

Judgment Demands a Substitute

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[0 : 00] Well, today we're going to continue our examination of the new covenant.

! And we know now, because of our study, that the new fulfilled the old, and it was a better covenant.

Listen to our scriptures for today as we close out Hebrews chapter 9 and anticipate studying, starting this September, Hebrews chapter 10 this fall.

We're going to start at Hebrews 9.15 and read to the end of that chapter, which is verse 28. Verse 28.

Established. That's talking about a last will in the Testament. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.

[1 : 34] Therefore, not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, this is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.

And in the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tent, that's the tabernacle, and all the vessels used in worship. Indeed, under the law, almost everything is purified with blood.

And without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are just copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly as the high priest enters the holy places, every year with blood not his own.

[3 : 16] For then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all, and that's all who believe, at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly awaiting for him.

Well, there is much to learn in those verses. The passage begins with the word, therefore, and is of course a reference to what has already been covered in the preceding verses, namely that Christ, because he suffered a sacrificial death, has now become the mediator of a new and better covenant.

God has established in his word a principle that cannot be violated. The principle is that the soul that sins must die.

That's the penalty of sin. That, of course, encompasses all of us. Now, we have proof that sin is universal, and that is the fact that death is universal.

[4 : 59] Everyone dies because everyone sins. For us to have any hope of entering into the very presence of an absolutely holy and pure God, we must have the penalty of sin removed from our account.

Payment for each of our sins must be exacted. The tiniest sin that remains in our account is not only sufficient to keep us out of heaven and to keep us out of God's presence, it's also sufficient to condemn the entire human race to eternal death.

If nobody had sinned from Adam until I came along and I committed the first one, I would have plunged the human race into sin. That's the ugliness of sin.

So how can we obtain such a payment for our sins? We must turn to Jesus for that answer.

He alone has provided payment to all who embrace Him and embrace Him in faith.

[6 : 26] When we trust Him, He is our lifeline to God, God the Father. He becomes the bridge, better described as the mediator in Scripture, between our sinless God and sinful man.

He is the mediator that stands between redeemed mankind and a perfect God who will not allow sin into His presence. So how did Christ accomplish this?

He did so, as we all know, by one act of supreme, sacrificial, and substitutionary death.

When I say substitutionary, He took our place. He was our substitute. And the cross made all the difference. Christ does not repeat His sacrifice over and over.

He died once for all of those who would believe. Now we've been studying the Old Testament priests, the earthly priests, the human priests.

[7 : 53] They repeatedly made sacrifice to God. Those sacrifices lasted some 1600 years and they were never able to totally pay for the sins of the people.

But they did symbolize something. They symbolized what was to come in Christ Jesus. So one question that sometimes arises is how were Old Testament saints ever saved?

They lived centuries before Christ ever was incarnated, came in human flesh. So on what basis were they saved?

Well, they were saved the same way we are. They were saved based upon the finished work of Christ.

The cross saved them. The only difference is they look forward to the cross in faith and we look back at the cross in faith.

[9 : 10] But it is the same sacrificial death that saves us. Now we should never pretend that they had the amount of light we have because we have the completed words of God.

Nothing need be added, nothing can be added. But these words really serve to explain the Old Testament basis of salvation.

Part of the work of Christ as mediator of the new covenant was the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant.

One of the first things that happened when Christ died upon the cross was to redeem all that had believed in God under the old covenant. They experienced what had up until that time been only a promise.

At the cross the promise was fulfilled. Paul talks about this in Romans chapter 3 verses 24 to 25.

[10 : 22] We are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as a propitiation that's the atoning sacrifice, the appeasement, the satisfaction.

It satisfied God's wrath, propitiation by His blood to be received by faith. Where does that come from? It comes from God.

Ephesians 2, 8 and 9 For by grace you are saved through faith that not of yourselves it is a gift of God not of works lest anyone should boast. Back to Scripture.

This was to show God's righteousness because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. the wrath of God which is very real His wrath towards sin is completely satisfied when men and women put their faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the blood of Christ was not shed for thousands of years into the future from the point of view of many Old Testament saints.

[11 : 48] In a way their salvation was extended to them by credit. It even talks about that in Paul's writings. You know, it was credited to Abraham. It was credited to their account.

This credit came to them by grace through faith and just as it accrues to us today. God was long-suffering.

God was patient. Until the sacrifice was made He passed over their sins. We have an example of that don't we in the Old Testament. He passed over the Hebrews' homes in Egypt where the blood had been applied to the doorpost and lintel.

He saw the blood and He passed over. When God sees the blood posted on our hearts He passes over. Now there's a deeper sense in all of this.

Christ was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. His sacrifice was in God's mind long before there were humans long before there was even a universe that was created.

[13 : 08] The point is that the Old Testament sacrifices were not a means of salvation. They did, however, stand as symbols of the one perfect sacrifice that would one day be made by the Son of

God.

Now the writer talks about the internal inheritance that the Old Testament saints could not receive without the sacrifice of Christ.

To gain access to God they needed total forgiveness and that came at Calvary. The new covenant was ushered in by Christ in the atonement and it provided full salvation that Israel had been longing for.

this leads to exploration as to the necessity of the death of the Messiah.

Did Jesus have to die and if so why? See the very idea of the Messiah coming and dying was a stumbling block to the Jews.

[14:28] It still is to this day. even in the scriptures it says whoever hangs on a tree will be cursed by God. Ironically the death of the Messiah was repeatedly predicted in many Old Testament passages.

You can't read places like Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 without knowing that the Christ of God would suffer and die.

There's a thing on the internet on YouTube these guys go around in Israel there are Jews themselves Messianic Jews that believe in Jesus. They go up to a Jewish man, a Jewish woman, even the Orthodox and say have you ever read Isaiah 53?

They say you know that's not in my Bible. I've always wondered why they skipped. He said let me read it to you. And they read it to these guys and they say who's that talking about?

And most of them say I don't know. Some of them say that's describing Jesus of Nazareth. Pretty amazing. So your assignment tonight is to read Isaiah 53.

[15:37] But the Jews chose to ignore the great truths concerning the death of the Savior. They came up with all kinds of spiritual gymnastics to try to do that.

Even at one time envisioning two messiahs. One that would suffer and die and one that rule and reign. we know that's not true. And eventually their ignorance became their denial.

Today most Jews will say Isaiah 53 is not about a person it's about Israel. Israel fulfills Isaiah 53. Not true. But once they started denying they began to weave and construct their own ideas about what the messiah would be like when he eventually arrived.

And a dying messiah was absolutely rejected by the Jews. Why? It did not fit their theology. It didn't fit in.

And yet we read that there's an absolute necessity of messiah's death. It's essential. The writer of the book of Hebrews understood the theological blind spots that the Jews had concerning the death of the messiah.

[16:56] And he then provides scriptural support for the necessity of messiah's death. death. And we read that a covenant demands death.

Though absolutely true a statement such of that sounds bizarre. A covenant demands death. Let us read again the operative verse. Hebrews 9 16 and 17.

For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. It must take place. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.

Now the Greek word for covenant equates to the English word for will, as in will and testament. A will does not take effect until the one who made it dies.

Until that happens, everything in the will is only a promise. Death must occur for the will to become operative.

[18:13] When we look at the old covenant through the lens of being a will, we begin to realize the necessity of Christ's death upon the cross.

The passage says that God gave an eternal inheritance to Israel in the form of a covenant. covenant. In other words, God made promises to the Jewish people.

These promises were contained in a will that God provided. When Christ died, the will went into effect. Until then, it was only a promise.

We also learn in these passages that forgiveness demands blood. for the will discussed above to become effective, blood had to be shed.

There had to be a death. Hebrews 9, verses 18 to 22. Therefore, not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.

[19 : 22] for when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people saying, this is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.

And in the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. Indeed, under the law, almost everything is purified with blood.

Again, without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. The first reason for Christ's death is that a covenant or will demands that a death occur and only then can the promises contained in the will become effective.

The second reason for the death of Christ was that forgiveness demands a blood sacrifice, a death, if you will. The shedding of blood, of course, is symbolic of death.

And I can assure you for 1600 years there was plenty of bloodshed and the death of animals, all of which were a picture of what would one day happen to the Messiah.

[20 : 55] I don't know how many of the priests or the Jewish people understood that, but that's what it had in view. And there was plenty of blood.

Thus, the death of millions of animals was prophetic looking forward to the atoning sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

The animals were a type of Christ and drew a picture of Calvary. The typology went all the way back to the beginning when we find God in the garden killing an innocent animal so he could cover the nakedness and the shame of Adam and Eve.

That too was a portrait of Christ. Even Moses, who to this day is in the mind of the Jewish people considered to be the greatest Jew that ever lived, participated in blood sacrifice.

And indeed, it was very bloody as a reminder of the penalty of sin which was death. Jesus made a direct reference to this in Matthew's Gospel, Matthew 26 28.

[22 : 16] For this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Moses ratified the old covenant with the blood of animals. Jesus with his own blood ratified the new covenant.

I hope if you remember nothing else, you remember the fact that everything in the old covenant, everything in the sacrificial system referred to and pointed to Christ.

Everything. We learn from the Spirit of God that forgiveness is a costly thing. Yet how lightly do we take it in this day when we water down the authentic gospel with which to satisfy fallen humanity.

Say these words or repeat this prayer and you will be in. Now go do your own thing because once saved always saved, right? I wonder if we've ever as a race of fallen creatures plumbed the depths of the fall of mankind in the garden through the first Adam and the infinite cost of our reconciliation to God.

[23 : 53] How often do people abuse God's grace because we treat the Lord Jesus sacrifice as just another historic fact that occurred in space-time history?

Not embracing what it really stood for. Do we rightly understand forgiveness? God does not wink at sin.

God does not say, oh it's okay, you can sin, I'm going to overlook it this time. He takes our sins and He placed them on His Son.

The perfect Christ, the perfect Son. He placed them on His Son. God cannot ignore our sin but He will forgive our sin if we trust in the death of His Son for that forgiveness.

And forgiveness, my brothers, is a very costly thing. Hebrews 9.23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

[25 : 12] The copies spoken of here were things under the old covenant. They served as sketches and outlines of the things that were going to occur in heaven.

Now we catch a glimpse of heaven when we examine the items that made up the worship in the tabernacle and later in the temple. The blood that was shed in those structures was a copy or a faint outline of the blood that Christ would shed for His people.

Well, it begs a question. How satisfied was God the Father with the sacrifice of His Son as the propitiation for sins?

Well, Paul tells us that in Philippians chapter 2. Most of you have this memorized. Our state to 11. God and being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

therefore God has highly exalted Him 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, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

[26 : 44] Let me state two truths. Jesus satisfies the Father. Truth one. Truth two.

We don't. We don't. That is why we must come to the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ, cloaked in His righteousness.

We can only come to the Father through Him. But through Him, we can come to the Father. Just like children go into the presence of their earthly father, we come to our heavenly Father through Christ.

Surely we all remember the prayers of the Pharisee and the tax collector. They were inside the temple. And the Pharisee, we remember, prayed his usual self-righteous prayer, even thinking God that he wasn't like this tax collector over here.

He was pure, not the tax collector, the Pharisee. Christ declared that the Pharisee was not justified before God. And he's not justified now.

[28 : 00] The tax collector, on the other hand, beat his breast and cried out asking God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Interestingly, the word be merciful is the same word for make propitiation for me.

He was asking God to place him under the protection of the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat. He threw himself on the mercy of God and one day, that tax collector went home justified in the sight of God.

Jesus said so. Jesus said he would. No person can be justified before God until he is placed into the death of Jesus Christ.

No person can be justified until he can say, God, I'm a sinner. I place myself into the death of your son. Be satisfied with me for his sake.

For his sake, the Lord's sake. And that's what true salvation is. Hebrews 9, 24-26, For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things.

[29 : 29] We see those in the first five books of the Old Testament. But into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God the Father on our behalf.

Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own.

For then he would have to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. world. But as it is, he's appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

By the way, that's a hint of what's to come in chapter 10 when we get there in September. Christ did not enter the earthly holy of holies.

He went into the very throne room of God. He entered the heavenly holy of holies where God dwells in perfect and infinite holiness.

[30 : 42] He entered there as our high priest. Capital H, capital P. And he's still there. And neither did Christ have to repeat his sacrifice.

He's not coming back as a baby in a manger. He's not coming back to hang on a cross. The one sacrifice one time was sufficient for all eternity to reconcile sinful men to a holy God.

This is opposite of what our good friends at the Roman Catholic Church teaches about the perpetual or continual sacrifice of Christ. Christ. And they claim without scriptural support that Christ is continually being offered as a fresh sacrifice for sins.

And I believe that's probably one of the reasons when you go in and visit a Catholic church, you see Jesus in the Roman church always on the cross. The statue of Jesus is up there.

we maintain and rightly so that Christ is no longer on the cross. He's on a throne, seated at the right hand of the Father.

[32 : 07] And we're getting near our summation with this comment, judgment demands a substitute. Hebrews 9, 27 and 28. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him.

Are you eagerly waiting for the Lord? I mean, let's face it, it gets darker every day down here. I'm waiting for the light. I'm out there on the farm in the early mornings.

I look toward the east, maybe I'll see the sky open up. We have seen that a covenant demands death. We've also seen that forgiveness demands blood.

Now we shall see that judgment demands a substitute. we all die. And it is a death by divine appointment.

No one ever enters heaven and catches God off guard. You don't catch God by surprise. After death, there comes a judgment.

[33 : 38] God appoints that judgment. men and women have two possibilities. Either they must pay for their own sin. Okay, how do we do that?

Well, to do that you have to spend eternity in hell. There's not enough time there to pay for all your sins.

Or you have those sins placed upon an acceptable substitute. And that's Christ. Either way, payment must be made.

All men die once. This was also true of Jesus. But unlike men, He will never face judgment for He was without sin.

He took our sins upon Himself. by His death, for our sake, God made Him to be sin who knew no sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

[34 : 52] Memorize that verse this summer. There will be a test in September. 2 Corinthians 5.21 He died the one death that eternal judgment demands.

When the earthly high priest entered the earthly holy of holies to sacrifice for sins, I believe the people that had assembled, and it was most of the nation, on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, I think they practically held their breath.

A collective holding of their breath. Now they had to breathe because it was a 24 hour ceremony.

But they were holding their breath as He went in. Would the earthly high priest do it correctly?

Because they knew if He didn't, He'd be struck dead. Would He do it correctly, and thus His sacrifice on our behalf of the Jews in that day, that's the hours, on our behalf would be acceptable to God the Father.

The Old Testament Jew would only know that for certain if the earthly high priest ultimately exited the tabernacle still alive.

[36 : 21] That's how they knew He did it right. Thank goodness. There was at that point a huge and collective sigh of relief. The people knew that God had accepted the sacrifice offered for the sins of the nation.

One day our eternal high priest is going to reappear for his church. there will be among the true believers in the church I think a collective sigh of relief.

We will know that the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His Son and we have been truly reconciled to Him. Now we already know that. How do we know that?

The resurrection. But when we see Jesus and be like Him, because we'll see Him as He is, we will know He's in perfect harmony with the Father.

And we will know that the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His Son and we have truly been reconciled to Him.

[37 : 37] Are you looking forward to that day? Well, that day is fast approaching. I don't know if it's going to be in my lifetime. I don't know if it will be in anyone's lifetime in here, but I bet it's in the lifetime of some of our younger members of this church.

And maybe it will be tonight or tomorrow. We don't know. But the day is approaching. May it be so in Jesus' name.

Let's close with a word of prayer. Father, we have been on holy ground tonight. And when we return in September, we're going to be in holy ground again, called Hebrews chapter 10.

Until that time, Lord, may we bury ourselves in Your Word, in prayer, prayers of thanksgiving, prayers of confession.

Lord, may we do those things that are pleasing in Your sight. we so love the Lord Jesus Christ.

[38 : 46] He's led us to the Father. He revealed the Father to us. And through Your Word, You still reveal the Father to us. May we spend this summer immersed in Your Word till we gather again, Lord, brothers in Christ.

We ask all this in the blessed name of Jesus. Amen. Thank you.