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Christ's Perfect Sacrifice

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Thanksgiving Sunday,

October 12, 2014

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^B Ephesians 2:22; 1 Peter 2:5; Job 1:6, 2:1; Daniel 10; Ephesians 6:12; Romans 8:38-39; Matthew 25:34; John 14:2; Colossians 1:20, 2:14-15

^C 1 John 1:3

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^E Psalms 103:12, Romans 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:57

^F Luke 21:26-28

A. The Fore-Going Teaching

1. A Résumé

- a. this chapter begins by giving a thumbnail sketch of the tabernacle, of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies
- b. this earthly tabernacle was there as an object lesson to God's people
 - (A) it dealt only with externals; with temporary, physical regulations
 - (B) it demonstrated the fact that sin separates man from God
- c. but behind this shadow in time there exists a heavenly, eternal reality
 - (A) into that, Jesus Christ, our High Priest has entered
 - (B) not with the token sacrifice of the blood of bulls and goats, but with His own blood – His life given to bear mankind's sin
 - (C) not simply a ritual; not providing only ceremonial cleansing
 - (D) but purging a person's conscience from sin
- d. with the result being stated in verse 15, "For this reason He (Christ) is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." – sins forgiven; a home in heaven

2. The Need for Cleansing

- a. from this truth, the writer of Hebrews steps aside for a moment in order to bring out another lesson from the OT tabernacle
- b. cleansing was important in the erection and use of that tabernacle
 - (A) everything and everyone had to be cleansed to allow worship
 - (B) blood – representing a life sacrificed – was the cleansing agent
- c. from this the writer makes this conclusion in verse 22: 'And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.'
 - (A) the OT tabernacle, its services, its rites were to provide a way for sinful man to receive forgiveness from the holy God
 - (B) yet all these were but a shadow of the reality
 - (C) that reality being that the Lord Jesus Christ by means of His sacrifice should bring eternal deliverance from guilt and death

(D) forgiveness and blessing come only from Christ's perfect sacrifice

3. Thanksgiving

- a. this is our Thanksgiving weekend
- b. it is a time when we pause and recognize that God in His Providence 'richly supplies us with all things to enjoy' (1 Timothy 6:17).
- c. such goodness from God is not limited to God's own people, but is upon the 'just and the unjust' (Matthew 5:45) as well as the entire animate creation (Psalm 104)
- d. and for all these things we should be truly filled with thanksgiving
- e. but of far greater benefit and significance, for those who have trusted in the Name of Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross, are the benefits of Christ's perfect sacrifice
- f. of which we shall take note of a few this morning, using as our text, the closing verses of Hebrews 9

B. Thanks for a Cleansed Meeting-Place for a Sinful People

9:23

'Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.'

1. Why Cleanse the Tabernacle?

- a. the earthly tabernacle was constructed at the direct command of God
- b. its design was divinely provided by God to Moses
- c. its materials were provided by God as part of the redemption of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt – it was at God's command that they took of the riches of the Egyptians as they left that land
- d. its craftsmen were appointed by God, endowed with the Holy Spirit
- e. its servants – Levites, priests, high priest – were selected by God and sanctified according to His command for their service
- f. so why was there need for an extra rite of cleansing? ... would not the Presence of God Himself assure its being clean?
- g. No, there was an ordained procedure that was necessary, so that the holy God could meet with the high priest, Israel's representative

2. Why Cleanse Heavenly Things?

- a. it is one thing to see that it was necessary for the earthly tabernacle needed cleansing – after all it was part of

- a sinful world
- b. but that heaven, God's dwelling-place, should need cleansing has seemed so strange that some have interpreted it as speaking about God's people since they are called 'a dwelling of God' (Ephesians 2:22) and 'a spiritual house' (1 Peter 2:5) – however, referring to Christians as 'heavenly things' seems peculiar and unnecessarily obscure
 - c. so we should take literally just what the verse says
 - d. and there are some clues in Scripture as to the reason for this need
 - (A) in the book of Job (1:6, 2:1) we find the adversary, Satan, able to attend the gathering before the Lord in heaven
 - (B) Daniel 10 tells of angelic struggles apparently in the heavens
 - (C) Ephesians 6:12 says "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."
 - (D) Romans 8:38-39 informs us that this conflict involves us, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - (E) and while we are to "inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34), there is a defect in it, for Christ had yet to 'go and prepare a place for you' (John 14:2)
 - (F) so, in the atoning sacrifice of Christ there was a work taking place that extended beyond this world and its people into heaven itself
 - (G) "and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven." (Colossians 1:20)
 - (H) "... having nailed it (the certificate of our debt) to the cross, when He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through (mgn: it, i.e., the cross)" (Colossians 2:14-15)
 - e. so then, in some fashion which we cannot plummet, Christ's perfect sacrifice cleansed even heaven, thereby making it a place suitable for the cleansed people of God to come into His very Presence.
 - f. and for this we give thanks because of Christ's perfect sacrifice

C. Thanks for Perfect Fellowship

9:24

'For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;'

1. The Veil Has Been Rent

- a. when Jesus cried out "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." and died, the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom
- b. this was not torn by human hands but by God
- c. since the tabernacle was first erected, that veil had barred the way between man and God, except for the high priest's annual entry
- d. the barrier has now been torn away

2. Intimacy Restored

- a. God's original intimacy with mankind, before sin spoiled it all, was when God would come and walk in the garden of Eden to spend time together with His creation – Adam and Eve
- b. Jesus – our High Priest; our Advocate; our Forerunner into heaven – the Son of Man has entered, not that earthly copy and shadow, but the reality which it represented – appearing in the God's Presence
- c. and in that act the intimacy between God and man has been restored, for the literal translation is that Christ entered 'into the very heaven to appear to the face of God'
- d. [the face of God](#) – for all the intimacy between Moses and God, that face of God he, nor any other man, was never permitted to see
- e. but Jesus son of Mary, legal son of Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth, presents Himself face to face before the God of Heaven, and,

3. In Him We Have Fellowship

- a. Jesus appears there 'for us' – 'on our behalf' – as our representative
- b. as our High Priest He is our defence lawyer, pleading our cause – when the accuser comes and points out our sins, Jesus can point to His feet, His hands, His side and say 'but for those sins I died!'
- c. but His presence there goes even further – He is a Forerunner, the One who has gone ahead of us that one day we may be there, too
- d. and finally, those who are in Christ by faith – in union with Him by the regeneration (being spiritually reborn) of the Holy Spirit – partake of that same intimate relationship to God as our heavenly Father
- e. so John the apostle could write, "[what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.](#)" (1 John 1:3)
- f. in Jesus Christ, then, we have perfect fellowship in that we address the Almighty God, Maker of heaven and earth, as 'Abba, Father'

g. and for this we give thanks because of Christ's perfect sacrifice

D. Thanks for Christ's Perfect Work

9:25-26

'nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.'

1. In Its Eternal Power

- a. every year the autumn would roll around, the seventh month of the Jewish religious year – and preparations would begin for Yom Kippur
 - (A) on the 10th day of the month, the high priest would offer sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people
 - (B) he would enter into the Holy of Holies for that brief moment; the place that represented God's dwelling-place on earth
 - (C) then he departed to resume his regular duties
 - (D) and next year, and the next, it would all be repeated
- b. and the work of making sacrifices for sins and trespasses went on
 - (A) there were sacrifices at the great annual feasts
 - (B) there were the special sacrifices every new moon
 - (C) further sacrifices every Sabbath day
 - (D) and there were sacrifices daily, morning and evening
 - (E) as well as the perpetual burnt offering
 - (F) for none of those sacrifices had lasting effect
- c. Jesus Christ, however, offered a once for all time sacrifice
 - (A) instead of the blood of bulls or goats – a substitute animal life – He offered His own blood, His own sinlessly perfect life
 - (B) a life of infinite value sufficient for mankind's sin – "and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." (1 John 2:2)
 - (C) and that applies not only to the sins of God's people in this age, but all ages, for if it were otherwise, and if the blood of bulls and goats could not save, and if God were to be able to forgive the saints in the OT – then Jesus would have had to have been slain many times from the day that sin first entered into man's heart

- (D) so because Jesus Christ's one sacrifice has eternal power – not just for the sins that happened before we came to Christ but for all those that have happened since, and are yet to happen
- d. for this we give thanks for Jesus' perfect sacrifice

2. In Its Abolishing Sin

- a. in the OT, God forgave sin on the basis of the sacrifices offered in obedience and faith, in anticipation of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary
- b. but the era of those sacrifices is over
 - (A) which Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, that old covenant and all of its shadowing of the future, was overtaken by reality
 - (B) a temporary tabernacle and temple; temporary and transient rites, rituals and sacrifices; a temporary covenant that disappeared
 - (C) but promises that were eternal
 - (D) and all those promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ – "As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us." (Psalms 103:12)
- c. but with the new covenant there came new realities to God's people
 - (A) the new birth by which a person becomes part of God's family
 - (B) the indwelling Holy Spirit giving daily grace
 - (C) sin has been put away; annulled; abolished in our new nature
 - (D) that innate rebellion of our old nature against God has been dealt a death-blow, that even though it still troubles us, we are given this assurance, "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace." (Romans 6:14)
 - (E) and this, "but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:57)
- d. Satan; and sin; and our old sinful nature; have been defeated in Christ
- e. for this we give thanks for Jesus' perfect sacrifice

E. Thanks that Christ Will Return for Us

9:27-28

'And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.'

1. As Our Sin-Bearer

- a. but it is not simply that sin, as some abstract quality is annulled
- b. some distant concept up in the theological clouds
- c. but it is rather that my sin, the wrongs that I have done and the good that I have failed to do – my failures, my stepping over God's line
 - (A) all these matters which, as surely one day I shall die, will I also have brought as a charge against me
 - (B) in that in common with all mankind, I must face the Judge
 - (C) each and every one of these has been placed upon Jesus Christ, so that when He was nailed to the cross, so were they
 - (D) and as He died, so they too are dead and have no longer any power to condemn nor to slay me
- d. 'he bore the sins of many' and by faith in His finished work I can claim myself to be one of that 'many'!
- e. for 'He took my sins and my sorrows, He made them His very own; He bore the burden to Calv'ry And suffered and died alone.' –{2}.
- f. for this we give thanks for Jesus' perfect sacrifice.

2. As Our Salvation-Bringer

- a. no longer do the words 'the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night' or 'the Judge is standing right at the door' strike fear for all those who are in Jesus Christ though judgement is coming for all mankind
- b. the believer has a High Priest, an Advocate, a Sin-Bearer
- c. but also, when Christ returns as He has promised, we look forward with joy – because, yes, we receive salvation when we trust in him
- d. for, in another and fuller sense, that salvation is not yet complete: we have been saved from the guilt of sin (justification); we are being saved from the power of sin (sanctification); and one day we shall be saved from the very presence of sin (glorification)
- e. so, as we look out on this troubled world and see, "men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see The son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:26-28)
- f. and for this, too, we give thanks for Jesus' perfect sacrifice

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ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

Barnes	– <i>Notes on the New Testament, et alia</i> , by Rev Albert Barnes, Gall & Inglis, Edinburgh
BM	– <i>Biblical Museum</i> , Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
EBC	– <i>The Expositor’s Bible Commentary</i> , © 1986 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 49530, Michigan <i>Hebrews</i> , by Leon Morris
EGT	– <i>The Expositor’s Greek Testament</i> , Hodder & Stoughton <i>Hebrews</i> , by Marcus Dods
Gill	– <i>Exposition of the Old Testament, Exposition of the New Testament</i> , by John Gill, D.D.
Kerux	– The sermon & illustration data base compiled by Rev. David Holwick at the web-site, www.holwick.com .
NICNT	– <i>The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i> <i>The Epistle to the Hebrew</i> , by F. F. Bruce
RWP	– <i>Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament</i> , by Dr. A. T. Robertson
TYN	– <i>The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries</i> <i>Hebrews</i> , by Donald Guthrie

2. ‘*My Saviour’s Love,*’ by Charles Hutchinson Gabriel (1856-1932)