

¹¹ But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. ¹² Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵ And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Text: Hebrews 9:11-15 A 4-6-25 Passion History #5 Psalm 148 Responsive Psalm: 43
Hymns: 151 (1-3, 6-7), 276, 386 (1-3), 386 (4-5)

JESUS IS OUR PERFECT HIGH PRIEST

My Savior sinners doth receive;
Who find no rest and no salvation,
To whom no man can comfort give,
So great their guilt and condemnation;
For whom the world is all too small,
Their sins both them and God appal;
With whom the Law itself hath broken,
On whom its judgment hath been spoken –
To them the Gospel hope doth give;
My Savior sinners doth receive.
My Savior sinners doth receive. (TLH #386:1)

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

During the time of the Old Testament, the high priest would go through the veil, or curtain, inside the tabernacle into the Most Holy Place. He could only enter the most Holy Place once a year, and he had to bring with him the blood of an animal sacrifice. The sacrifice was for his sins and the people's sins. It was to teach God's people that we're all sinners who can only come before Him, the holy God, because of the sacrifice of His Son.

We're reminded that the Old Testament tabernacle was "*made with hands.*" The tabernacle that Jesus serves in, we're told, is "*not of this creation.*" The tabernacle that Jesus serves in is called "*the greater and more perfect tabernacle.*" The High Priest entering the Most Holy Place was a picture of Jesus, God the Son, Who comes directly to God the Father.

Jesus is called "*Christ,*" which means "*Anointed One.*" In the Old Testament a priest was anointed by having some olive oil poured on his head. It signified that he had been chosen for his office. God the Father said about Jesus Christ, "*This is My beloved Son*" (Mt. 3:17). God sent Jesus as our perfect high priest. We're told, "*Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come.*" Jesus replaced the Old Testament high priests. "*The good things to come*" refers to

the Good News that we don't need the Old Testament sacrifices anymore because they pointed to Jesus, who fulfilled them.

When Jesus died the curtain inside the temple, which was thirty feet high and as thick as your hand, tore completely in two from top to bottom (Lk. 23:45). The significance of that is that we sinners can come to God through Jesus. Why would we still want high priests entering the Most Holy Place for us when we can come to God by faith in Jesus? Hebrews 4:14, 16 says, "*We have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. ... Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*"

We're told, "*Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood [Jesus] entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.*" Why would we still want a high priest to bring the blood from a sacrifice into the Most Holy Place? Jesus shed His blood on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for our sins, once and for all. Two chapters before our text we're told about Jesus, "*Such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself*" (He. 7:26-27). Just before He died Jesus declared, "*It is finished!*" (Jn. 19:30), which can also be translated, "*It is paid in full!*" We're told that as our perfect High Priest Jesus "*obtained eternal redemption*" for us. "*Redemption*" in the original is "*loosing, releasing, providing a ransom.*" Jesus paid for every sin of every sinner. Our sins are forgiven.

Our text refers to "*the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer.*" The Old Testament believers were forgiven and saved the same way we are. They offered the sacrifices God commanded, and they placed their faith in the coming Savior for forgiveness. The Old Testament believers were forgiven and saved by faith in the coming Savior. We New Testament believers are forgiven and saved by faith in the same Savior – the Savior who has come.

We're told that "*Christ, ... through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.*" If we go back to offering the Old Testament animal sacrifices, in effect we're saying that Jesus' sacrifice wasn't enough to save us. We're saying that we have to do something to be saved. But how are we ever going to be certain that we've done enough? If there were something we had to do, sacrifices we still had to offer, then why did Jesus have to die on the cross? We're not saved by what we do for God. We're saved by what God did for us. We're told, "*The blood of Christ ... [cleanses] your conscience.*" We shouldn't look to anything in us or in what we do for the confidence that we're saved. We look to Jesus, and we know we're saved!

Jesus had to suffer terribly and die on the cross because of our sins. Jesus knew He was the only hope for our salvation. Jesus willingly suffered and died for us because He loves us. He willingly put Himself through all He did to save us. David says, "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart – these, O God, You will not despise*" (Ps. 51:17). What Jesus wants from us is sorrow over our sins. We tell Him we're sorry for our sins. We place our trust in Him, and He forgives us.

We're told, "[Jesus] is the Mediator of the new covenant." As "the Mediator of the new covenant," Jesus has made peace between His Father and us. God loves us and forgives us. God is our dear, loving heavenly Father, and we are His dearly-loved children.

We're told, "*The blood of Christ ... [cleanses] your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*" We want to live our lives for Jesus who gave His life for us. God says, "*Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own. For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's*" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). God doesn't want us to live in fear of Him. At the same time, we don't want to take Him and our relationship with Him for granted. God deserves our reverence and respect. God deserves for us to live our lives for Him. Jesus tells us, "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind*" (Mt. 22:37). "Jesus, help us to put You first in our hearts and lives. Help us to live lives of faith and love, pleasing to You."

Jesus says His purpose for us is "*that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*" We know from the first chapter of Ephesians that we are among God's "called," God's elect, because we believe in Jesus as our Savior. As God's "called" – as those who believe in Jesus – we "*receive the promise of the eternal inheritance*" in heaven! As the Bible says, "*Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" (Jn. 3:16)

God cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden Of Eden. He didn't want them to eat fruit from the Tree Of Life and live forever in their sinful state (Ge. 3:22-24). We don't want to live forever in these sinful bodies that suffer from sickness, disease, and injury. We don't want to live forever in this sinful world with all of its problems. In heaven we'll have perfect health, perfect peace, and perfect happiness forever. In heaven we'll see God and serve Him perfectly always. We can't wait to be there!

Oh, draw us ever unto Thee,
 Thou Friend of sinners, gracious Savior;
 Help us that we may fervently
 Desire Thy pardon, peace, and favor.
 When guilty conscience doth reprove,
 Reveal to us Thy heart of love.
 May we, our wretchedness beholding,
 See then Thy pardoning grace unfolding
 And say; "To God all glory be:
 My Savior, Christ, receiveth me.
 My Savior, Christ, receiveth me." Amen.
 (TLH #386:5)