

Sent: Wednesday, 30 November 2016 1343
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Hebrews 9

Hebrews 9 marks the "definitiveness," and the "finality"--and the "sufficiency"--of Christ's sacrifice for sin on the cross of Calvary!

Under the "old covenant" – in the "earthly sanctuary," a "tabernacle" elaborately prepared – the High Priest was required to go through an extensive process on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) in entering into the Holy of Holies, "behind the veil," once every year, to sprinkle the blood of a sacrifice on the "Mercy Seat," which covered the "Ark of the Covenant," which was overshadowed by the "cherubim of glory," to make atonement for the sins of the people! Whew!

The author of Hebrews thus briefly describes the process and ceremony to which the books of Exodus and Leviticus devote 50 chapters! All so full of symbolism and a foreshadowing of what Christ would accomplish one day through His definitive sacrifice! In addition, all, as Hagner notes, to, "draw out the parallels between the repeated sacrifices of the tabernacle and the single, efficacious sacrifice of Christ"!

The importance of the blood can be seen from the words God spoke to Moses in Leviticus 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement." As Hagner notes, just as the first covenant was ratified by blood, so does the new covenant depend upon blood, but the blood of Christ, not of animals! All of which gives new meaning to the words of Jesus, in Matthew 26:28, when He instituted the Lord's Supper, taking the cup saying, "This is My blood which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins!" Something we continue to do in remembering and celebrating (but not re-doing) the definitive and final sacrifice of Christ!

The author of Hebrews puts it this way: "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands...and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once and for all, having obtained eternal redemption! For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!"

The author of Hebrews further notes that He (Jesus) is the "mediator of a new covenant... and that now once at the consummation of the ages, He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself... and that having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time – without reference to sin (no longer needing to bear sin) – to those who eagerly await Him!"

Thus we see the definitiveness, finality, sufficiency, and necessity of Christ's sacrifice on the cross of Calvary! With or without all the detail, could there be anything more amazing than this? Shouldn't knowing this give us the greatest hope and joy of all and affect how we live and desire to share this truth with others, particularly in this Christmas season?

On to Hebrews 10 – and more – when we meet once again on December 13th!

May God bless you and yours!
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