

Heb 9:27-28 The Sacrifice of Christ: Summary and Applications

Chapter 9 is all about the Great Sacrifice of our Great High Priest! We've seen the excellency of his sacrifice as Jesus did not come with the blood of bulls and goats, but instead, He offered HIMSELF. We've seen the reach of his sacrifice. In other words, his sacrifice reached all the way to heaven itself, to the very presence of God. We've seen the sufficiency of this sacrifice as a one-time offering. And finally we've seen the effects of this sacrifice as it is powerful to purify the conscience, take away sins, and cleanse those who come to him. In vv. 23-26 we have a summary of these things. And finally in vv. 27-28, we see the great application of these truths, which will take up all our time today under four headings: 1) Death, 2) Judgment, 3) Appearing, and 4) Salvation.

1. Death. Look at v. 27: "**And just as it is appointed for man to die once . . .**" The author's point is that as a man Jesus died once. And, He does not need to be offered up as a sacrifice again. Often, we take his death for granted! As Christians we say, "*Jesus died*" many times over and over again. And to many, his death may have become commonplace. Christians may speak these words without giving much thought. But this should never be! There is nothing more serious, nothing more solemn, nothing more central to the great plan of God for this world than the death of Christ. For God to send his Son into this evil world and offer himself as a sacrifice for sinners, for his "enemies" goes beyond my/our comprehension!

Before returning to this point, let's think back for a moment. Where did death come from? Who is responsible for death? What is it? Why does everyone die? Why is it more certain than taxes? Why does it cause so much fear? Why do men try their whole lives to evade it, cheat it somehow? Well, our text says it was "appointed" for man to die once. Who appointed it? It was APPOINTED by God. Why? In Gen. 2:16-17 God says to Adam: "**You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**" Here we have the command of God not to eat of that tree, and then the consequence, death, is given as a penalty. In a football game when someone is offsides there is a 10 yard penalty. When a driver breaks the law of speeding the penalty is a fine. If someone breaks into your house and steals your things there is the penalty of retribution and jail time. We understand this. In the same way, death is God's penalty for disobedience to his commands. And, for those who sin, there is only one death. And this punishment fits the crime.

But let's be clear with what death is. Death isn't merely the expiration of a body. We are both soul and body. And yes, our bodies will die one day. But, death is also separation from God, as God cannot look upon sin. And, death is also eternal. It is eternal because we have sinned against an eternal God. And God cannot overlook such a sin. To overlook ANY unrighteousness, is contrary to the character of God. And think about this: If God's judgment for sin is death, and this punishment fits the crime, consider how GREAT an offense it is: physical death, separation from God, and eternal hell.

I know this is a difficult topic. But, we must talk about it. The Bible speaks often about death and why it comes to all of us. It is appointed by God. And I believe the more we understand the depths of our sin and depravity, the greater our God will be when He saves us (which is next in

this passage). Brothers and sisters, my greatest times of revival in my heart and the greatest moments of love coming down to me is when I see HOW GREAT MY SIN IS as I regard the holiness of God. And then, I see his mercy in Christ. (And we will get there.) But, turn with me to Is. 59. Starting with v. 2 we read: **“But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies; your tongue mutters wickedness. No one enters suit justly; no one goes to law honestly; they rely on empty pleas, they speak lies, they conceive mischief and give birth to iniquity. They hatch adders’ eggs; they weave the spider’s web; he who eats their eggs dies, and from one that is crushed a viper is hatched. Their webs will not serve as clothing; men will not cover themselves with what they make. Their works are works of iniquity, and deeds of violence are in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they are swift to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; desolation and destruction are in their highways. The way of peace they do not know, and there is no justice in their paths; they have made their roads crooked; no one who treads on them knows peace.”**

Brothers and sisters, these words describe the people of Israel during Isaiah’s prophecy. They also picture what WE are like as sinners. And v. 2 gives the result. As sinners, we are separated from God. And the way of peace we do not know (v. 8). And let me ask, “What waits us on the other side of death?” It is judgment, which brings us to the 2nd part of v. 27.

2. Judgment. V. 27 says, **“and after that comes judgment.”** Now, as we’ve seen, the judgment for sin is death. This is why we die physically. This is why our bodies go back to the dust. This is why we are separated from God, now, spiritually. But, this text deals with so much more. He says, “AFTER” death comes judgment. This judgment is connected with the 2nd coming of Christ. This is a general statement: *“After death comes judgment.”* This is true, and this is what the world fears. This aspect of death is what lies underneath all the fears of sinful men. There is a judgment to come.

Many non-Christians see death as a relief. But, this will not be the case. There will be a final judgment. I think of Jesus teaching in Matt. 25 when he says: **“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’ (vv. 31-34).** And then later he says: **“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels’ (v. 41).** This is the truth set before us in the Scriptures. Beyond physical death, there will be a final judgment. And this will come at the appearing of Christ.

3. Appearance. In this text we see the word “appearance” two times. In v. 26 it says, **“But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”** This first appearance is Christ’s FIRST coming as the long-awaited Messiah. This is his incarnation as God takes on flesh. And the emphasis of this first appearing is his death, the great sacrifice on the cross, to “put away sin.” (This is what we have talked about the last two

weeks, and what continues in cp. 10). Now look at v. 28: **“so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time . . .”** Here, the author ties Jesus first coming and his sacrifice with his second coming. And the connection between the two appearances is very important. Why? Because there is no second coming without the first coming, particularly the “putting away of sin.”

A good example may be Jesus’ words with the religious leaders when he says in Matt. 12:29, **“How can someone enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.”** So it is with war. What happens when there is a strong, fortified, position that must be taken? Well, the strategy is to take away the advantages and “disarm” the enemy before the invasion. This is what happened on D-Day as the ships off the coast bombed the area before the ground troops arrive. In the same kind of way, Jesus, in his great sacrifice on the cross, takes away sins of his people. If Jesus does not take away sin on the cross at his first coming, then who will he come back for? No One! For All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. This is why Paul says to the Colossians: **“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him”** (Col. 2:13–15).

Even in the Old Covenant, the high priest went into the holy of holies with a particular task, to do the duties of a priest who goes between the people. And he carries the blood of the sin and guilt offerings into the most holy place. But he continued this year after year. And every time he came out still a sinner, never fully conquering the problem of sin. This is why there must be another sacrifice from another priest from a different order. Look at vv. 23-26: **“Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”**

This means that when Jesus returns, He will not deal with sin. He will not do it again. He will not lay down his life as a sacrifice again. It was truly finished on the earth, on the cross, when Jesus said, *“It is finished.”* The resurrection is still to come, and it is implied in this text because one does not return if one is dead! But the EMPHASIS here is on the one time sacrifice. And finally notice what will happen for those who wait for him.

4. Final Salvation. Do you remember a few minutes ago when I spoke of an “eternal” sin. Well, in order for salvation to be effective there must be an “eternal” sacrifice. In other words, there must be a sacrifice WORTHY of such a salvation. This is really the point of the author when comparing blood of bulls and goats with that of Christ! Look back at Heb. 2:1-2: **“Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or**

disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?”

Yes, we are saved NOW. But this verse is speaking about a final salvation that will begin at his coming when faith will become sight. Today is the day of faith. Tomorrow is the day of sight. And who does he save? Those who are “eagerly (ESV addition) *waiting for him*.” I did a long word study this week on this word “wait,” and it is peculiar to Paul. The exact same word is used in Rom. 8 where he says ALL of creation “groans” as they “eagerly” wait for their redemption. And when will this happen? It will happen at Jesus’ 2nd coming. In the same way, we wait with eagerness, with groaning, with anticipation (See Rom. 8:19, 23, 25, 1 Cor. 1:7; Gal. 5:5).

I think of the people who saw the high priest go into the holy of holies. I imagine they were eager (among other things) for his return from the holy of holies and the tabernacle.

For the rest of our time, let’s consider how we apply these truths.

Application: It is always best practice to interpret Scripture with Scripture. So, when you come to such a teaching, always ask yourself, “Where is this taught in other places.” For a good example turn to Rom. 5:12-19: **“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”**

Application: Final judgment is certain. It has been set by God in the future for a particular day. And those who die outside of Christ, only wait that day. And, there is no change from one state or another. There are no other chances. There is no purgatory! Death will come and go (and many think they are merely moving on from death). But, judgment remains! It will come at the 2nd coming and judgment of Christ. And NO ONE will escape judgment.

Application: There will still be a “judgment” for Christians, as “all will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” But, our judgment will not be one of condemnation. Why? Christ has paid our penalty! So, the penal aspect of judgment is removed. This is why we still die (physically). This is universal judgment and the consequence of sin. But, it will not be penal for the Christian.

Application: Consider the great mercy of God. God did not have to provide such a salvation for sinners. He could have left all of us there and not accomplished such a great salvation! Therefore, do not neglect so great a salvation!

Application: Until his return we live by faith and not by sight.

Application: We live in the time of salvation. Jesus has not come yet. This is why Paul can say, **“Today is the day of salvation”** (2 Cor. 6:2). It is what we do now that affects what will happen on that day. What will you do with cross of Christ? If you have believed on the Jesus, if you are in Him, if you are a Christian, your sins have already been judged. And yes, there is another judgment (the judgment seat of Christ) for all. But, for the Christian, there will be a final “salvation” (see. v. 28).

Application: The next appearing of Christ will be in glory, not in humility. We must not forget this. We must shift our thinking and not expect the suffering servant (though it was necessary for our salvation, and we will never forget this glorious truth), but instead we await a reigning KING!

Application: It is God who establishes the rules of this world, not us. (“It is appointed by God”)

Application: Death did not enter this world on its own. It is God’s punishment for sin. This means death is not merely “natural.”

Application: For me, and many of us, this may be the most difficult subject to think about it. This is why many preachers (including myself) don’t preach it often. But we must! And if we go through Books of the Bible verse by verse, we will certainly preach it. (Hebrews is full of this truth!)

Application: Seeing the depths of sin and the coming judgment must motivate us to live godly lives and make disciples of this world. Let me end with Tit. 2:11-14: **“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”**