

Consider Jesus: The Mediator of the New Covenant (Part 2) Hebrews 9:1-10:4

In Hebrews 9 our author continues to unfold the superior nature of the New Covenant and its Mediator, Jesus Christ. With the backdrop setting of the Old Covenant "shadows" and types - temples, tabernacles, incense, gold, etc. - "Christ appeared" (9:11) on center stage as the "Star" of this eternal drama of the ages - as the substance and the reality of God's story.

There were numerous lessons - partial and preparatory (Heb 1:1) - under the Old Covenant. To name only a few:

- 1) We can't just walk in on God as we please - with our own ideas, by our own merit, in our self-made righteousness. (A Holy, Holy, Holy God always sets the terms - "regulations" - 9:1)
- 2) However, He will make a merciful and gracious way or provision for a "connection" with Himself - 9:6-7.
- 3) Every Old Covenant regulation or ceremony pointed to something (Someone!) yet to be fulfilled, yet to come, that would provide full and perfect ("eternal" - 9:12) redemption.

That something, that Someone was the Messiah (9:11 - "when Christ appeared"). "All the good things to come" (9:11) came in Him! As our great High Priest He bypassed every "copy" (9:23,24) and surpassed every "symbol" (9:9) to go straight into the heavenly presence of God's throne room once for all (9:12,24). How could He do that? "Through His own blood" (9:12), by His perfect and sacrificial death (9:15,16) He was able to go straight into "the presence of God for us" (9:24).

"For this reason He is the mediator of a new (and better) covenant" (9:15). Through His sacrificial death we received an "eternal redemption" (9:12). Through His Risen Life we received an "eternal inheritance". Meaning what? This "once for all" work of our full and perfect Savior has supplied us with a "once and for all" full and perfect salvation! (9:23-10:4) The unique and sufficient once-for-all salvation secured by Christ is something the repetitive sacrifices could never secure (10:14). He came to "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (9:26) No more sin consciousness! No more sin gaps between God and me! No more condemnation! No "sinner" living in me any longer! He came to "cleanse our conscience from dead works" (9:14). What are "dead works"? Often, the things we do to try and put away our sin! The things we think will make our flesh more Christian! The things we'd stop doing if guilt were not the motive! He came to take away the fear of the presence of God (9:24,27-28). No fear of rejection, of death, of the judgment to come! Now we "eagerly await Him" (9:28) in every aspect of life!

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Greetings

There is a place where people pray more and pray harder than at church - at the airport baggage carousel! You start when the plane lands - "Please God, let my bags be there." It gets more intense when the group stands around the carousel - the light flashes, the bell or buzzer rings, and some even pray out loud, "I hope my luggage is not still in Detroit!" Shouts of praise and thanksgiving erupt, "Thank you Jesus! Oh what a blessing! Ahhh, relief!", especially if your suitcase is one of the first to come out of the chute. The longer you wait, however, the more fervent and impassioned the beseeching, "Not today, Lord. I need waders and boots to catch fish... I'm running late already... my sermon notes..." (A few times my suitcase has been the very last bag... a few times, it didn't come at all, and no matter how long you stand there, how hard you pray, how loudly you complain, it's not coming!)

I've learned some things about praying while standing at the baggage carousel of life. I'm learning by faith that God knows what I need... when I need it. What I think and what God determines are not always in synch! And I can demand all I want that God respond to my terms - and no matter how loudly I complain, He won't! I'm learning - daring - to thank God in such places. Thanking God in all things crowns Him Lord of every place and keeps me in my place - ever dependent, ever subordinate, ever trusting, before a Sovereign, Loving and Redemptive God who fully knows what I do not yet fully know - What I need... When I need it!

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