

And This Will We Do, If God Permits
An Expository Journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews**
Chapter 3: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ
Hebrews 1:1-4
35: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ: Part 20

WAOY Tuesday 02/17/09

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse-by-verse journey through the **Epistle of Hebrews**, and today I want to continue to look at what the writer of **Hebrews** taught about the Preeminence of Jesus Christ. So let's open our Bibles and read **Hebrews 1:1-4** again together:

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Now on the last broadcast, we were looking at the seven *excellencies* that the writer of **Hebrews** shows us in the second half of verse two and all of verse three. So let's read those verses again together:

2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Now in these two verses, we can see that the writer of **Hebrews** is going to great lengths to describe just who Jesus is to his first-century Jewish audience. And by teaching what he teaches here, the writer is showing these Jews, and us, that Jesus is far superior to any heavenly angel or any Old Covenant prophet.

And by looking closely at verses two and three of **Hebrews 1**, we saw that Jesus is both the instrument by which God made all things, and He is also the heir of all things that are made. We saw that all that God has done in the earth and all that God ever will do in the earth, He has done and will do for His own Glory... and we saw that Jesus Christ is the radiance or the brightness of that Glory. We also saw that Jesus Christ is the exact representation of the Father... that He acts and moves and operates in perfect accordance with the Father, for Jesus only does what He sees His Father do. And we also saw that it is Jesus that upholds all things by the Word of His own Power, and that by Him all things consist and have their being.

The writer of **Hebrews** is telling us under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost that Christ purged our sins all by Himself. That is, He was both the sinless Priest who administered the purging, but He was also the Spotless Sacrifice who was slain so that our sins could be forever purged.

Now, the Bible says that although Christ was both the High Priest and the Lamb who was slain, this Sacrifice and this purging were different than anything that occurred under the first Covenant. In other words, Jesus being offered as the sacrifice for sins was not just one of many sacrifices that all had equal value.

You see, under the Law the lamb was slain once a year on the Day of Atonement. But that Old Covenant purging was very much inferior to that which Jesus did for us, in that the Old Covenant sacrifices had to be done over and over again every year. And the reason those sacrifices had to be offered continually, year after year, is because not one single sin of anyone was ever purged by the sacrifice of an animal.

Now that may shock some of you, but the Bible says that this is true. Not one single sin of any human on earth was ever forgiven or purged by the sacrifice of an animal. In fact, that is not what animal sacrifices were for. The only thing that animal sacrifices did was hold back God's just Wrath against sin, just long enough for the people to slay another animal. That is why the Jews had to butcher literally

millions of animals over the centuries when animal sacrifice was in force. Please read again with me what the writer of **Hebrews** says about this in **Hebrews 10:4**, when he said:

⁴For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

And again in **Hebrews 10:11**, when he said:

¹¹Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

But Jesus, all by Himself, *did* purge our sins! And by purging them that means that Jesus did away with them forever by this one single act of Mercy and Grace when He died on the Cross and rose again. Now look at what this very same writer said in **Hebrews 7:25-27**:

²⁵Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

²⁶For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

²⁷who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

It was indeed a wondrous work when Jesus Christ created the world. And it is wondrous that Jesus sustains the world that He made. But a greater work than making and upholding the world is that of purging men of their sins. In **Hebrews 7:27** we are told that Jesus

²⁷... does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

You see, dear friends, in the Old Testament the priests had to make sacrifice after sacrifice, for themselves first because they too had sinned. And this is a huge point that the writer of **Hebrews** is trying so hard to make to his first-century Jewish audience, by reminding them that even though the priests were supposed to administer the sacrifice on behalf of others, they also were sinners and they also needed the

blood of animals to hold God's Wrath back from coming against them, while the sinless High Priest named Jesus had no need at all to be forgiven for any sin, because He never sinned one time! And the writer of **Hebrews** is passionately teaching here that not only was Jesus, the sinless High Priest, a much more superior High Priest than any Levite, but Jesus the Lamb was a much more superior sacrifice than any animal or any collection of animals.

All that the Old Covenant did, dear friends, was look forward to the time when the Messiah would come. All of the signs and symbols and types and shadows of the Law were *always* pointing toward the time when the Promises that were made under the Old Covenant would be entirely fulfilled in Jesus Christ in the New Covenant.

So Jesus did not make but one sacrifice. And He not only was the High Priest offering the Sacrifice, but He was also the Sacrifice itself. And because Jesus' Sacrifice was holy, pure, and perfect, He alone can purify our sins - something that all the Old Testament priests and all of the Old Testament sacrifices put together could never do. Biblical Christianity alone is the only religion in the history of the world where sin is forever dealt with by the finished Work of Jesus Christ. Under the Law, sin had to be dealt with over and over again every day. Under the demonic religion of Islam, sin has to be dealt with over and over again every day. Under the false religions of Buddhism and Hinduism, sin has to be dealt with over and over again every day. Under the false systems put forth by Rome or the Mormons or the Jehovah's Witnesses, sin has to be dealt with over and over and over again in every service. Even in many teachings by groups that we would easily call Christian or even Evangelical, sin has to be dealt with over and over and over again every day, because they all make the very same mistake in teaching and believing that Salvation is either a work wholly by Man, or a cooperative effort between God and Man, rather than what the Bible says that it is: a Sovereign Act of God alone.

And the net result of believing that Salvation is either wholly a work of Man or a cooperative effort between God and Man, is that since nobody got saved until Man chose God, then Man can "un-choose" God at any point or time down the road and be lost again. And this false teaching flies in the face of what the writer of **Hebrews** is teaching here when he says that Jesus Christ purged our sins forever all by Himself.

Either Jesus paid for all of our sins or He didn't. And if Jesus paid for our sins, then they are paid for and we don't have to pay for them day after day after day. If the **Epistle to the Hebrews** is true... if it is inspired, if it was God-breathed and reliable, then Jesus purged all of our sins one time- forever - all by Himself. And that means that at the very second that I receive faith from God to believe, and I put all my trust and all my confidence and all my hope in eternal Life in the finished Work of Jesus Christ, I am *forever* forgiven and all my sins are washed away. And that also means that all of those false religious systems which refuse to acknowledge and which refuse to believe and trust in all that Jesus has done for us, in forever purging our sins: it means that they still operate under the Old Testament concept of continual daily purging, and the Old Testament concept of having to seek a fresh sacrifice every day.

But under Jesus, under the sacrifice that Jesus made for us, sin is forever dealt with one time. Jesus paid for sins one time and He is never going to have to pay for them again. Jesus Christ dealt with the sin problem once and for all. And it had to be done. We could not communicate with God or enter into fellowship with Him unless sin was dealt with. So Christ went to the Cross and bore the penalty of sin for all who would accept His sacrifice, believe in Him, and receive Him. For those people, sin was forever purged and wiped out.

Now this Truth must have seemed especially remarkable to those to whom the **Epistle to the Hebrews** was originally written. The scandal of the Cross was a stumbling block to many Jews, but the writer of **Hebrews** never apologizes for it. Instead, he shows the Crucifixion of Jesus to be one of the seven excellent Glories of Jesus Christ, in that by that one single act that was done on time, all of the collective sins of all of the chosen people of God are forever purged. And all the collective Wrath of God that God would pour out on every chosen soul who sinned was poured out instead on Jesus. This writer's words are as straightforward as those of the Apostle Peter in **1 Peter 1:18-25**, when Peter said:

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,

¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the *blood* of Christ.

²⁰ For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you

²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

²² Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,

²³ for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.

²⁴ For,

“All flesh is like grass,

And all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,

And the flower falls off,

²⁵ But the word of the Lord endures forever.”

And this is the word which was preached to you.

You see, we are all sinners. And either we pay the penalty for our sins - which is eternal death - or else we accept Jesus Christ's Payment for sin in His Sacrifice, for which we receive eternal life. And if the desire of our heart is to receive Christ as Savior - to believe in and to accept His Sacrifice - then the Bible says that all of our sins are washed away and we are free to love and serve God.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Covenant of Peace Church 13600 John Clark Road Gulfport, Mississippi 39503 228.832.7729 www.covenantofpeace.net

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.