to those that love their pets, and have faithfully stewarded over them, that His redemption plan includes the creature as well.

It is striking to consider the first 4 chapters of Hebrews, a total of 67 verses, is exclusively about man's entry into rest with God and how that's achieved. But the Father of mercy slips one verse into the text letting His children know His eye sees those creatures we have cared for and they are manifest (not hidden) in His sight.

The Creature in Context

Lest one think I am stretching the meaning of the word, let's look at two passages that use "creature," in the same nuanced way:

Strong's G2937 - Creature: individual things or beings; creation.

—Rom 1:25—

*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the **creature** more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

—Rom 8:39—

*Nor height, nor depth, nor any other **creature**, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Clearly, "creature" refers to something other than human beings – it includes all the living and breathing creation.

There is no question that Hebrews 4:13 affirms the creature is within God's view and redemptive plan. To interpret the verse otherwise would strip it of context. However, there is one glaring difference between how man and the creature enter God's rest: Man comes by faith, but the creature comes by innocence. It says in verses 12 - 13, God discerns the creature's soul and spirit, seeing its innocent nature because it did not sin.

Outlined in verse 13, the text says that "all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." A word study on nakedness

would reveal it is often referring to an uncovering or an exposure; as in nudity, shame or improper behavior. The creature is naked and opened unto the eyes of God just as they are. Their outer “garment” is fur, hide, scales, plates, a shell, etc.; all things which are natural to them since the time of creation. That has never changed. Whereas with man, the outer garment—skin—is now covered by fabric, which is not his natural condition. Adam and Eve lost their cloak of glory, when they sinned, exposing their nakedness.

If we look at the story of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, He peeled back his natural man revealing the glory of his heavenly condition to the attending disciples. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes were dazzling white. Since Adam was made in the image of God, and Eve was taken from Adam’s side, they would have exhibited this shining glory before they sinned. Their sin not only brought death, fear and guilt, but also the shame of their exposed bodies. However, since the animal did not sin, there’s no need for an additional covering, since there is no shame in their exposure. God sees their original, undefiled condition as it was on the 5th and 6th day of creation; it is pure.

In the Garden, after the fall, the glory has departed and we see a merciful God cover Adam and Eve’s shame with the hide of an *innocent* animal. Think about it... the innocent was sacrificed for the guilty to cover their sin (nakedness). Sound familiar? The entire Bible, from cover to cover, is about this story.

The Innocence of the Creature

Though subjected to man’s corruption, the creature remains spotless of sin. But more importantly, the creature’s relationship with the Creator was never severed.

Romans 8 affirms this:

—Rom 8:20—

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected [the same] in hope,

Note this important distinction: God promises that the creature shall be delivered from the “vanity” (frailty, want of vigor) it is subjected to because of man’s sin. It does not say the creature sinned. Therefore, they do not need salvation. They only need to realize the “hope” given to them by God. This Greek term, “hope” means “that in which one confides or to which he flees for refuge; expectation.” When is this redemption? It starts with the **Rapture**, when the creature sees the manifestation of the sons of God, and is ultimately finished in the future; perhaps at the creation of the new heavens and earth.

The Creature’s Redemption



Strong’s G1805 – Redemption: to recover from the power of another, to ransom, buy off.

The creature will be redeemed — **bought off** by Christ’s blood from the corruption brought upon it by man’s sin. To fully grasp the magnitude of this truth and its implications for creaturely redemption, let’s look at the key Greek terms in detail.

HEBREWS 4:13 – WORD STUDY BREAKDOWN

—Heb 4:13—

Neither is there any creature¹ that is not manifest² in his sight³: but all things⁴ [are] naked⁵ and opened⁶ unto the eyes⁷ of him with whom we have to do⁸.

#	Word	Greek Meaning	Strong's
1	Any creature	of individual things and beings, a creature, a creation	G2937
2	Manifest	hidden	G852
3	Sight	before the eyes of one, before his look, to his view	G1799
4	All things	everything, anything, whatsoever	G3956
5	Naked	metaphorically, naked, i. e. open, laid bare	G1131
6	Opened	laid bare, laid open, made manifest to one	G5136
7	Eyes	are (fixed) upon, looks after, providing care	G3788
8	To do	relation: with whom as judge we stand in relation	G3056

Summary

God sees **every creature**, laid bare before Him. Nothing is hidden. His eyes are fixed upon the creature, and He **provides** for it. There is a **relationship** between God and the creature – one that culminates in the creature standing before Him when the purchased possession is acquired.

Conclusion: Let Their Redemption Begin

This powerful verse was hidden in the flow of Hebrews' argument about how we enter into God rest – now and eternally. But, the inclusion of this text is no accident. God intended for us to know without a doubt that the creature is part of His redemptive plan. Though I referenced this in the chapter entitled "Let's Talk About Righteousness," I now see another facet of that truth emphasized in Heb. 4:13. It confirms everything we've studied so far.



Whether by Rapture or Resurrection, the creature is waiting. At the **Rapture**, when we are changed, **they too will be released** from the vanity they were subjected to, and repositioned into their liberty. Or, if it be by Resurrection, we are assured they are bound for the 'Promised Land' of heaven where they, too, shall enter into God's eternal rest. And, we joyfully look forward to seeing them there.

His eyes are fixed upon the creature. Let their redemption begin.

—*Heb 4:14-16*—

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.