

"It Was Necessary, Therefore ..."

"... that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (Heb. 9:23). The writer has shown that a death has taken place for the transgressions which were under the first covenant; that even that first covenant had itself been dedicated by blood (9:18), concluding with the thought, *"I may almost say, all things are cleansed by blood, and apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission"* (Heb. 9:22).

Since, therefore that the whole system of the law; the tabernacle, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the covenant, "typified" that which was later to come, it was necessary that there be blood to cleanse or sanctify that first covenant. Thus he writes, *"For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses unto all the people according to the law, he took scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and the people, saying This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded to youward"* (Heb. 9:19f, Ex. 24:8).

But, as the writer repeatedly has shown, since these things were only a shadow or copy of that which was to come, the blood used to cleanse these copies was ineffectual. While all things are cleansed by blood and apart from the shedding of it, there is no remission; the blood of bulls and goats cannot itself remove sins (Heb. 10:4). It was necessary that better sacrifices be made to cleanse the heavenly things of which the tabernacle, with the priesthood and sacrifices, were copies of. *"For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the Holy Place year by year with blood not his own; else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"* (Heb. 9:24-26).

The necessity of better sacrifices than those under the law was mandatory. If the heavenly things of which the tabernacle, et al., were a copy of could do no more than that which were copies of it, what was the purpose of making that sacrifice? If the blood of animals could accomplish as much in cleansing and forgiveness as the blood of Christ, why should He die? The justification for the offering of Jesus is based upon the thought that such a sacrifice was necessary, that there was eternal benefit from that sacrifice, not found in the sacrifices made which preceded His. The constant sacrifices offered under the law would mean Christ must die often, if this eternal quality of forgiveness was not found in his blood.

"And inasmuch as it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this cometh judgment, so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sins, to them that wait for him unto salvation" (Heb. 9:27f). This statement, so often cited as proof of judgment coming after death; actually is made to establish the writer's point of the necessity for a better sacrifice. Men do not die multiple times before judgment; Christ does not die many times to accomplish man's cleansing! His next appearance will not be to accomplish cleansing for men! His next appearance will be to gather to Himself those cleansed by His one sacrifice, offered for all.

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