

# EXPLANATION OF 58<sup>TH</sup> BIBLEBOOK

## HEBREWS 9 (A.D. 64)

### OUTLINE

9:1-5.	The sanctuary under the old covenant was inadequate and temporary	1
9:6-10.	The sacrifices under the old covenant were inadequate and temporary	2
9:11-14.	The sacrifice of Christ is perfect in nature and eternal in effect	4
9:15-22.	Christ is the Testator (Guarantor) and the Executor (Mediator) of the new covenant	6
9:23-28.	The sacrifice of Christ was a perfect sacrifice that is perpetually effective	8

**Hebrews 9 to 10:18** teaches the changes from the old order to the new order<sup>1</sup>. The sanctuary under the old covenant was inadequate and temporary (9:1-5). The ceremonial laws of the Old Testament were inadequate and temporary. As long as the sanctuary/temple remained standing, the way into the Most Holy Place (fellowship with God in his presence) was not yet disclosed. The Old Testament ceremonial/ritual law was a shadow or illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices were not able to clear the conscience of the worshipper. The ceremonial/ritual laws were only external regulations applying until the time of the new order (the New Testament period) (9:6-10). At his first coming, Christ, the High Priest of the present good things, went through the heavenly sanctuary, with his own blood which obtained eternal redemption and really cleanses consciences (9:11-14). Christ is the Testator (Guarantor) and the Executor (Mediator) of the new covenant. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. But Christ sets people free from the sins committed under the first covenant, because with the shedding of his blood there is complete forgiveness (9:15-22). He entered heaven and appeared for us (the believers in the old covenant and the believers in the new covenant) in God's presence. He offered himself once for all to take the sins of many away. At his second coming he will bring perfect salvation to those waiting for him (9:23-28).

### 9:1-5. The sanctuary under the old covenant was inadequate and temporary.

The inadequacy of *the old order* as compared with *the new order* is now set forth first with reference to the arrangements of the sanctuary and then to the sacrificial ritual associated with it. The sanctuary of the old covenant, in its furnishings and in sacrificial rituals proclaimed its own temporary character. The writer remains biblical and refers to the *tabernacle* and not to the first or second *temple*.

**9:1.** The first had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary.<sup>2</sup>

According to Hebrews 8:5, this sanctuary was 'a copy'<sup>3</sup> and 'shadow'<sup>4</sup> of the sanctuary in heaven. Therefore, the whole Old Testament ceremonial law with its tabernacle and later temple, and the sacrifices made in it by priests was 'a copy and shadow' that pointed forward to the real things that would be revealed later in the New Testament.

'The sanctuary' of the old order was inadequate and temporary and had to give way to the new order. *The mobile tabernacle (tent) in the wilderness proclaimed its own temporary character. It had to be built up and broken down again and again.* Already Isaiah proclaimed that "heaven is God's throne and earth is his footstool" and that people cannot build a temple in which God would dwell<sup>5</sup>. He proclaimed that God "lived in a high and holy place" and preferred "to dwell with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit"<sup>6</sup>. And Ezekiel prophesied that because of Israel's sins, God himself would desecrate his first Jerusalem temple<sup>7</sup>!

Jesus prophesied that the second Jerusalem temple would be replaced by a "temple made without hands"<sup>8</sup>. He taught that in the new order, Christians will never again worship God in any temple or on any mountain, but in spirit and in truth<sup>9</sup>. Stephen and Paul proclaimed that "God does not live in temples built by men"<sup>10</sup>. In Ephesians 2:22, Paul teaches that Jewish and Gentile Christians are being built together to become "a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit". Therefore Hebrews 3:6 teaches that sincere Christians are "God's house". And according to Revelation 21:22, in the new heaven and new earth there will not be any temple (building), "because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple"!

<sup>1</sup> The changes from the Old Testament order to the New Testament order.

<sup>2</sup> **9:1.** The first (πρῶτος-ἡ-ον)(apof-s-adjective pronominal ordinal neuter feminine singular)(covenant) had (εἰχε>εχω)(viaa--zs) regulations (ordinances) (το δικαιομα)(literally: 'that which is demanded by righteousness')(n-an-p) for worship (religious service) (ἡ λατρεία)(n-gf-s) and also (κα ... τε) an earthly (worldly) (το κοσμικον) (a--an-s) sanctuary (αγιος-α-ον)(ap-an-s).

<sup>3</sup> το υποδειγμα

<sup>4</sup> ἡ σκια

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 66:1-2

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 57:15; cf. Ephesians 2:19-22

<sup>7</sup> Ezekiel 24:21

<sup>8</sup> Mark 14:58; John 2:19-22

<sup>9</sup> John 4:21-24

<sup>10</sup> Acts 7:48; Acts 17:24

**9:2.** For a tabernacle was *once* furnished (in two sections): The first in which (were) the lampstand and the table and the consecration of bread, which was called the Holy Place.<sup>11</sup>

### (1) The Holy Place.

- The ‘lampstand’ (Hebrew: menorah) consisted of a main stem with 3 side branches to each side that supported 7 flower-shaped lamp-holders<sup>12</sup>. It signified *the outward unity of the nation-state of Israel*. Contrast Christ standing in the midst the seven lampstands in the New Testament *signifying not an organisational unity, but a spiritual unity of the churches in the world*<sup>13</sup>.
- ‘The table of showbread’ had 12 cakes (one for each tribe) placed on it every Sabbath<sup>14</sup> and the old cakes were eaten by the priests<sup>15</sup>.

**9:3.** And after (behind) the second curtain (was) a tent which was called the Most Holy Place.<sup>16</sup>

**9:4.** Having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold in which (was) the gold jar having (containing) the manna and the budding staff of Aaron and the stone tablets of the covenant.<sup>17</sup>

**9:5.** And above this (were) the cherubim of glory overshadowing the place of propitiation<sup>18</sup>, concerning which there is now no (room or time to) discuss part by part (in detail).<sup>19</sup>

### (2) The Most Holy Place.

- The ‘curtain’ separated the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place.
- ‘The golden altar of incense’ stood in the Holy Place according to the Hebrew text, but according to a possible Greek translation it stood within the Most Holy Place. The words ‘before the veil’<sup>20</sup> suggests that it stood in the Holy Place. On the Day of Atonement, incense was burned on it and the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled on the horns of the incense altar and on the mercy-seat<sup>21</sup>.
- ‘The ark of the covenant’ ‘covered on all sides with gold’ contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s ‘staff’ that budded and ‘the stone tablets of the covenant’. Originally the pot with manna and Aaron’s staff were outside the ark, but later put inside the ark for safekeeping. *After the destruction of the first temple by the Babylonians in 587 B.C. no more is heard of the ark*<sup>22</sup>. The ‘cherubim’ of glory had no likeness of anything in heaven or on earth and appeared to have symbolised the storm-winds on which the God of Israel was pictured as riding through the sky<sup>23</sup>. They were the carriers of the divine radiance/glory/presence (shekinah). They are two figures made of beaten gold standing at either end of the mercy seat (a slab of pure gold 2½x1½ cubits)(the place of propitiation)<sup>24</sup> with which they were connected and facing inward towards each other, their wings stretched out and overarching the mercy seat. The mercy seat on the ark of the covenant symbolised the throne of God’s grace (4:16).

<sup>11</sup> **9:2.** For (γαρ)(cs) a tabernacle (tent) (η σκηνη)(n-nf-s) was *once* furnished (equipped with furniture, NIV set up)

(κατεσκευασθη>κατασκευαζω)(viap--zs) (in two sections): The first (πρωτος-η-ον)(a-onf-s ordinal) (section) in (εν)(pd) which (η) (aprdf-s=adjective pronominal relative dative feminine singular) (were) the lampstand (η λυχνια)(n-nf-s) and the table (η τραπεζα)(n-nf-s) and the consecration (setting forth, presentation) (η προθεσις)(n-nf-s) of bread (ο αρτος)(n-gm-p), which (ητις)(apnrf-s relative) was called (λεγεται>λεγω)(vipp--zs) the Holy Place (το Αγια)(ap-nn-p).

<sup>12</sup> Exodus 25:32ff; Exodus 37:17ff

<sup>13</sup> cf. Revelation 1:12-13

<sup>14</sup> Leviticus 24:5-8

<sup>15</sup> Leviticus 24:9

<sup>16</sup> **9:3.** And (δε) after (behind) (μετα)(pa=preposition accusative) the second (δευτερος-α-ον)(a-oan-s ordinal) curtain (το καταπετασμα)(n-an-s) (was) a tent (η σκηνη) which (η)(dnfs=determiner/definite article neuter feminine singular / aprnfs=adjective pronominal relative neuter feminine singular) was called (λεγομενη>λεγω)(vppnfs-s) the Most Holy Place (literally: the Holy of Holies) (το Αγια Αγιων) (ap-nn-p + ap-gn-p).

<sup>17</sup> **9:4.** Having (εχουσα>εχω)(vppanf-s) the golden (χρυσους-η-ον)(a--an-s) altar of incense (το θυμιατηριον)(n-an-s) and (και) the ark (η κιβωτος)(n-af-s) of the covenant (η διαθηκη)(n-gf-s) covered (περικεκαλυμμενην>περικαλυπτω)(vprpaf-s perfect tense) on all sides (directions) (παντοθεν)(ab=adjective adverb) with gold (ο χρυσος)(n-dn-s) in (εν)(pd) which (η)(aprdf-s relative) (was) the gold (χρυσος-η-ον)(a--nf-s) jar (η σταμνος)(n-nf-s) having (containing) (εχουσα>εχω)(vppanf-s) the manna (το μαννα)(n-an-s) and (και) the budding (βλαστησασα>βλαστανω)(vpaanf-s) staff (rod, stick) (η ραβδος)(n-nf-s) of Aaron and (και) the stone tablets (η πλαξι)(n-nf-p) of the covenant (η διαθηκη)(ngf-s).

<sup>18</sup> Hebrew: kapporeth

<sup>19</sup> **9:5.** And (δε) above (υπερανω)(pg) this (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(npgfzs=noun pronoun genitive feminine 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular) (were) the cherubim (το Χερουβ-ιν)(n-nn-p) of glory (η δοξη)(n-gf-s) overshadowing (κατασκιαζοντα>κατασκιαζω)(vppann-p) the place of propitiation (the mercy seat)(το ιλαστηριον)(ap-an-s), concerning (περι)(pg) which (ων)(aprgn-p relative) there is (εστιν>ειμι)(vipa-zs) now (νυν)(ab) no (ουκ)(ab) (room or time) to discuss (λεγειν>λεγω)(vnpa) part by part (in detail) (κατα μερος)(n-an-s)(NIV: We cannot discuss in detail).

<sup>20</sup> Exodus 30:6

<sup>21</sup> Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 16:15

<sup>22</sup> Jeremiah 3:16

<sup>23</sup> Psalm 18:10; Deuteronomy 33:26; Ezekiel 1:5-13; 10:9-14

<sup>24</sup> Hebrew: kapporeth<kippor, to make atonement

## 9:6-10. The sacrifices under the old covenant were inadequate and temporary<sup>25</sup>.

**9:6.** *When* these things were thus arranged, the priests were *continually* in the first tent, performing the religious services.<sup>26</sup>

The Holy Place was in continual use. Daily in the mornings and evenings the appointed priests entered the sanctuary to trim the wicks of the lamps on the lampstands<sup>27</sup> and to burn incense on the incense altar<sup>28</sup>. Every week they put fresh loaves of bread on the table of the showbread<sup>29</sup>.

*The present tense in the Greek text is a historic present*, indicating the procedure laid down by the Levitical law rather than the procedure which was still being enacted at Jerusalem while the author was writing - even though the latter cannot be excluded.

**9:7.** But into the second (tent) the high priest alone, once each year, not without blood, which he offers for himself, and for (the sins of) the people committed in ignorance.<sup>30</sup>

But the Most Holy Place was entered only once a year and only by the high priest<sup>31</sup>. The mercy seat was all the time shrouded in a cloud arising from the incense burning on the incense altar. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month (Tishri, about October) the high priest entered the Most Holy Place twice to make atonement for his own sins and for the sins people had committed in ignorance (9:7). First he carried the blood of the bullock which had been sacrificed as a sin offering for himself and his household (5:3; 7:27), and sprinkled it on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. Then he brought the blood of the goat that had been slaughtered as a sin offering for the people of Israel and sprinkled it on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. Thus he completed *the atoning ritual*. He would come out of the sanctuary and confessed the national unintentional sins (cf. 5:2) over the head of the second goat, assigned by lot 'to Azazel', which was then driven from the dwelling place of people into a solitary land<sup>32</sup>.

**9:8.** This the Holy Spirit *continues to* make clear that the way into the holies (the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place) has not yet been made manifest, *as long as* the first tent was still standing.<sup>33</sup>

The Most Holy Place was completely out of bounds for the other priests and all other people. *The Holy Spirit teaches that throughout the whole Old Testament period there was for ordinary people no direct access to the living God!* The way into God's holy presence was barred by the curtain hanging between the outer and inner spaces (rooms) of the tent. As long as Christ had not yet passed through the heavens (4:14) into the presence of God, *the earthly structure had not yet lost its sanctuary status*.

**9:9.** This (is) *an illustration* (parable) for the present time; according to which gifts and sacrifices that were *constantly* being offered were not able to bring perfection with respect to the conscience of the performer of the religious service.<sup>34</sup>

**9:10.** (being) only external (carnal) ordinances or regulations about foods and drinks and various ceremonial washings, until the point of time of the new order (the New Testament period).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>25</sup> not able to clear the inward conscience, because they are outward ceremonial regulations

<sup>26</sup> **9:6.** *When* these (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdgn-p=adjective pronominal *demonstrative* genitive neuter plural) things were thus (in this manner) (ουτως)(ab) arranged (equipped with furniture, furnished) (κατεσκευασμενων>κατασκευαζω)(vprpgn-p *perfect tense*)(used in temporal sense), the priests (ο ιερεις)(n-nm-p) were *continually* (δια παντος) in (εισοισιν<εισειμι)(vira--zp) the first (πρωτος-ν-ον)(a-oaf-s *ordinal*) tent (η σκηνη)(n-af-s) (the Holy Place) performing (fulfilling, bringing to conclusion) (επιτελουντες<επιτελειω) (vppanm-p) the religious services (τα λατρευα)(n-af-p).

<sup>27</sup> Exodus 27:20f

<sup>28</sup> Exodus 30:7f

<sup>29</sup> Leviticus 24:8f

<sup>30</sup> **9:7.** But (δε) into (εις) the second (δευτερος-α-ον) (tent) the high priest (ο αρχιερευς) alone (μονος-η-ον)(a--nm-s), once (απαξ)(ab) each year (ο ενιαυτος)(n-gm-s)(genitive of time), not without (χωρις)(pg) blood (το αιμα)(n-gn-s), which (ο)(apran-s *relative*) he offers/brings to (προσφερει>προσφρω)(vira--zs) for (υπερ) (pg) himself (εαυτος-ης-ον)(nrgmzs), and (και) for (the sins of) the people (ο λαος)(n-gm-s) committed in ignorance (το αγνοημα)(n-gn-p).

<sup>31</sup> cf. Luke 1:8-10

<sup>32</sup> Leviticus 16:8,10,26

<sup>33</sup> **9:8.** This (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdan-s *demonstrative*) the Holy (αγιος-α-ον)(a--gn-s) Spirit (το πνευμα)(n-gn-s) *continues to* make clear (δηλουντος>δηλωω)(vppagn-s) that the way (η οδος)(n-af-s) into the holies (τα αγια) (here the word is used to comprise the Holy Place and the

Holy of Holies together) has not yet (μηπω)(ab) been made manifest (*it stayed unknown*) (πεφανερωσθα>φανερωω)(vnrp), *as long as* the first (πρωτος-η-ον)(a-ogf-s *ordinal*) tent (η σκηνη)(n-gf-s) was (has) (εχουσης>εχω)(vppagf-s) still (ετι)(ab) standing (η στασις)(while it still retained its status).

<sup>34</sup> **9:9.** This (ητις)(apmf-s) (is) an illustration (parable) (η παραβολη)(n-nf-s)(the parabolic significance of the tent) for (εις)(pa) the present (ενεστηκοτα<ενιστημι)(vpraam-s) (point of) time (ο καιρος)(n-am-s); according to (κατα) which (ην)(apraf-s *relative*) gifts (το δωρον) (n-nn-p) and (τε και) sacrifices (η θυσια)(n-nf-p) that were *constantly* being offered (προσφεροντα>προσφρω)(vipp--zp) were not able (δυναμεναι>δυναμαι)(vppnnf-p n=mid/pas dep) to bring perfection (τελειωσαι>τελειωω)(vnaa) with respect to (in relation to) (κατα)(pa) the conscience (η συνειδησις)(n-af-s) of the performer of the religious service (λατρευοντα>λατρευω)(vpraam-s).

<sup>35</sup> **9:10.** (being) only (μονος-η-ον)(ap-an-s) external (carnal) (η σαρχις)(n-gf-s) ordinances or regulations (το δικαιωμα)(n-nn-p) about (επι)(pd) foods (το βρωμα)(n-dn-p) and (και) drinks (το πομα)(n-dn-p) and (και) various (διαφορος-ον)(a--dm-p) ceremonial washings (ο βαπτισμος) (n-dm-p), (επικειμενα<επιτιθημι)(vppnnn-p) until (μεχρι)(pg) the point of time (ο καιρος)(n-gm-s) of the new order (the New Testament period) (the time of reformation/reconstruction/setting straight what was out of line) (η διορθωσις)(n-gf-s).

The first tabernacle with its curtain barring the way into God's presence is an illustration (parable) for the present time that animal sacrifices were not able to clear the conscience of the worshipper. Not an outward reality, but an inner reality hindered people to have access to God. *The sinful nature of man and every kind of sin caused people to have a guilty conscience and a guilty conscience made it impossible to approach the holy God.* In order to have direct and free access to God, a person must have a purified conscience! *A person must first be regenerated before he is set free to approach God with confidence and before he is able to worship and serve God in an acceptable way.* All animal sacrifices and other religious actions which accompanied it (the food laws and the ceremonial washings) could not effect a purified conscience, that is, could not effect regeneration. At best, they could only effect ceremonial and symbolical removal of pollution. They were only "external regulations until the coming of the new order". *The new order is a time of restoration/reconstruction/reformation, when Christ reshaped the structure of Israel's religion. Then the old covenant had to give way to the new covenant (8:13); the shadow to the realities (10:1)<sup>36</sup>; and the outward and earthly copy to the inward and heavenly reality (8:5)! In Hebrews the law is a pattern or preliminary blueprint of the redemptive order introduced by Jesus Christ.*

### 9:11-14. The sacrifice of Christ is perfect in nature and eternal in effect.

**9:11.** But *when* Christ appeared *once for all* as the high priest of the good things (expected during the Old Testament period) *that are already* here, (he entered) through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation,<sup>37</sup>

**9:12.** also not through the blood of he-goats and calves, but through his own blood, he entered once for all into the holy place (the sanctuary in heaven at his ascension and enthronement), having *once for all* obtained eternal redemption.<sup>38</sup>

*Now the time of reformation (restoration, reconstruction), that is, the time of the new order, has arrived! 'The good things expected to come' (ARV) during the Old Testament period has become 'the good things that have already come' (RSV) during the New Testament period! With the first coming of Christ, 'the temporary shadows' have given away to 'the perfect and abiding realities'!*

During the Old Testament period the day when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place was a day of soul-afflicting and fasting. But now in the New Testament period after Christ had entered the heavenly sanctuary at his enthronement it has become a day of joyful celebration because their High Priest King sits enthroned at the right hand of God.

*The heavenly sanctuary is not made with human hands and would (from the ascension and enthronement of Jesus Christ onwards) replace the earthly sanctuary made by human hands<sup>39</sup>! God does not dwell in an earthly sanctuary<sup>40</sup>, but among 'the people of God' and within 'the people of God' - they are now the heavenly sanctuary, 'the house of God' (3:6)<sup>41</sup>. God lives in a high and holy place, but also prefers to make his dwelling with people that are humble and contrite in spirit and tremble at God's word<sup>42</sup>. How can Christ who passed through the heavens at his ascension and enthronement (4:14) after his ascension be regarded as dwelling amongst his people on earth? *By raising his people up with Christ to share the throne of Christ in the heavenly realm<sup>43</sup>!**

<sup>36</sup> Colossians 2:17

<sup>37</sup> **9:11.** But (δε) *when* Christ appeared *once for all* (παράχρηνομενος>παράχρηνομαι)(vpadnm-s) as the high priest (ο αρχιερευσ)(n-nm-s) of the good things (τα αγαθα)(ap-gn-p)(expected during the Old Testament period) *that are already* here (γενομενων>γινομαι)(vpadgn-p d=mid dep),

(he entered cf. verse 12) through (δια)(pg) the greater (μειζων-ονος)(a-mgf-s comparative) and more perfect (compete, having attained the end or purpose)(τελειωτερος>τελειως-α-ον)(a-mgf-s) tent (η σκηνη)(noun genitive feminine singular) not (ου)(ab) made with hands (χειροποιητος-ον)(a--gf-s), that (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdnn-s demonstrative) is (εστιν>ειμι)(vipa--zs), not (ου)(ab) of this (near at hand x εκεινος that further away)(ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(a-dgf-s) creation (η κτισις)(n-gf-s) (thus: he entered through the heavenly sanctuary),

<sup>38</sup> **9:12.** also not (ουδε)(cc) through (δια)(pg) the blood (το αιμα)(n-gn-s) of he-goats (ο τραγος)(n-gm-p) and calves (young bull, ox) (ο μωσχος)(n-gm-p), but (δε)(ch) through (δια)(pg) his own (ιδιος-α-ον)(a--gn-s) blood, he *once for all* entered in (εισηλθεν<εισερχομαι)(viaa--zs) *once for all* (εφαπαξ)(adverb) into (εις)(pa) the holy place (τα Αγια)(ap-an-p)(the sanctuary in heaven at his ascension and enthronement), having *once*

*for all* obtained (found, secured) (ευραμενος<εβρισκω)(vparamm-s) eternal (αιωνιος-α)(a--af-s) redemption (releasing by payment of a price) (η λυτρωσις)(n-af-s)(by his crucifixion on earth).

<sup>39</sup> Mark 14:58; John 2:19ff

<sup>40</sup> Acts 7:48; Acts 7:24

<sup>41</sup> 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22

<sup>42</sup> Isaiah 57:15; Isaiah 66:2

<sup>43</sup> Ephesians 2:6-7. God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace to us in Christ Jesus." This refers to *the legal position (state) of Christians as well as their present condition*. Christians have been tried, condemned, crucified, buried (Romans 6:4-8; Romans 8:17; Colossians 2:12; 2 Timothy 2:11) together with Christ Jesus. They have been made alive, raised and set in heavenly places (Romans 6:5; Romans 8:17; Colossians 2:13; Colossians 3:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 20:4)! *There is a time factor! Christians do not at once receive this glory in full measure.* But their legal right to receive all this glory is guaranteed and secured and it has already begun here on earth through their regeneration and continued renewal by the Holy Spirit of Christ. The lives of Christians are already now hidden with Christ in God. The names of Christians are inscribed in the heavenly Book of Life. They are governed from heaven by heavenly standards and motivated by heavenly truths! All the blessings of heaven keep on descending upon Christians. The grace and the power from heaven enable Christians to be more than conquerors. The thoughts and purposes of Christians aspire towards heaven and their prayers ascend to heaven.

The Greek participle ‘having secured eternal redemption’ means that Christ entered into the heavenly sanctuary ‘after’ he had secured an eternal redemption at the cross on earth! His work of redemption is absolutely fulfilled and completed by his death on the cross. “It is finished *and remains perfectly completed and finished for ever*”<sup>44</sup>.

He does not first have to carry his own blood into the heavenly sanctuary, as some suggest, thus *basing a New Testament doctrine on an Old Testament type instead of using Old Testament types to illustrate securely based New Testament doctrines!* There is no such division of the Lord’s sacrifice into two phases. *Jesus Christ accomplished by his death and resurrection what Aaron and his successors performed in type* by a twofold act of slaying the victim in the courtyard and then by presenting the blood in the Most Holy Place. *The reality of this twofold act is the once for all time crucifixion and resurrection from death of Jesus Christ.*<sup>45</sup>

The ‘ransoming’ or ‘releasing’ or ‘redemption’ takes place at the price of the life of God’s only Son. Here the question to whom the price is paid is irrelevant. The Old Testament high priests entered the earthly sanctuary repeatedly, because the redemption which their ministry procured was a sign and had a temporary character. But our High Priest Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary once for all time and sits on God’s throne for ever, because the redemption which his ministry procured is *perfect in nature and eternal in effect. The enthronement of Jesus Christ in heaven guarantees and secures for ever the perfectly completed work of salvation of Jesus Christ on earth!*

**9:13.** For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled *again and again* on those who have been (ceremonially) defiled, sanctify them with a view to cleanness of the flesh (NIV so that they are outwardly clean),<sup>46</sup>

**9:14.** by how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit *once for all* offered himself without blemish unto God, *certainly* cleanse our conscience from dead works in order to *continually* serve the *for ever* living God?<sup>47</sup>

*The blood of slaughtered animals during the Old Testament period did possess a certain efficacy, but it was only an outward efficacy for the removal of ceremonial pollution. The sin offerings presented during the Old Testament period had no effect on the consciences of the people (cf. 10:1-3) on whose behalf they were slaughtered. They served merely in an external and symbolical manner to counteract the defilement of sin.*

The slaying of the red heifer<sup>48</sup>, which had previously taken place on the Mount of Olives, “outside the camp” (13:13), was discontinued after 70 A.D. when the temple was destroyed.

Christ offered himself through the eternal Spirit. ‘Spirit’ with a capital S is meant. The writer is thinking of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 42:1. *God put his Spirit on him and in the power of that Spirit Jesus Christ accomplished every phase of his ministry:*

- his incarnation<sup>49</sup>,
- his ministry with people<sup>50</sup>
- his death, in which he fulfils the role of priest<sup>51</sup> and victim<sup>52</sup>
- his resurrection<sup>53</sup>
- and his triumphant ascension into heaven proclaiming his victory over all disobedient people<sup>54</sup>

The sacrifices during the Old Testament had to be without blemish outwardly. But Christ was without blemish spiritually and morally. Like the Servant of the Lord, he had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth<sup>55</sup>. He was without ‘sin’ (4:15) and he was completely actively obedient (5:8; 10:7).

The four prerequisites for the only perfect sacrifice of atonement for sin are:

- He must be a *human* being (not an animal),
- He must be a *sinless* human being (not a sinner),

<sup>44</sup> τετελεσται>τελεω indicative perfect passive. John 19:30

<sup>45</sup> Note refuting the notion of a continuing sacrificing of Christ’s body in the practice of ‘mass’ in Hebrews 1:3 and 10:11-12!

<sup>46</sup> **9:13.** For (γοαρ)(cs) if (ει)(cs) the blood (το αιμα)(n-nn-s) of goats (ο τραγος)(n-gm-p) and (και) bulls (ο ταυρος)(n-gm-p) and the ashes (η σποδος)(n-nf-s) of a heifer (young cow) (η δαμαλις) (n-gf-s) sprinkled *again and again* on (ραντιζουσα>ραντιζω)(vppanf-s) on those who have been (ceremonially) defiled (made common) (τους κεκοινωνημενους<κοινωνω) (vprpam-p), sanctify (set apart, remove from the common or profane) (thus qualifying a person to worship God *again*)(αγιαζει>αγιαζω)(vifa--zs) them with a view to (προς)(pa) cleanness (η καθαροτης) (n-af-s) of the flesh (η σαρξ) (n-gf-s)(outwardly, ceremonially) (NIV: so that they are outwardly clean),

<sup>47</sup> **9:14.** by how much (ποσω)(aptdn-s inTerrogative) more (μαλλον)(ab comparative) shall the blood (το αιμα)(n-nn-s) of Christ, who (ος) (aprrm-s relative) through (δια)(pg) the eternal (αιωνιος-ον)(a--gn-s) Spirit (το πνευμα)(n-gn-s) *once for all* offered (προσηνεκεν<προσφερω) (viaa--zs) himself (εαυτος)(npamzs) without blemish (defect)(αμωμος-ον)(a--am-s) unto God (ο θεος)(n-dm-s), *certainly* cleanse (καθαριει>καθαριζω) (vifa--zs) our (ημων)(npg-xp) conscience (η συνειδησις)(n-af-s) from dead (νεκρος-α-ον)(a--gn-p) works (το εργον)(n-gn-p) in order to *continually* serve (εις)(+infinitive expresses purpose) λατρευειν>λατρευω)(vnpaa) the *for ever* living (ζωντι>ζωω)(vppadm-s) God (ο θεος)(n-dm-s)?

<sup>48</sup> Numbers 19

<sup>49</sup> Luke 1:35

<sup>50</sup> Isaiah 11:2; Luke 3:22

<sup>51</sup> cf. Isaiah 52:15

<sup>52</sup> Hebrews 9:14

<sup>53</sup> Romans 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18

<sup>54</sup> 1 Peter 3:19

<sup>55</sup> Isaiah 53:9

- He must be a completely *willing* and actively obedient person (not a martyr),
- He must be the person *chosen* by God and endowed with God's Spirit (not a self appointed prophet).

Only such a person could at one and the same time satisfy God's will and meet the human predicament. God's demand was and is that people should be 100% holy and righteous and that their unholiness and unrighteousness should be 100% punished. It is not ritual purification, but spiritual and moral purification that counts with God<sup>56</sup>. *Only when the heart and conscience is cleansed from 'dead works' can the barrier between God and man be removed. Only when people are emancipated from the inward bondage can they worship God in spirit and truth. This is 'the perfection' which the Old Testament rituals could not achieve.*

## 9:15-22. Christ is the Testator (Guarantor) and the Executor (Mediator) of the new covenant.

### (1) Differences between the first and second covenant.

**9:15.** And for this reason he (Christ) is *always* the Mediator of a new covenant, so that, // now that a death has *once for all* taken place for a ransom from the transgressions (committed) under the first covenant, // those who are *effectively* called (and now are God's elect) may *once for all* receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.<sup>57</sup>

The basis of Christ's mediatorship is his sacrificial death. The costly price of his death provided redemption for those who broke the law of God. The new covenant is based on the blood of Jesus Christ, that is, on the death of Jesus Christ! Cf. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" ('the many' are those chosen before time and called by God in time)<sup>58</sup>. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (established by my death)<sup>59</sup>.

The first covenant was a *temporary* covenant, which provided (a *temporary*) measure of atonement and (a *temporary*) remission of sins committed under it. The first covenant was incapable of providing 'eternal redemption', 'eternal forgiveness' (in which sins are remembered no more)<sup>60</sup> and an 'eternal inheritance' (9:15), because *the first (old) covenant<sup>61</sup> made with Israel was NOT an 'eternal covenant'!*<sup>62</sup> *The new covenant is the 'eternal covenant' (13:20), because it is eternally valid and eternally effective!* The writer associates the word 'eternal' with the new covenant! Jesus Christ is the Author of *eternal* salvation (5:9). He sacrificed himself through the power of the *eternal* Spirit (9:14). The new covenant and everything that the grace of God provides under the new covenant is *forever* the possession of those called!

The eternal inheritance of grace and glory both here and hereafter is for "those who have been called" (cf. 3:1). The close connection between God's effectual calling of his people and the heritage which is theirs as his sons and heirs and joint-heirs of Christ is explained more fully in Romans 8:14-30.

Redemption of transgressions committed under the first covenant, could have direct relevance only to readers of Israelite birth or adoption, because *these transgressions were breaches of the Mosaic law, which was an integral part of the first covenant.*

*The retrospective validity of the death of Christ, which cover Gentiles as well as Jews is stated in more general terms in Romans 3:25-26 and Acts 17:30.* "All who sin apart from the law (who commit sins other than the breaches to the

<sup>56</sup> Isaiah 1:13-18; Mark 7:1-13

<sup>57</sup> **9:15.** And (και) for (δια)(πα) this reason (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdan-s demonstrative) (Christ's effective sacrifice) he (Christ) is *always* (εστιν>ειμι)(vipa-zs) the Mediator (ο μεσιτης)(n-nm-s) of a new (previously unknown)(καινος-η-ον)(a--gf-s) covenant (η διαθηκη)(n-gf-s), so

that (οπως)(cs), //now that a death (ο θανατος)(n-gm-s) has *once for all* taken place (γενομενου>γινωμαι)(vpadgm-s) for (εις)(πα) a ransom (redemption setting free) (η απολυτρωσις)(n-af-s) from the transgressions (η παραβασις>παραβαινω)(n-gf-p) (committed) under (επι)(pd) the

first (πρωτος-η-ον)(a-odf-s ordinal) covenant (η διαθηκη)(n-df-s),// those who are *effectively* called (and now are God's elect) (οι κεκλημενοι> καλεω) (vprnm-p) may *once for all* receive (λαβωσιν>λαμβανω)(vsaa--zp) the promise (η επαγγελια)(n-af-s) of the eternal

(αωνιος-α-ον)(a--gf-s) inheritance (η κληρονομια)(n-gf-s).

<sup>58</sup> Mark 14:24, cf. Mark 10:45; John 10:11

<sup>59</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:25

<sup>60</sup> Jeremiah 31:34

<sup>61</sup> the ceremonial law which was added to the covenant with Abraham 645 years later

<sup>62</sup> **The eternal covenant.** God's covenant of grace is an eternal covenant with God's people (Genesis 17:7). *The word 'everlasting' (Hebrew: olam) must be interpreted in the context of the whole Bible. In the Bible the word has several different meanings: "The LORD reigns forever" (Psalm 9:8). On the one hand it has an idiomatic significance in the sense of 'continuing without a break for a period of time predetermined by God': "to continue during the whole life of a slave" (Exodus 21:5-6); "the Name of the LORD may be in the temple for as long as it exists" (2 Chronicles 7:16); "continue for endless generations" (Psalm 49:11); "continue to be a wasteland for a very long time" (Isaiah 32:14); "continue for as long as the sun exists" (Psalm 72:17); "continue as long as the decrees for the moon and stars continue, i.e. for as long as this creation exists" (Jeremiah 31:35-36).*

*Because a covenant has conditions, God's covenant with the disobedient part of the natural nation of Israel is not 'eternal' (Judges 2:1-3), but it is 'eternal' with the believing part of Israel! It is first 'eternal' with the genuine believers in Israel (Jews as well as non-Jews) (Isaiah 56:3-8) during the Old Testament period and later with the genuine believers from all nations during the New Testament period. Jesus spoke of his sheep in the sheep pen of Israel and the sheep pens of the other nations which he would gather together to form "one flock with one Shepherd" (John 10:16)! The believers from the non-Jewish Corinth (2 Corinthians 6:16) and Asia Minor (1 Peter 2:9-10) belonged to this flock. For all eternity God would have just one 'people of God' first on this present earth (1 Peter 2:9-10) and later on the new earth (Revelation 21:3)!*

Mosaic ceremonial law) will also perish apart from the law. ....”<sup>63</sup>. The Gentiles have the law (the Ten Commandments) written in their hearts and when they do not listen to that law, they will not be declared righteous on the final judgement day.

“God’s law (his requirement that all people are 100% holy and righteous and that all unholiness and unrighteousness must be punished 100%) silences every mouth (that tries to justify itself) and holds the whole world (of people before and after Christ) accountable to God”<sup>64</sup>. “God presented him in his blood as a *sacrifice of atonement (which becomes effective) through faith*. He did this to demonstrate his justice (at the present New Testament time<sup>65</sup>), because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand (the breaches of the Mosaic law by Gentiles during the Old Testament period) unpunished”<sup>66</sup>.

“In the past (during the Old Testament period) God overlooked such ignorance (among the Gentiles, that is, the ignorance that people were created in the image of God and should not make dead images of the divine being), but now he commands all people everywhere to repent”<sup>67</sup>.

## (2) The difference between a testament and a covenant.

**9:16** For where (there is) a will (testament), it must of necessity lead to (registering) the death of him who *once* made (it).<sup>68</sup>

**9:17.** For a will (is only) legally valid over dead (people) (that is, where a death has taken place); because it never has validity *when (as long as)* the one who *once* made (it) is *still* living.<sup>69</sup>

**9:18.** Wherefore not even (lit. also not) the first (covenant) was put into effect without blood.<sup>70</sup>

The Greek word: ‘*diathéké*’<sup>71</sup> basically means a settlement in which the notion of a sworn fidelity of the lesser to the greater is emphasised rather than ‘a mutual contract or agreement between two equals’: *sunthéké*’<sup>72</sup>. In this passage the word has two meanings:

- A will/testament is the settlement in which the will of a person that has died is established for his heirs (9:16-17). By law, the heirs have no title to the inheritance unless the testator dies. A testament depends on the death of the testator.
- A covenant is the settlement in which God sovereignly bestows grace and establishes a new or special relationship with his people<sup>73</sup> (9:15,18). By grace, Christ bequests (leaves by will) or transmits his inheritance to the heirs when they believe in him. By fulfilling the divine requirement for holiness and righteousness, Christ (the heavenly Covenanter) meets all the claims of God’s outraged righteousness. By the death of the Testator (the One who made the will) (Christ), his inheritance assumes the aspect of a bequest (estate) accruing to his brothers. By his death Christ earned the inheritance and made the will. And by his resurrection, Christ became the Executor (Administrator, Mediator) of his inheritance. Christ is the Testator (the One who earned salvation) (9:16-17) and the Executor (the One who imputes and imparts salvation)(9:15,18) in one, the Surety (Guarantor of the required righteousness)(7:22) and the Mediator (the One who brings about the righteous relationship between man and God) (8:6) alike.

The first covenant also required death for its ratification. In that case it was not a testament that required the death of the Testator. But it required death nevertheless. *In the covenant made with Abraham in Genesis 15:1-18 and in the covenant made with Moses in Exodus 24:3-8, some covenant victims were slaughtered.* But there is no suggestion that these victims represented God, the Covenant Maker, or that they represented Abraham and Israel, the recipients of these divine covenants. In Hebrews 9:18 the writer is thinking of Exodus 24:3-8, when the first covenant was inaugurated. Moses recorded the covenant in the Book of the Covenant, sprinkled blood of burnt offerings on the altar, read the Book to the people of Israel who promised to obey it and then sprinkled blood onto the people.

## (3) Differences in the texts of Exodus and Hebrews.

<sup>63</sup> Romans 2:12-16

<sup>64</sup> Romans 3:19

<sup>65</sup> Romans 3:26

<sup>66</sup> Romans 3:25

<sup>67</sup> Acts 17:30

<sup>68</sup> **9:16** For (γαρ)(cs) where (οπου)(cs) (there is) a will (testament) (η διαθηκη)(n-nf-s), it must of necessity (η αναγκη)(n-nf-s) lead to (the registering/proving)(φερεσθαι>φερω)(vnp) the death (ο θανατος)(n-am-s) of him who *once* made (διαθεμενου>διατιθημι)(vpamgm-s) (it) (the will). (A will or testament is only valid where death has been proved).

<sup>69</sup> **9:17.** For (γαρ) a will (η διαθηκη)(n-nf-s) (is only) legally valid (firm, reliable) (βαβαιος-α-ον)(a--nf-s) over (επι )(pd) dead (νεκρος-α-ον) (ap-dm-p *demonstrative*) (people) (i.e. where a death has taken place); because (επει)(cs) it never (μηποτε)(ab) has validity (strength in the sense of ‘taking effect’) (ισχυει>ισξυω)(vipa--zs) *when (as long as)*(οτε)(cs) the one who *once* made (διαθεμενου>διατιθημι)(vpamnm-s) (it) (the testament) is *still* living (ζη>ζωω)(vipa--zs).

<sup>70</sup> **9:18.** Wherefore (this is why) (οθεν)(ch) also not (not even) (ουδεν)(ab) the first (η πρωτη)(apofn-s *ordinal*) (covenant, vs 15) was put into effect (renewed, inaugurated, initiated) (εγκαινισται<εγκαινιζω)(virp--zs *perfect tense*) without (χωρις)(pg) blood (το αιμα)(n-gn-s).

<sup>71</sup> η διαθηκη

<sup>72</sup> η συνθηκη

<sup>73</sup> Hebrew: ‘berith’

**9:19.** For *after* Moses had proclaimed every commandment according to the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves (and the goats), water, scarlet (red) wool and branches of hyssop, and *once for all* sprinkled this scroll and all the people.<sup>74</sup>

**9:20.** He said, “This (is) the blood of the covenant, which God had *once for all* commanded with reference to you.”<sup>75</sup>

The words in Exodus 24:3-8 (sprinkling the blood of the covenant on the altar and the people) are summarised in Hebrews 9:19-20 (sprinkling the blood of the covenant on the scroll and the people). *There are other differences in the text and they are probably due to the fact that the writer of Hebrews drew upon some source which is no longer extant.* (It is suggested that it was a Jewish commentary on Exodus 24). See also the difference in Hebrews 9:4 concerning the position of the incense altar (inside the Most Holy Place instead of outside before the curtain<sup>76</sup>) and the contents of the ark (the jar with manna in the ark instead of before it<sup>77</sup>; Aaron’s staff in the ark instead of in front of it<sup>78</sup> and the two tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God in the ark, while this is not mentioned in the Old Testament<sup>79</sup>).

- The reference to ‘goats’ is probably a later addition to the text of Hebrews.
- The text agrees with the Greek translation of Exodus 24:5 which specifies ‘calves’<sup>80</sup> as the sacrificial animals used at this occasion.
- In Exodus Moses sprinkles part of the sacrificial blood on the altar (as representing God, the Author of the covenant) and part on the people (who are thus brought into God’s covenant). But in Hebrews the blood is sprinkled on the book and on the people.
- In Exodus Moses sprinkles nothing but blood. In Hebrews the blood is accompanied by water, scarlet wool and hyssop. The hyssop was apparently tied with the scarlet wool to a cedar wood stick, thus forming a sprinkling implement which was dipped in the blood diluted with water. Although ‘water and scarlet wool and hyssop’ are not mentioned in the Exodus 24 account, there is no reason why this common method of sprinkling should not have been used by Moses in the procedure described. See also the sprinkling of blood of the paschal lamb round the doorway<sup>81</sup>; the sprinkling of blood (and water) on the cured leper or on a house which had been cleared of a leprous infection<sup>82</sup>; and the sprinkling of blood mixed with water<sup>83</sup> on persons or objects that had become ceremonially defiled by contact with the dead<sup>84</sup>. It looks like features of the purification ritual in Numbers 19:18 are here associated with the ratification of the first covenant in Exodus 24:3-8.

**9:21.** both the tent and all the vessels used in the ceremonies likewise he sprinkled *once for all* with blood.<sup>85</sup>

Purification by the sprinkling of blood was done at:

- The ratification of the first covenant<sup>86</sup>
- The purification of the tabernacle and the vessels of divine service. On the Day of Atonement the mercy-seat and the horns of the altar of burnt offering were sprinkled with the blood of the bullock presented as a sin offering for the high priest Aaron and his house<sup>87</sup>. And the tabernacle (tent) and all its furnishings, inside and outside, were hallowed by being anointed with oil<sup>88</sup>. But because the high priest Aaron and his sons were hallowed with the blood of the ram of consecration and with the oil of anointing when they were installed in their sacred office<sup>89</sup>, it might be inferred that the tabernacle and its furnishings, which were hallowed at the same time, were sprinkled with the blood in addition to be anointed with the oil.

**9:22.** And according to the law nearly all things are being cleansed by blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>74</sup> **9:19.** For (γάρ)(cs) *after* Moses had proclaimed (λαλειθεισις>λαλειω)(vrapgf-s) every (πας)(a--gf-s) commandment (η εντολη)(n-gf-s) according to (κατα)(pa) the law (ο νομος)(n-am-s) to all (πας)(a--dm-s) the people (ο λαος)(n-dm-s), he took (λαβων>λαμβανω)(vraanm-s) the blood (το αιμα)(n-an-s) of calves (ο μοσχως)(n-gm-p) (and the goats)(και των τραγων) together with (μετα)(pg) water (το υδωρ, υδατος)(n-gn-s), scarlet (red) (κοκκινως-η-ον)(a--gn-s) wool (το εριον)(n-gn-s) and (και) branches of hyssop (ο/η/το υσσωπος) (n-gf-s/n-gm-s), and (τε ... και...)(and...and...)(cc) *once for all* sprinkled (εραντισεν>ραντιζω)(viaa--zs) this (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apanzs) scroll (το βιβλιον)(n-an-s) and (και) all (πας-αντα)(a--am-s) the people (ο λαος)(n-am-s).

<sup>75</sup> **9:20.** He said (λεγων<λεγω)(vppanm-s), “This (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdnm-s *demonstrative*) (is) the blood (το αιμα)(n-nn-s) of the covenant (η διαθηκη)(n-gf-s), which (ης)(aprgf-s / apraf-s *relative*) God (ο θεος)(n-nm-s) had *once for all* commanded (εντειλετο <εντελομαι) (viad--zs) with reference to (προς)(pa) you (υμας)(npa-yp).

<sup>76</sup> Exodus 30:6

<sup>77</sup> Exodus 16:33-34

<sup>78</sup> Numbers 17:10

<sup>79</sup> Exodus 31:18

<sup>80</sup> μοσχάρια (Hebrew: parim, oxen)

<sup>81</sup> Exodus 12:22

<sup>82</sup> Leviticus 14:4ff,49ff

<sup>83</sup> Hebrew: me niddah

<sup>84</sup> Numbers 19:18

<sup>85</sup> **9:21.** both (και) the tent (η σκηνη)(n-af-s) and (δε)(cc) all (πας)(a--an-p) the vessels (το σκευος)(n-an-p) (of) used in the ceremonies (η λειτουργια)(n-gf-s) likewise (ομοως)(ab) he sprinkled *once for all* (εραντισεν>ραντιζω)(viaa--zs) with blood (τω αιματι)(n-dn-s).

<sup>86</sup> Exodus 24:3-8

<sup>87</sup> Leviticus 16:14-19

<sup>88</sup> Exodus 40:9-11; Leviticus 8:10f, Numbers 7:1

<sup>89</sup> Leviticus 8:23f,30

<sup>90</sup> **9:22.** And (και) according to (κατα)(pa) the law (ο νομος)(n-am-s) nearly (almost) (σχεδον)(ab) all things (πας)(ap-nn-p) are being cleansed



Almost everything, which requires to be ceremonially cleansed under the old covenant (the Mosaic Law), must be cleansed by means of blood.

There were some rare exceptions:

- A poor Israelite may bring some flour or even two turtledoves or young pigeons to the priest as his sin-offering instead of a lamb<sup>91</sup>.
- After the rebellion of Korah atonement was made by burning incense<sup>92</sup>
- Metal objects captured in war were to be purified by fire and the sprinkling of blood mixed with water<sup>93</sup>
- After fighting the Midianites the Israelite commanders brought captured gold objects to make atonement for their souls<sup>94</sup>

The general rule was: “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness”. Ceremonial cleansing or genuine atonement had to be effected by means of blood.

## **9:23-28. The sacrifice of Christ was a perfect sacrifice that is perpetually effective.**

### **(1) The copies on earth of the realities in heaven.**

**9:23.** (It was) necessary, then, for the copies of these things in the heavens to be purified, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.<sup>95</sup>

The writer acknowledges that *the Old Testament rituals were real and effective for ceremonial cleansing of the earthly things, but denies that they were of any use for the removal of inward and spiritual defilement*. They were only ‘copies’ of the spiritual realities. ‘The heavenly things’ that required cleansing are the defiled consciences of people. This is *a cleansing that belongs to the spiritual sphere and not to the material sphere*. Ritual cleansing was adequate for the material order, but a better sacrifice is necessary for effective purification in the spiritual order!

*It is the people of God who require inward cleansing so that they may approach God without defilement of sin and that they may be fit to dwell with God*. By the death of Christ and thus by the sprinkling of his blood the people of God become ‘the house of God’ (3:6)<sup>96</sup>. In order to be a spiritual house of this kind, they must have experienced regeneration and cleansing by ‘the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ’<sup>97</sup>. Thus the book of the new covenant (the eternal gospel written in heaven), the Christian sanctuary (the heavenly Zion) (12:18-24), the new Israel (the Christian Church including the company of the redeemed in heaven) *have all been consecrated by the blood of Christ. They all have the stamp of Christ on them*.

### **(2) The place of making atonement.**

**9:24.** For Christ did not *once for all* enter a man-made sanctuary, (that was only) a copy of the genuine realities; but (he entered) heaven itself, now to appear *once for all* before the face of God for (on behalf of) us.<sup>98</sup>

If sinners are to appear before God, even through the representation of a sinless High Priest, they themselves must be cleansed from sin, otherwise the very presence of God would be polluted. Having finished his work of salvation through his death and resurrection on earth, he ascended into heaven right into the presence of God to be our eternal Representative with God<sup>99</sup>.

### **(3) The frequency of making atonement (The difference between the Greek original and the Latin translation.)**

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(καθαριζεται>καθαριζομαι) (vipp--zs) by (εν)(pd) blood (το αιμα)(n-dn-s), and without (χωρις)(pg) the shedding of blood (η αιματεκχυσις)(n-gf-s) there is (γινεται>γινομαι)(vipn--zs)(the present tense signifies something that is always true) no (ου)(ab) forgiveness (releasing) (η αφεσις)(n-nf-s).

<sup>91</sup> Leviticus 5:11

<sup>92</sup> Numbers 16:46

<sup>93</sup> Numbers 31:22f

<sup>94</sup> Numbers 31:50

<sup>95</sup> **9:23.** (It was) necessary (αναγκη)(n-nf-s), then (ουν)(cs), for the copies (patterns) (το υποδειγμα)(n-an-p) of these things (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apddn-p demonstrative) in (εν)(pd) the heavens (ο ουρανος)(n-dm-p) to be purified (καθαριζεσθαι>καθαριζομαι) (vnp), but (δε)(cs) the heavenly (επουρανιος-ον)(ap-an-p) things themselves (αυτος-η-ον)(npnzp) with better (κρειττων)(a-mdf-p comparative) sacrifices (η θυσια)(n-df-p) than (παρα)(pa) these (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdaf-p demonstrative).

<sup>96</sup> 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:22; 1 Peter 2:5

<sup>97</sup> 1 Peter 1:2,19,22f

<sup>98</sup> **9:24.** For (γαρ)(cs) Christ did not (ου)(ab) *once for all* enter (εισηλθεν<εισερχομαι)(viaa--zs) a man-made (χειροποιητος-ον) (a-an-p) sanctuary (τα Αγια)(ap-an-p), (that was only) a copy (plural)(an antitype, the counterpart) (αντιτυπος-ον)(ap-an-p) of the genuine realities (plural)(αληθινος-η-ον)(ap-gn-p); but (αλλα)(ch) (he entered) heaven (ο ουρανος)(n-am-s) itself (αυτος-η-ο)(npamz), now (νυν)(ab) to appear *once for all* (to become visible) (εμφανισθηναι<εμφανιζω)(vnap) before the face (countenance) (το προσωπον)(nn-dn-s) of God (ο θεος)(nn-gm-s) for (on behalf of) (υπερ) (pg) us (ημων)(npz-xp).

<sup>99</sup> cf. 1 John 2:1-2

**9:25.** Nor in order to offer *again and again* himself often, even as the high priest (in Israel) *again and again* enters the (Holy Place and the) Most Holy Place year by year with blood belonging to others.<sup>100</sup>

The high priests (in Israel) entered the Most Holy Place only once a year, very briefly and with the blood of animals - they did not sacrifice themselves.

This had to be repeated year after year, because they were *token sacrifices, pointing to the one real sacrifice that was necessary and that was coming*<sup>101</sup>. The sacrifice of Christ was not a token sacrifice, but *a real sacrifice*, the shedding of his own blood, perpetually effective and calling for no repetition.

**9:26.** Then it would have been necessary (a must) that he (Christ) suffered often since the foundation of the world. But now once for all he has appeared at the end of the ages (for the removal of sin by the sacrifice of himself.<sup>102</sup> (*The first coming of Christ made that the end of the ages or the time of fulfilment!*)

*If the sacrifice of Christ was not perpetually effective and did call for repetition, then Christ would have to endure suffering and death times without number throughout the ages of history (cf. 4:3). However, the death of ordinary people is only once (9:27) and the death of Christ is ‘once for all’!*

To talk about Christ’s sacrifice as ‘an *eternal* sacrifice’ could be very misleading. *The Roman Catholic Church says that Christ is eternally offering himself in heaven and this is repeatedly re-enacted on earth in the Eucharist (cf. Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:26,28 and Hebrews 10:11-14). However, the sacrifice of Christ is once for all time in history (it is never repeated) and expresses the eternal mercy of God and the eternal efficacy of his sacrifice. To repeatedly re-enact his sacrifice of atonement is a denial of his absolutely completed and perfect work of salvation. Christ himself said, “It is finished and it remains finished forever!”<sup>103</sup>! No-one (no church, no church official and no ceremony) can add to his completed and perfect work of salvation<sup>104</sup>!*

The fact is that Christ has been manifested once on earth at ‘the time of fulfilment’/‘the end of the ages’ (at his first coming) in order to deal conclusively with sin. *It is not that Christ happened to come at the time of fulfilment, but rather that his coming made that the time of fulfilment!* His first coming and his redemptive work inaugurated ‘the time of fulfilment’/‘the end of the ages’. See Hebrews 1:2. “The last days”/ “the end of the ages” are the unique events of salvation history between the first and the second coming of Christ!

The following unique events of salvation history took place at the beginning of “the last days” and will take place at the end of “the last days”:

• The first coming:

- 1 Peter 1:20. The first coming of Christ. He was revealed “in these last times”<sup>105</sup>.
- Hebrews 1:2. God’s final revelation. “In these last days” God spoke to us by his Son”<sup>106</sup>
- Hebrews 9:26. Christ’s sacrificial death. “Once at the end of the ages” he did away with sin by the sacrifice of himself<sup>107</sup>.
- Acts 2:17. The outpouring of the Spirit. He was poured out “in the last days”<sup>108</sup>

• The second coming:

- John 6:39,40. The resurrection of the dead. I will raise him up “at the last day”<sup>109</sup>
- John 12:48. The final judgement. Christ’s words will condemn him “ at the last day”<sup>110</sup>

*The divine revelation progresses up to Jesus Christ, but there is no progression of revelation beyond Jesus Christ!* God spoke through Jesus Christ “in the end of these days”<sup>111</sup> (Hebrew: “in the latter end of the days” or “in the end-time” or “ultimately”), which is the Old Testament phrase that denotes the period of time in which the words of the Old Testament prophets are fulfilled<sup>112</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> **9:25.** Nor (ουδε)(cc) in order to (ινα)(cs) offer *again and again* (προσφεριη>προσφερω)(vspsa--zs) himself (εαυτος-η-τον)(npramzs) often (πολλακις)(ab), even as (ωσπερ)(cs) the high priest (in Israel)(ο αρχιερευς)(n-nm-s) *again and again* enters (εισερχεται>εισερχομαι)(virp--zs)

the (Holy Place and the) Most Holy Place (τα Αγια) year by year (κατα)(pa)(+ ο ενιουτος)(n-am-s)(distributive use of the preposition) with (εν)(pd) blood (το αιμα)(n-dn-s) belonging to others (αλλοτριος-ια-ιον)(a-dn-s).

<sup>101</sup> cf. Isaiah 53:5-6

<sup>102</sup> **9:26.** Then (else, since, if that were true) (επει)(cs) it would have been necessary (a must) (εδει<δει)(viii--zs) that he (Christ) suffered (παθειν>πασχω)(vnaa) often (πολλακις)(ab) since (απο)(pg) the foundation (η καταβολη)(n-gf-s) of the world (ο κοσμος)(n-gm-s). But (δε) now (νυνι)(ab) once for all (απαξ)(ab) he has appeared (has been manifested publicly) (πεφανερωται>φανερωω)(virp--zs) at (επι)(pd) the end (completion, consummation)(η συντελεια)(n-df-s) of the ages (ο αιων)(n-gm-p) for (εις)(pa)(=purpose) the removal (putting away, annulment) (η αθετησις)(n-af-s) of sin (η αμαρτια)(n-gf-s) by (δια)(pg) the sacrifice (η θυσια)(n-gf-s) of himself (αυτος-η-ο)(nrgmzs).

<sup>103</sup> τετελεσται<τελεω. indicative perfect passive

<sup>104</sup> Revelation 22:18-19

<sup>105</sup> φανερωθεντος δε επ εσχατου των χρονων

<sup>106</sup> επ εσχατου των ημερων τουτων ελαλησεν ημιν εν υω

<sup>107</sup> απαξ επι συντελεια των αιωνων ... αθετησιν της αμαρτιας

<sup>108</sup> εκχεω ... εν ταις εσχαταις ημεραις

<sup>109</sup> αναστησω αυτον εν τη εσχατη ημερα

<sup>110</sup> κρινει ... εν τη εσχατη ημερα

<sup>111</sup> επ εσχατου των ημερων τουτων

<sup>112</sup> Genesis 49:1; Deuteronomy 4:30; Isaiah 2:2; Jeremiah 30:24; Ezekiel 38:16; Daniel 10:14; Hosea 3:5; Micha 4:1

The purpose of his coming was ‘the removal’ (cancellation, annulment, setting aside)<sup>113</sup> of sin. The same word is used in Hebrews 7:18, “the setting aside of the law”. The announcement of the Melchizedek priesthood in Psalm 110:4 constitutes the *disannulling* or *abrogation* of the earlier law that set up the Aaronite priesthood. *Christ’s first coming was not ‘a destruction’<sup>114</sup> of the law, but ‘a fulfilment’<sup>115</sup> of the law<sup>116</sup>.*

**9:27.** According to so much (=just as) it is appointed (destined) for man to die once, and after that (to face) judgement,<sup>117</sup>

**9:28.** so also Christ, having been sacrificed once for the purpose of the taking up and away of the sins of many people<sup>118</sup>, for a second time will *certainly* appear without sin to those who *continually* wait patiently for him with a view to salvation (from physical death, temporary creation and all evil).<sup>119</sup>

People die once, by God’s appointment, and in their case *death is followed by judgement!* Christ died once, by God’s appointment, and in his case *death was followed by salvation* for all his people! Thus, non-Christians (non-believers) and Christians must have absolute opposite expectations about the second coming of Christ and about life after death! Christians are certain about their salvation, because Jesus Christ ‘took their sins upon’ himself and ‘took their sins away’ when he sacrificed himself<sup>120</sup>.

During the Old Testament period the people waited expectantly for the high priest to reappear from the temple after he had presented the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement. The writer of Hebrews presents the second coming of Christ in terms of this re-emergence of the High Priest, Christ, from the heavenly sanctuary. At his second coming he will complete the application of his completed work of salvation to his people (1:14)<sup>121</sup>!

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<sup>113</sup> αθετησις

<sup>114</sup> καταλυσαι

<sup>115</sup> πληρωσαι

<sup>116</sup> Matthew 5:17

<sup>117</sup> **9:27.** According to (κατα)(pa) so much (=just as) (οσον)(apran-s /apdan-s relative) it is appointed (destined) (αποκειται<αποκειμαι) (νιρν--zs)(the present tense indicates a truth that is continually true) for man (ο ανθρωπος)(n-dm-p) to die (αποθανειν>αποθνησκω)(vnaa) once (απαξ)(ab), and (δε) after (μετα)(pa) that (ουτος-αυτη-τουτο)(apdan-s demonstrative) (to face) judgement (η κρισις)(n-nf-s),

<sup>118</sup> Mark 10:45

<sup>119</sup> **7:28.** so (ουτως)(ab) also (και)(ab) Christ, having been sacrificed *once for all* (προσενεχθεις<προσφερω)(vrapnm-s) once (απαξ)(ab) for the purpose of the (εις το+infinitive)(expresses purpose) taking up and away (ανενεγκειν<αναφερω)(vnaaa) of the sins (η αμαρτια)(n-af-p) of many people (πολυς-πολλη-πολυ)(ap-gm-p), for a second time (εκ + δευτερος-α-ον)(apogm-s ordinal ) will *certainly* appear (be seen) (οφθησεται<οραω)(vifp--zs) without (χωρις)(pg) sin (η αμαρτια)(n-gf-s) to those who *continually* wait patiently for (who eagerly expect) (απεκδεχομενοις>απεκδεχομαι)(vppndm-p) him (αυτος-η-ο)(npanzs) with a view to (εις)(pa) salvation (η σωτηρια)(n-af-s) (from physical death and temporary creation and all evil).

<sup>120</sup> cf. Isaiah 53:10,12; 1 Peter 2:24

<sup>121</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:26