

## **The Lord's Last Will And Testament**

### **Hebrews 9:11-28**

#### **Introduction**

to the In the 9th chapter of Hebrews we are given glimpse into the inferiority of the Old Sanctuary as compared superiority of the New Sanctuary. In the first part of the chapter we discovered;

1. The Old Covenant Sanctuary is worldly of this earth on the earth (v.1).
2. The Old Covenant Sanctuary is a mere shadow of things to come (vv.2-5).
3. The Old Covenant Sanctuary had a very limited access to the people (vv.6-7).
4. The Old Covenant Sanctuary was temporary (v.8).
5. The Old Covenant Sanctuary was ineffective in changing the heart (vv.9-10).

Now the author explains the superior Sanctuary under the New Covenant. Superior in its location (v.11); superior in its ability to really change lives (vv.12-23); superior in its substance over the shadow (v.24); because it is based on a completed sacrifice (vv.25-28).

We are given a glimpse into heaven and heaven's worship. In Heaven we have a perfect priest who has offered a perfect sacrifice once for ever!

#### **The New Covenant Sanctuary; More Effective In It's Location (v.11)**

*Hebrews 9:11 (NKJV) 11But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*

Someone will someday write a book entitled; "Great but's of the Bible". Earlier in the chapter the author shared the deficiencies and limitations of the Old Covenant sanctuary; worldly (v.1); a shadow (vv.2-5); limited access to God for the people of God (vv.6-7); temporary (v.8); ineffective in producing a permanent change of heart (vv.9-10).

God was the Architect of the Old Tabernacle. It was filled with symbolism. The white wall of linen symbolized God's holiness and righteousness. There was only one gate or one way into the Tabernacle. There is only one way to enter God's presence.

The author will offer at least four reasons why the heavenly sanctuary is superior to the earthly sanctuary;

1. The person offering the sacrifice: It is Jesus Christ Himself (v.12a).
2. The preciousness of the sacrifice: Jesus offers His blood (v.12b).
3. The permanence of the sacrifice: Done once and will last for all time (12a).

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4. The power of the sacrifice: It brings eternal redemption (vv.12c-15).

What is the singular thing that differentiates the Old from the New? Jesus Christ. "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come".

Realtors will tell you it's all about location, location, location.

### **The New Covenant Priest; More Effective In Changing Lives (vv.12-23)**

*12Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.*

One of each was sacrificed on the Day of Atonement (see Lev.16:5-10). Another translation reads "but through His own blood" (same phrase used in 13:12). Jesus is the Sacrifice. He entered once for all—having obtained eternal redemption—found only here and in Luke 1:68; 2:38; its original use—meant the buying and the releasing of slaves—through the payment of a ransom. A better covenant; a better sanctuary; a better sacrifice.

*13For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,*

The writer makes reference to the elaborate rituals required for cleansing. The death of Jesus was necessary to fulfill the old covenant and establish the new covenant.

What is the significance of the ashes of the heifer? It is found in Numbers 19. John MacArthur writes; "It is said that, in the history of Israel, only six red heifers were killed and their ashes used. One heifer's ashes would suffice for centuries since only a minute amount of the ash was required" (see pp.1858-1859).

In the Law there were several things that rendered a person "unclean". If an Israelite touched a dead body, he became ceremonially unclean for seven days—the remedy was to mix the ashes of a heifer with pure spring water and to sprinkle the defiled person on the third and the seventh days. He then became clean. Mantle says; "The ashes were regarded as a concentration of the essential properties of the sin-offering, and could be resorted to at all times with comparatively little trouble and no loss of time. One red heifer availed for centuries" (noted by MacArthur).

Many people are put off by the concept of blood sacrifice. They find it at best bizarre and at worst repulsive!

But the Bible is clear; "the wages of sin is death" and the price of redemption is blood.

*14how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

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What is the author saying? If the blood of goats, bulls, heifers had the power to cleanse from the most serious outward—defilements—how much more powerful is the blood of Jesus to cleanse—not simply the outside defilements—but the internal—deep heart—personal defilements. What is the meaning of the eternal Spirit?—Different people have come to different conclusions—does it mean through an Eternal Spirit—meaning a willing Spirit—in contrast to the innocent—and yet unwilling sacrifices—the animals! Sacrifices take two forms—willing and unwilling! Or is this a reference to the Holy Spirit—that is Jesus made His sacrifice in the power of the Holy Spirit? Whatever it means—Jesus was innocent—spotless—sinless—the sinless lamb qualified to be Our Sin Bearer.

The blood is innocent (without spot to God); applied (through the eternal Spirit);

The blood wasn't shed simply to cleanse your conscience from dead works—but to serve the living God!

*15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

This single verse provides a lifetime of meditation, reflection and constant comfort. We are told;

1. Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant
2. The Saints are the recipients of an eternal inheritance
3. Those under the OLD COVENANT could receive forgiveness

Once again—how were people saved in the Old Testament?

If the blood of bulls and goats could only offer a temporary solution to the problem of sin;

The passage reminds us that Jesus had “become the guarantee of a better covenant” (7:22).

What is the author saying by “Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant”? Think carefully. There were Jewish people who had allegedly come to Christ who were now seeking to return to Judaism as the solution to their current trial or tribulation! To return to Judaism would mean to return to Moses as Mediator.

*“that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance”*

Who are the called? The elect. Who can receive the promise of eternal inheritance? Salvation was to be brought for those waiting for the Messiah! What did it mean to wait for God's Messiah? Redemption! Forgiveness! Hope! This promise was first given in the Garden of Eden when God said, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen.3:15). Someone

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would come and crush the head of Satan. A battle would be fought and won—between Satan and the seed of the Woman. A Human. Another promise would be given to Abraham. “And through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed” (Gen.22:18). What kind of blessing is involved? Intellectual contributions or social contributions or philosophical contributions? I think the blessing here is Christ—Jesus the Lord. The promise is a reference to Christ and His sacrifice! The context is a person and a sacrifice!

Jesus is the Mediator. He has become the Mediator by His own death. A death that paid a ransom. Jesus died as a ransom “for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant” that is committed under the first covenant.

*16For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.*

There is some debate whether the word should be translated “testament” or “covenant”. The New King James Translators have opted for ‘testament’. The reason seems to be the emphasis on the one who has made the testament (*diatheke*). The writer brings up death (here) and the metaphor of enforcement. The testament becomes binding upon death.

In this illustration or metaphor Jesus is the testator. Jesus made His will. When He died He sealed His will in His blood. But then something amazing happened. Jesus rose from the dead. He comes back to life—to make sure His will is executed in the exact way that He has proscribed. Jesus is His own Executor of His own will!

*17For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.*

In ancient times a will could serve the same function as in modern times. What is a testament? The express wishes of a person. Prior to death—a will can be changed, amended, altered or even destroyed. But once the testator is dead—the last will is the one in force.

Can a person distribute property before death? Of course. But again the point seems to be most wills reflect the wishes of a person after they die.

The author seems to be making the point that the spiritual benefits are distributed shortly after the death of our Lord Jesus. What are the Christians to receive? Forgiveness of sin? Yes. Eternal life? Yes. A future kingdom? Yes. In Daniel 7:18 we read “But the saints of the most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.”

Later the writer of Hebrews will say; “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken” (12:28).

*18Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood.*

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*19For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,*

*20saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you."*

*21Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.*

*22And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.*

The phrase shedding of blood translates one very long Greek word (*haimatekchysia*) found only here in the Greek New Testament. According to scholars (Behm; TDNT, 1:176)—it is the shedding of blood in slaying:

“The main point is that the giving of life is the necessary presupposition of the remission of sins. This was prefigured in the animal sacrifices of the OT, but what could be actualized in the OT (Heb.10:4) has now been established as an eternal truth by the death of Christ” (p.177)

What does it mean; “and without shedding of blood there is no remission”? Remission (aphesis—noun—related to the verb *aphiemi* (often translated forgiveness)—let go—send away—cancel—remit, pardon a debt or sin. The noun was used in secular Greek but also the Septuagint for release from captivity—and then came to be used for pardon, the cancellation of an obligation, a punishment, or guilt!

Sometimes the word is translated “remission” and sometimes “forgiveness”.

Salvation is always by blood. The blood must be innocent (v.14), shed (v.22), and applied (v.22).

Jesus said, “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt.26:28).

In Revelation 1:5; “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood”.

Salvation is always by blood. Salvation is always by a person. “Salvation is of the LORD” (Jonah 2:9). Salvation is always by grace. “For by grace are you saved through faith; and not of yourselves: It is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast” (Eph.2:8-9). “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11).

This grace is preceded by the sinner's faith—“therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom.5:1). “But without faith it is impossible to please

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him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb.11:6).

*23Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.*

The writer of Hebrews is giving us insight into the rituals in the Tabernacle and the Temple.

### **The New Covenant Ministry; More Effective In It's Fulfillment (v.24)**

*24For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;*

Jesus did not go into an earthly temple to fulfill some temporary requirements. Jesus entered into heaven itself—in the presence of God—for us!

The sacrifice of Jesus was made—once for all never to be repeated!

### **The New Covenant Sacrifice; More Effective In It's Permanence (vv.25-28)**

*25not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—*

*26He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

How many times has Jesus shown up? Once. Did Jesus visit this planet and people prior to his incarnation? I think a strong case can be made for the pre-incarnate visits of Jesus. But I think this passage reminds us that Jesus has only come once—in the incarnation. Once at the end of the ages (this age). At the beginning of Hebrews the author wrote; ‘but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son’ (1:2). Jesus lived and died in the last days of the age of the Law—the Old Covenant—the Mosaic age. Jesus lived at the time of the end of Moses and the Prophets (John the Baptist being the last Prophet under the Law). What did Moses and the Prophets (including John the Baptist) all have in common? They pointed to Jesus. They spoke of Jesus.

Jesus appeared “to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”.

What in the world does that mean—‘put away sin’? Jesus has done what no animal sacrifice could ever do—the sacrificial death of Jesus is sufficient to put away sin and provide forgiveness of all people for all times. I heard Robert Jeffers say “sufficient for all but efficient only for those who by faith will trust Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

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*27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,*

Appointed (apokeimai)—In Luke 19:20 it is translated in the literal sense “laid up” (KJV) or laid away (NIV); in two other places it is used in the spiritual sense (Col. 1:5 and 2 Tim. 4:8) where something is set aside or laid up for the Christian. Here the thought seems to be “Just as man is destined to die once” (NIV). We share a common end death—and after this judgment.

We all have an appointment with death.

*28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.*

This is the history of redemption in a nutshell. Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”

What does this mean? Is this a reference to the second coming of Jesus? Jesus appeared to humanity the first time in His incarnation. He will appear a second time—apart from sin—for salvation”. Salvation can mean many things depending on the context. Here the rescue seems to be—not a rescue from sin (he has already done that) but rather a rescue from this world and everything in it.

Someone (including William MacDonald; Believer's Bible Commentary; p.2188) has pointed out the three appearances of Jesus in vv.24-28;

v. 26 He has appeared—incarnation—advent—came to save us from the penalty of sin (the past tense of salvation)

v.24 He now appears—this is a reference to his present ministry in the presence of God to save us from the power of sin (the present tense of salvation)

v.28 He will appear—this speaks of His imminent Return when He will save us from the presence of sin (the future tense of salvation)

### **Conclusion**

The New Covenant of Grace is God's Last Will and Testament.

Tell me something Saint—aren't you interested in knowing what Jesus has left you in His will?

What has Jesus left you?

1. Full, final and forever pardon (he has appeared once for all—the work can never be repeated).

2. Jesus appeared at the end of the age (Moses law) after the Old Covenant fully and persuasively demonstrated man's failure and powerlessness.

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3. Jesus appeared to put away sin—no longer a matter of annual atonement—eternal forgiveness.

4. Jesus put away sin—by the sacrifice of Himself—in His own body—he bore the punishment we deserve.

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned He stood;  
Sealed my pardon with His blood;  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!  
Philip P. Bliss