

58-09-05.wpd --Anticipating Jesus
sacrifice, Tabernacle, priesthood, death, judgment, Second Coming
Heb 9:15-28

The entire universe is waiting for God's promise of restoration.

INTRODUCTION:

[Anticipating Christmas Day is often more enjoyable than opening gifts on Christmas morning. But contemplating the arrival of God's Son on Planet Earth has delighted the hearts of believers all year long, year after year, for 2000 years. Owen Feltham (English author of 1600s) wrote, "*All earthly delights are sweeter in expectation than in enjoyment; but all spiritual pleasures more in fruition than in expectation.*"

--*Expectation* is usually the result of a *promise*. The Bible is one long story of promise, from the *promising paradise* in Eden that we lost, to the promised restoration, when a "new heaven and new earth" will become ours at Christ's return. Scripture makes it clear that **HOM.idea....**

--The **text** speaks of a "*promised eternal inheritance*" under a new covenant, a promise that anticipated the coming of Jesus, who would be the priest or "*mediator*" to bring it about. We see this anticipation in the OT, in Heaven itself, and in us, who are waiting for His return.

I. The Old Testament Anticipated the Coming of Jesus

- A. For sinners to have a right relationship with God, their sins must be dealt with (the purpose of OT sacrifices was to atone for [cover over] people's sins in anticipation of their final removal.)
- B. God's *old covenant* bound Him to what's recognized as a "*last will and testament*," a written promise of His will for those who would inherit what the testament promised...
 1. This meant, in legal terms, that for His will to be effective, God would have to die-- **v.16-17**, *In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.*)
 2. In the case of the OT, God could not die, and that is why the old covenant was temporary. It *anticipated* a new covenant, which would bring into reality what the OT could only point to.
 3. It is impossible for God to *die*... unless He becomes *human*-- Luke 22:20b, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (when Jesus said that, He was declaring His deity! He was saying, "Remember that *will and testament* I gave you so long ago? I am here now, to make it effective by My death.")

TRANS: The OT spelled out the *moral laws* that define human sin. It gave *ritual laws* to *cover over* those sins temporarily. But it could not bring about God's will and testament of a "*promised eternal inheritance*," not until the Maker of the will could die. The OT anticipated the death of the God who made it. Heaven itself anticipated this!

II. The Heavenly Tabernacle Anticipated the Coming of Jesus

- A. In the OT, the Tabernacle was dedicated symbolically for ministry by the blood of sacrificed animals, but it was only a copy of the one in Heaven, which Moses had seen and was told to replicate.
- B. We can see the need for an earthly Tabernacle, where Heaven met Earth, but WHY the need for a Tabernacle in Heaven?
 1. God's plan for humanity that was just starting in Eden was much bigger than it appeared. We learn in the NT that the destiny of the physical universe and even of Heaven itself was connected with God's plan for the human race.
 2. Humanity's place in the restoration of "that which was lost" touches Heaven itself, because the human death of God's Son was needed to cleanse that heavenly Tabernacle, where Earth meets Heaven--**v.23-26**. It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

TRANS: The entire universe is waiting for God's promise of restoration. Earth awaited it in the OT covenant. Heaven awaited it in a heavenly Tabernacle that represented a missing factor in God's overall plan for the created universe. That missing factor was us, humanity, and Heaven awaited a Human who could restore the plan. Jesus, by becoming one of us, was that Human!.... Today,

III. Believers Are Anticipating the Coming of Jesus

- A. Listen to how this chapter of Hebrews ends--**v.27-28**, *Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed*

once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. (Jesus came the 1st time, not to *cover over*, but "to take away [our] sins" by His death. Believers everywhere anticipate His 2nd coming, "not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.")

B. Two words to focus on in these verses are *judgment* and *salvation*:

1. The basis of "*judgment*" after death is a person's honest response to this question: "*Have you joined yourself to the crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ?*" Our acceptable answer to that question is seen in the sacraments of **baptism** and **communion**.
 - a. In **baptism**, we show, once for all, our connection to Christ in His death and burial, where He not only *removed our sins*, but *buried our old life* and *raised us to new life in Him*.
 - b. In **communion**, we acknowledge our ongoing connection to the death of God's Son, not only to feed our spiritual lives, but to "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."
2. When He does come, He is bringing the complete "salvation" that we have only begun to experience now through new birth. When He returns, Jesus will lead us, totally restored in resurrected bodies, to fulfill a human destiny beyond our wildest dreams.

CONCLUSION:

--**The entire universe is waiting for God's promise of restoration.**

But the focus is centered on the response of humanity to God's plan of salvation. Humans, made in the image of a Sovereign God, have the ability to choose for themselves how they respond to the question:

"*Will you join yourself to the crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ?*"

Heb 9:15-28 (NIV) For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. {16} In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, {17} because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. {18} This is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood. {19} When Moses had proclaimed every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people. {20} He said, "This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep." {21} In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. {22} In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. {23} It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. {24} For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. {25} Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. {26} Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. {27} Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, {28} so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.