

Hebrews 9:11-22 "Our Life Is In His Blood"

HEB 9:11-12 "When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. 12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption."

This portion of scripture speaks of the difference between the eternal and the temporal. The High Priests of Israel entered the Most Holy Place precisely through the means God ordained in His law when He instructed them to offer sacrifice for themselves first, and then for the people. (Heb.9:7)

This was done once each year as a reminder of the hope they had in God's provision for their sin and guilt. And yet it demonstrated how short they fell of God's law as they waited in anticipation the rest of the year for this great event.

Year after year they celebrated this hope and year after year they saw how the One who was appointed for the final redemption of men was to be anticipated as well. That time was to be fulfilled in Christ.

GAL 4:4-7 "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. 6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."

The High Priests of Israel entered the Inner Sanctuary once a year; a sanctuary made with the hands of men. A sanctuary which symbolized the presence of God who dwells in no earthly tabernacle.

ACT 17:24-25 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else."

ACT 7:48-49 "However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says: 49 "'Heaven is my throne, and

the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be?"

The Son of God left His throne of glory and fulfilled His anointed role as our Redeemer. In fact when our writer uses the word Christ here in our text in Hebrews he uses the word *Christos* in the Greek which is translated "anointed".

Our Lord was anointed to be our High Priest. And since He did not come to dwell in tabernacles made by men we see that He"went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. (HEB 9:11)

If it's not a part of this creation then it is not temporal in nature. Therefore, if it's eternal in nature, the results are eternal as well. And so the life which He gives issues from His very life which is eternal. This is our hope. This is our life in Him.

But this life comes from a death. Not just a death for the sake of death, but a death which was sacrificed for a specific purpose.

HEB 9:12 "He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption."

Redemption, which can be translated "a ransoming", is defined, in theological terms, as a purchasing, as of something sold. Redemption has to do with you and I who have been sold into the bondage of sin, suffering its consequences. Paul touches on this in ROM 7:14 "We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin."

Adam essentially sold us into that bondage by choosing to align himself with the desires of Satan. Being sold into that bondage produces what God said it would produce when He said to Adam and Eve, "in the day that you eat of the fruit you will surely die."

That's the only thing that sin can produce; death. Wouldn't it be nice if someone could come along and buy us back and place us into a family where death is not what we have to look forward to?

That's what Christ's redemption is all about. He purchased us. But He didn't do it with things like the blood of goats and calves. He did it with His own blood. Jesus Christ was truly man and truly God. But as man He came to do what the first Adam failed to do. Jesus, the Son of man, fulfilled perfectly all things and was eligible to stand before the Father to buy us back.

1CO 6:19-20 "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

His blood for ours. His death became ours. His life is now ours as His resurrection secured that very life which we claim with confidence by faith in the only Savior.

ROM 6:4-5 "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. 5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."

In His resurrection "He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption." That Most Holy Place is in the very presence of the Most High God whose Kingdom is not of this world.

We are no longer a slave to the world or to the life leading to death. We serve a new Master who has purchased us and has full authority over us. And yet this same Master and Lord calls us friends in Christ. His life now becomes ours.

Our writer in Hebrews would challenge these Christians to whom he is writing, as well as you and I, to consider the vast difference between the temporal blessings found in Judaism, to which they had become familiar, and in some cases comfortable, and place them beside the eternal and then live accordingly. In other words, challenging them to live in the Spirit and not in the flesh or the things of the world.

We don't have to live in fear wondering if we have to repeat this process over and over again as did the Jews who looked to the Day of Atonement each year. Our salvation has been secured once for all time, "once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption." (Heb.9:12)

Our writer then again makes this comparison to the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf.

HEB 9:13-14 "The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. 14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered

himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"

Notice he doesn't suggest that the law and its regulations were in themselves bad. After all they were given by God. In fact they served the purpose of giving the worshippers in Israel a true sense that prior to coming with their sacrifices they were ceremonially unclean, but now after the sacrifice they were declared ceremonially clean.

Unclean; referring to their status before God because of sin.

Clean; now accepted of God because of an innocent victim slain on their behalf.

Dr. Donald Guthrie makes this comment on verses 13 and 14.

"Two examples are chosen from the Levitical sacrifices to be representative of the general provisions of the Mosaic law to provide for purification of sin. The first -- the blood of goats and bulls -- probably as reference to the offerings of the Day of Atonement (Lv.16), and the second -- the ashes of a heifer -- could refer to the occasional offering of a heifer (Num.19). One of the most important contrasts is between the external nature of the Levitical offerings and the essentially spiritual character of the offering of Christ. The Levitical offerings could and did provide ceremonial purity on a temporary basis, but the offering which Christ made could purify your conscience, i.e. it was an inner and spiritual cleansing."

Andrew Murray also notes that Numbers 19 referred to in our text, regarding the ashes of a heifer, showed "that anyone who had touched a dead body was unclean, and had to be excluded from the camp. To meet the need, the ashes of a heifer that had been sacrificed, and of which the blood had been sprinkled towards the tabernacle, were mingled with water, and sprinkled on the one who has been defiled. The sprinkling restored him to his place and privileges; with a clear conscience he could now take part in the life and the worship of God's people."

These references which we see in our text were known to the readers and they would have immediately seen that it was true that God made provision to ceremonially clean those who had been defiled in Israel. But if that was the extent of fellowship with God what a sad state of affairs. For the next time you became ceremonially unclean, as did a woman every month because of her menstrual flow (Lev.15:25), you would always have to be looking

to the next ceremony to make yourself clean in the sight of God and men.

And so it was true that the provisions of the law did work with the outward cleansing in that sense, but the contrast our writer makes is abundantly clear.

HEB 9:14 "How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"

Our consciences have been cleansed once and for all as we rejoice in the final act of Christ's redemption. We stand before our God as "not guilty" as we place our faith in Christ. And because of that position before our heavenly Father we may serve Him, not in a fear which makes us recoil at His presence, but in an awesome reverence which, out of gratitude, enables us to approach His throne with joy and thankfulness knowing that He will not go back on His word.

Speaking of Christ Luke says in LUK 1:72-75 [He came] "to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, 73 the oath he swore to our father Abraham: 74 to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear 75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days."

Because we are new creatures in Christ we not only rejoice in His salvation for us, but we are called out, as Luke says, and as our writer says in verse 14, to serve the living God.

This is an aspect of Christianity today which seems to be often overlooked. There's a great deal being said of rejoicing and enjoying this new life and getting as much from God as you deserve simply by calling on His name. You would think we had been called to live in a spiritual Disney World.

No, we've been called to live in an eternal world with our King and Lord whose Kingdom is not of this world. But our service to God should be something which we do in His grace and strength as we seek to please Him and use the gifts He gives for the edification of the Body of Christ.

Service to Him is a great privilege as well as a great responsibility. The apostle Paul was a man who labored hard for the work of Christ. He knew good times as well as bad and yet he learned to

be content in all of them. This is why he could say in ROM 15:17 "Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God."

But his service to Christ was in his service to the Church.

ROM 15:31-33 "Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, 32 so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed. 33 The God of peace be with you all. Amen."

Paul even commends other believers in their service as an integral part of their worship of God.

2CO 9:12-13 "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else."

We've been called by God to worship Him in Spirit and in truth through our service unto Him. And this has all been accomplished by our eternal God and Savior. It's not simply going through the motions which pleases God and is considered true worship or service. Dr. Donald Guthrie puts it this way: "True worship necessarily involves whole-hearted commitment to God. It involves considerably more than ceremonial correctness."

HEB 9:15 "For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance - now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant."

You and I have been given an eternal inheritance that cannot be taken away. Christ is the One who has gained the victory and given us this inheritance which is eternal, not only in duration, but in quality.

But notice that in verse 15 our writer speaks of a new covenant. In this verse the word covenant speaks of a legal arrangement in which God promised to be our God and that we would be His people through the shed blood of Christ, as we received Him by faith. It fulfilled the first covenant with regard to foreshadowing the promise of a Savior.

But as we come to verse 16 we see that the same word used for covenant in verse 15, which in the Greek is *diatheke*, is the same word in verse 16 and yet they do not carry the exact same meaning. Now the question might be raised, if the same word is used why then would they not mean the same? For the same reason in the English the word "club", for example, could have a variety of meanings.

It could be a noun and mean an instrument for striking things. It could be a verb and explain what you could do to something as in clubbing something. It could also denote a place where people gather to party, i.e. a night club.

What determines what it means is the context. So, too in the Greek. And this is why the meaning is somewhat changed from the two verses. The context differentiates the two. F.F. Bruce says, " the Greek word is *diatheke*, ... has the comprehensive sense of settlement."

So, whether a covenant or a testament, as in last will and testament, they both have the sense of settlement. An arrangement has been made and it is settled according to that arrangement.

Verse 15 speaks of a covenant fulfilled in Christ, verse 16 speaks of a will or testament which is why we read in the NIV.... HEB 9:16-18 "In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it 17 because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. 18 This is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood."

Here the word *diatheke* is clearly changed to mean a will because even in the days of Abraham there were covenants and wills. No one was confused to think the two were exactly the same and everyone understood that only a will was put into effect on the death of the one who made it. Not so with a covenant.

But what is the point our writer is making in these verses? Just this. If we have been given an inheritance in Christ then that inheritance can only be put into effect upon the death of the Testator, who in this case is our Lord Jesus. But it is precisely because of His death that we can rightfully claim our inheritance as full sons of God.

Being children of Christ we have the promise of this eternal inheritance. It is sure because the covenant Christ made with us

included the inheritance which we receive by faith in the Messiah who died, but then rose from the dead.

It is only inaugurated through His death, thus the verses HEB 9:16-17 "In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, 17 because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living."

But Christ's death was never intended to simply be an expiration of life. People die all the time from old age, disease and such, and their wills are only then put into effect. But Christ's death had to be more than that. It had to be a sacrifice. It had to be an atonement for our sin. It had to be a legal covering for our sin which could only take place in someone being accused of the crime and paying the penalty for that sin.

This Christ did, even though He committed no sin. But die, He did. And through His death we are given such an inheritance; it's part of the covenant. And that's why our writer includes HEB 9:18 "This is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood."

The first covenant spoke of the second. And in many ways it foreshadowed it. Therefore it had to be a copy of it in the way in which a death had to take place for the remission of sin. This was seen in the sacrificial system with the High Priests of Israel carrying out their priestly duties.

HEB 9:19-22 "When Moses had proclaimed every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people. 20 He said, "This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep." (Exodus 24:8) 21 In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. 22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

It's the blood which cleanses. In the O.T. the blood was central to the Levitical system of sacrifice. The blood was sprinkled on practically everything related to the system, including the people of Israel. Blood was to cover everything as a way of demonstrating the effects of sin, which touched everything.

To bring something, whether an article of clothing or furniture or someone into the presence of God, it had to be cleansed. It had to be made pure. Nothing unclean can dwell in the presence of God. Therefore to become clean one had to adhere to the standard of cleanliness God instituted, which was full payment for sin.

Sin had to be dealt with. Someone had to pay the price in full. The problem Israel had is the same problem people have today. No one can fully satisfy God's justice with their own good works.

And yet, the price had to be paid and the price was always the same. The blood of an innocent victim must cover those who are guilty. Those animals sacrificed in the Old covenant did not commit sin. They stood in place of the people who were guilty. But an animal cannot ultimately satisfy God's justice for men.

They were simply a picture of One who would come to die for our penalty. They were a picture of an innocent victim who was not an animal, but a human being undefiled, spotless, pure and perfect in every respect.

Only the Son of God could have fulfilled this because, after the fall of Adam, there would be no human being who was perfect, without sin. And so Jesus had to be born of a virgin. He had to be born according to the Law. He had to be born of the line of David according to prophecy. But He was born to die.

Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. For those who would suggest that Christ's death was a tragic mistake or interruption of God's perfect will for Jesus is not to understand where our life comes from. It comes only through His death, the shedding of His blood.

We see this clearly in LEV 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life."

That which is life for you and me, that is the blood, is the very thing God requires of us. The wages of sin is death. But praise God He covenanted to send His only begotten Son into this world to die in our place on the cross, an instrument of capital punishment in those days.

He was declared a criminal by the world and even forsaken of the Father as such for us, though guiltless. He paid the penalty in full. The only thing He asks of you and me and the whole world is to

quit trusting in ourselves and place our total trust and faith in Him and what He has done for us.

He shed His blood for an atoning work, where He satisfied the penalty demanded of us by God from the very beginning.

ISA 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

This is God's promise; that our sins will not come between us and Him, ever. But this will only be true of those who are cleansed as white as snow under the fountain of Christ's blood shed on our behalf as they place their faith in Him.

But the shed blood is not the end of the story, which is why we look to our hope as an everlasting one. That came through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

His shed blood and death for us must always be accompanied by the truth that we don't love and serve a dead martyr, but a risen glorious living Savior who lives today making intercession on our behalf.

Let me end with Paul's encouragement from his letter to the church in Rome.

ROM 6:5-11 "If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, (Or be rendered powerless) that we should no longer be slaves to sin - 7 because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."