

Hebrews 9:11-28: A Sanctuary for the Conscience, Part II- "A Bloody Service"

Intro: Our society aspires to become more sophisticated in religion leaving behind the bloody scenes and practices of human and animal sacrifices to practice a more benevolent, clean, practical, and inspiring spirituality. The brotherhood and the essential goodness of mankind are themes that lie at the core of such attempts at a nobler and kinder pursuit of religions or spirituality. Are we really advancing in such attempts? Have the modern purveyors of such religions discovered a truly better and redeeming path? Why does Christianity insist on the cross with its bloody service and constant reminders of death?

- 1) The bloody service exposes that no matter how much we try to get better and appear nobler and kinder, there is death in the heart of man; this world has been subjected to vanity, corruption, and death since the fall. Any tabernacle or worship that man attempts to build and offer to God must reckon with their rebellion, sin, and guilt before their creator. *Do we confess our own guilt, corruption, and death?*
- 2) The bloody service in the sacrifices, blood, and death of the OC testifies to the reality of such guilt, corruption or uncleanness before God. Hence, God, the Holy God, must be appeased, namely, satisfied in His righteous demands of death for the transgressor. Such bloody service testified to the Holiness, Purity, and Righteousness of God. *Do we confess God as Holy, Good, and Righteous in His verdicts?*
- 3) The bloody service testifies to the condemnation of the first order of things, not just what we know to be bad but also what we think is good. While man humanly speaking can be said to work much good, the standard is God's law, thus, we have all sinned and fall short of His righteousness. Without Christ, all our "good" works are dead works, they are all sinful. *Do we confess the corruption of ALL our works separated from Christ?*
- 4) The bloody service testifies to covenantal life with God which means defining/understanding/attaching ourselves properly by our representative/covenantal heads, Adam and Christ. 2 heads and 2 covenants: in Adam: obey and live/disobey and die (the law) --- in Christ: believe/trust in the One who obeyed both in life and death (the law) becoming the last/true Adam for us. *Have we come to see and live our lives from the implications of such 2 heads/covenants?*
- 5) The bloody service under the OC signifies that blood/death is required to cleanse from sin and enter into covenant relationship with God. Israel promised to obey the covenant which demanded death for transgressors yet foreshadowed forgiveness in the sacrifices. Although, God is holy and must punish transgressors, He is also merciful/gracious and makes a way to be both just and justifier of sinners. God provides the blood/guilt/death of transgressors upon the body of Christ in order to forgive sinners by grace through faith in a New Covenant.
- 6) Truly in Christ, the old has passed away and the new has come! Such truth begins to penetrate and govern our conscience as we battle against sin. However, because our flesh and this age still remain, our perfection cannot be morally/spiritually complete, that is without sin; yet, through assurance in the conscience of perfection in Christ, the fruits of new creation begin to abound in our lives against the flesh that we constantly put to death in Christ. This is the inheritance that Christ has willed by His blood to His people until the culmination and recreation of all things.

