

January 17, 2021

Reviving our Faith

"...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..."

Hebrews 9:15-16

"But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God...because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."

Hebrews 10:12-14

"Therefore brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is his body, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith..."

Hebrews 10:19-25

Among the tasks accomplished by the people of Israel at Mount Sinai during the year that they stayed there was the careful construction of the Tabernacle of God. This 'Tent of Meeting' became the place where the people would come to meet with God. It was divided into two rooms; the first or outer room was called the Holy Place and the second or inner room, the Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies. The Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Most Holy Place and the High Priest could only enter that space once per year on the Day of Atonement.

Before the High Priest could enter into God's presence he had to offer a blood sacrifice for his own sins. After the blood of that sacrifice was carried into God's presence he could leave to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people and the blood of that sacrifice was also brought before God in the Most Holy Place.

In reminding all believers of our perfected relationship with God the Hebrew author paints a picture of Jesus, the perfect High Priest, offering a one time and for all time sacrifice for our sins. Because he was sinless he could be the perfect sacrifice for our sins. So, under our new and perfected covenant with God, our High Priest makes it possible for God to purify us from our sins once and for all.

Through that perfect sacrifice by which you and I are ransomed from the consequences of our own sin, Jesus has opened a way for us to enter into God's presence at any time; to literally live there. At the death of Jesus on the cross the Gospels tell us that the curtain in the temple was torn in two. This curtain, which separated the people from God's presence in the old tabernacle, has been opened for us as God's chosen people.

Unlike the people of Israel, you and I can have *"...confidence to enter the Most Holy Place..."*; we can enter into the very presence of God and we can do that without fear because we are washed in the blood of Jesus. No people, not even the chosen people of Israel, have enjoyed such open access into the very presence of the God of creation.

Despite the chaos of our troubled world we, as believers, still have that access through our faith in God and in the redemption we have in Jesus. No matter what might be happening around us, you and I can stand in the presence of God and trust that we are safe in that presence. As the Apostle Paul wrote, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship of persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor*

life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:35-39)

So, when we grow tired and discouraged because of this troubled and chaotic world the Hebrew author would call us to remember who and whose we are. Through the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus we who believe always stand in the very presence of the God of all creation and nothing in that all of that creation can separate us from that presence.

