**The Better Ministry of Jesus Christ through His Blood 9:11-22**

The overall theme of Hebrews is the supremacy of God’s Son Jesus Christ. The Son reveals God perfectly and speaks the words of God to us in these last days. The Son also mediates God’s grace. The prophecies and promises of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New Covenant of which Christ is the mediator.

*The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of God’s being sustaining all things by his powerful word.* *After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.* vs. 1:3.

Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians some of whom were being tempted to revert to Judaism, facing hardships because of their faith, were spiritually immature, at risk for becoming complacent, losing heart, growing weary. Some had fallen away and left the faith with hardened and unbelieving hearts.

*The word of God is alive and active…it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart*. 4:12

God speaks to the church then and now exhorting us to hold firmly to our faith and to approach God’s throne of grace with confidence through our great high priest Jesus the Son of God for mercy and to receive grace and help in our need. And He exhorts us to encourage one another as well, that none of us would fall away with an unbelieving heart.

We also see God’s supreme Son Jesus Hebrews as one who was fully human and subject to temptation but in without sin.

Jesus was *fully human in every way… …* 2:17

*He was tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin*. 4:15

We are exhorted to fix our eyes on this Jesus, the pioneer and perfector of faith. Hebrews gives us hope as we live in these last days looking forward to Christ’s coming again to bring salvation to us who wait for him, who persevere to the end to receive the promised eternal inheritance.

Two weeks ago, Pastor Paul’s message in Chapter 8 and the first part of Chapter 9, introduced the theme of the superiority of the New Covenant and the limitations of the Old Covenant. There were two serious limitations of the old covenant – severe restriction or access to God **and** the animal sacrifices offered were ceremonial and external only and did not provide actual cleansing of the conscience nor power to obey the law. Today as we focus on the significance of the blood of Christ

1. **A Better High Priest and Better Sacrifice 11-14**
2. **A Better Covenant and Mediator 15-22**

**Key Verse: *14How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!***

1. **A Better High Priest and A Better Sacrifice 11-14**

**11*But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. 12He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. 13The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. 14How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!***

Let’s look at verse 11 - **11*But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here…***

“But” is referring back to the previous section about the old order of worship in the first tabernacle, in particular the Day of Atonement, once every year, when the High Priest offered sacrifices for his own sins first and then the sins of the people and entered the Most Holy Place carrying the blood of sacrifice. Picking up with verse 8 –

 *8The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning. 9This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. 10They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.*

***But*** *when* ***Christ*** *came* *as high priest* he ushered in this ***new order*** – the one that the old covenant ceremonial sacrifices were anticipating and pointing toward. Christ is our better High Priest – without sin himself and interceding for the people in heaven not on earth, eternally and effectively.

***The good things that are now already*** ***here*** are the good things that have come through Jesus Christ and his ministry. The early church lived in a time where the ceremonial worship continued in the Temple until AD 70 even after Jesus’s life, death, resurrection and ascension. The *good things* *that are now already here* – the writer of Hebrews emphasizes that these are already here – the Jewish Christians did not need to go back to the old order now. The good things are God’s promises to His people through Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, King David and all the prophets – eternal inheritance – the covenant blessings – all these good things finally come to God’s people fully in Jesus Christ.

Now look at the rest of verse 11 and 12 - ***he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.***The greater and more perfect tabernacle that’s not man-made and not even part of the created universe, is the true heavenly tabernacle – the original on which the earthly copy or shadow was based. This part of the good things in this new order.

*He entered the Most Holy Place once for all****by his own blood***, not by the blood of animals, not by external or ceremonial washing. Christ entered the Holy of Holies by his death on the Cross, by shedding His innocent blood. Christ offered himself unblemished to God - he lived a holy life of love in full obedience to the Father. We see in this passage that Jesus is not only our Great High Priest, He is our perfect sacrifice, the Lamb of God.

Christ *entered the Most Holy Place****once for all****by his own blood****,****thus obtaining****eternal redemption.***This emphasizes both the once for all, one time, once for all time, the definitive nature of his sacrifice and the lasting permanence of it – eternal redemption.

In these two verses there is also hint at an additional aspect of this more perfect tabernacle and new way into the Holy of Holies that is made more explicit in Hebrews 10:19b-20 where we are - *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.* This is a reference to the tabernacle’s 2nd curtain for the entrance into the Most Holy Place. Among other dramatic supernatural effects witnessed at the time of Jesus’ death on the cross, the earthly temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom, according to Matthew, Mark and Luke’s gospels (Mt 27:51, Mk 15:38, Lk 23:45) when Jesus cried out in a loud voice “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit”, gave up his spirit, breathed his last breath. Early on when the Jews in the Temple challenged Jesus’ authority to cleanse the Temple courts and asked for proof, Jesus said “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” John writes that the temple Jesus referred to was his body, predicting his death and resurrection. Jn 2:18-22

Jesus’ ministry is better as the great high priest whose ministry gives us eternal and unlimited access to God, eternal redemption. But Jesus himself, in particular his body and his blood, is the curtain; Jesus is the new way into this eternal redemption and the most Holy presence of God. This is what we celebrate and remember when we eat the bread of communion – his body broken for us – and drink the blood of the covenant – His blood poured our for us for forgiveness of sin.

Now that I’ve been a believer in and follower of Christ for a few years short of 50, I don’t think twice when I hear the phrase “the blood of Christ” or blood of animal sacrifices. In fact, it is one of the most central and precious tenets of our faith and the source of great consolation, assurance and gratitude. But when I try to explain it to a secularly minded person or even if I try to think about it myself without using familiar Christian terms I find it difficult. Especially in the post-HIV/AIDs era, with Hepatitis and other blood borne pathogens, it’s hard to wrap my head around blood being “cleansing”. And the idea of slaughtering animals today for mere ritual cleansing is abhorrent to many of us – some would favor not even slaughtering animals for food. This would not have been the case at all for first century Hebrew Christians – it was in their DNA, in their “blood” – it would have been absurd for them to think that there was any other way to be ceremonially cleansed so that they could worship God and be in their community. And we know that the Old Testament sacrifices pouring out the life blood of animals all pointed forward to and prefigured the death of Christ. Hebrews provides ample material for understanding this better ourselves, as well as in our sharing the gospel and discipling others. It also highlights how crucial it is for us Christians to be diligent students of the Old Testament, as well as the New, that we may know and share with others the whole counsel of God.

The blood of Christ refers not primarily to the physical substance but to Christ’s action of offering himself to God as a sinless, morally perfect sacrifice in perfect obedience to the Father.

The blood of Christ is clear outward evidence that his life blood was poured out when he died a sacrificial death to pay for our redemption. Biblically, the blood of Christ is equivalent to his death in all its saving aspects. We may usually think of it in the sense of removing our guilt before God, but we also see in Hebrews and elsewhere that it cleanses our consciences, gives us access to God in worship and prayer, progressively cleanses us from remaining sin, and rescues us out of a sinful way of life or slavery to sin.

The blood of Jesus is perhaps the greatest mystery of eternity because it is not human wisdom but divine wisdom. It was foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block for the Jews.

In the physical world, we must pay the penalty when we break man’s laws.  In the spiritual world, the penalty for breaking our covenant with God is death, both physically and spiritually.

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.  Leviticus 17:11

And later in this passage in verse 22 - *In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.*

It is a spiritual law that only a sacrifice of sinless blood will pay for sin. Animals are considered sinless in that they operate by God-given instinct and are not held morally culpable by God. Throughout the history of God’s people sacrifices of animals were offered to atone for sin. The punishment of sin is a bloody death, not just a lethal injection. It is the loss of the animal’s life substituting for the life of the sinner, the covenant breaker. The blood is evidence of that death that satisfies the demand of God’s justice and wrath against sin, brings forgiveness, and opens the way to Holy God. The blood of Christ signifies His sacrificial death on the cross, atoning for our sins.

Atonement is in the narrow sense is reparation or expiation for sin, making amends for guilt or wrongdoing, so referring only to Jesus’ dying and paying for our sins on the cross. But even in this passage, we see that there is more to Jesus’ ministry of atonement and his shed blood than that. Wayne Grudem defines atonement more broadly as the entire work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation.

Christ’s atonement in this sense meets four needs or problems we have as sinners:

1. We deserve to die as the penalty for our sin
2. We deserve to bear God’s wrath against sin
3. We are separated from God by our sins
4. We are in bondage to sin and to the kingdom of Satan

Christ meets these needs by:

1. Sacrifice – Christ died on the cross as a sacrifice for us; he paid the penalty for our sin by his death. This is clearly articulated throughout the book of Hebrews and in today’s passage.
2. Propitiation – Christ removed us from the wrath of God that we earned by our sin. As Jesus was bearing our sins and guilt on the cross, he was abandoned by his heavenly and faced the fury of God’s holy wrath against the sin and evil stored up since the beginning of the world. This is only implicit in today’s passage but is clear elsewhere in Scripture.
3. Reconciliation – Christ overcame our separation from God by reconciling us to God, bringing us back into fellowship with God. This is reflected in vs. 14 that ***we may serve the living God!*** And more explicitly elsewhere in Hebrews that Christ has increased access to God, a new and living way into the Holy of Holies, we can draw near to God through the blood of Christ.
4. Redemption – Christ redeemed us out of slavery to sin by paying the ransom price (the death of Christ) to free us from captivity.

When we respond to the gospel call to trust in Christ’s ministry for our salvation, we are regenerated by God giving us new spiritual life by the Holy Spirit in us, and we repent for sin and respond in faith by God’s grace. God justifies us through our faith in Christ.

“Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he 1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and of Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and 2) declares us to be righteous in his sight”. (Grudem p. 722-723) Through His death on the cross, Jesus fulfilled all the demands of the law, and God declares us “not guilty!”  No charges made against us will ever stand.

*There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death*. Romans 8:1-2

But there is even more to Christ’s ministry and the power of His blood including sanctification and glorification.

Verses 13-14 –***14How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!***

I think it’s important not to overlook the phrase “***eternal Spirit”*** in vs 14. The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus as High Priest for every aspect of His ministry. This greater High Priestly ministry included His incarnation (conception), His sinless life, His baptism, wilderness temptation, His ministry on earth, His death on the Cross as the sacrifice for our sin, His resurrection and His ascension into Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. The Holy Spirit not only helped Jesus in his completed works but continues to help fulfilling the New Covenant promise through Jeremiah and again in Chapter 8:10-12 *I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people…they will all know me. I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.* When Jesus went to be with the Father in heaven, he and the Father sent this same eternal Spirit to his followers:

John 15:26*When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.*

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you,”  John 16:7.

But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God,” 1 Corinthians 6:11.

“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit,” 2 Corinthians 3:18.

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the *Holy Spirit* who has been given to us,”  Romans 5:3-5.

“Sanctified” means to be set apart as sacred. Essentially, it’s the purification of sin and spiritually maturing to become more Christlike.

The point is that the Eternal Spirit is intimately involved in Jesus’ entire High Priestly ministry on our behalf. We see the Trinity working together to fulfill God’s redemption plan for His people.

As we have seen, while God ordained and accepted the earthly high priest’s sacrifices and rituals to obtain temporary atonement for the people’s sin, these were merely external and symbolic, only acceptable in that they pointed to Jesus the true Lamb of God who would bring actual atonement and purification. So God’s wrath against sin was being stored up. Additionally, this symbolic atonement did nothing in the way of actually removing sin and guilt or defeating sin and death.

But the blood of Christ is able to ***cleanse our consciences*** *from acts that lead to death so that we may serve the living God*! If the blood of animals under the old order could sanctify the ceremonially unclean to become outwardly clean then how much more will the blood of Christ cleanse and sanctify us for whom He died, who trust in Him for salvation?

Conscience meant awareness of information about something, like consciousness of sin. It is the inward faculty of distinguishing right and wrong, our moral consciousness. While there are unintentional sins, which God does still hold us accountable for, we usually have enough conscious ones to cause us to have a guilty conscience.

The cleansing of our conscience occurs in the moment when we confess our sin and repent, and believe in Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for our sin, and we receive, by faith, forgiveness for all the sins we have committed. We also receive cleansing in a continuing process of sanctification, being made holy, being cleansed. Sanctification is also by faith in the blood of Christ and is continuous and by God’s grace, lifelong. In the words of today’s key verse: the blood of Christ will *cleanse our consciences****from acts that lead to death*…**

What are acts that lead to death? Well, obviously in this context, sin is what leads to the punishment of death and defiles our consciences. The same phrase is in Hebrews 6:1 “*repentance from acts that lead to death*”. I don’t think it’s primarily referring to the rituals of the Old Covenant per se, because when people obediently followed ceremonial law it did not lead to punishment by death, even though these rituals were limited. However, after Christ came, these rituals were obsolete and those who rejected Christ and His salvation in unbelief and trusted in these empty rituals certainly would be committing acts leading to spiritual death, especially if they lead others to stumble.

But wait – there is one more phrase in our key verse 14 - ***so that we may serve the living God!*** Like Pastor Paul reminded us recently John Piper’s slightly reworded Westminster catechism answer for What is the chief end of man? To glorify God **by** enjoying Him forever. The original says to glorify God **and** enjoy Him forever. Both work for me. When we are delivered from bondage to sin and the burden of our guilty conscience, we are finally able to serve the living God in spirit and in truth as he intended. This new heart is central to the New Covenant promises prophesied by Jeremiah and Ezekiel and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. This new spiritual heart wholly loves God, wants to obey God, wants to please God, wants to know God, repents quickly and draws near to God for mercy. We are saved for a purpose – to glorify God and enjoy Him.

1. **A Better Covenant and Mediator 15-22**

***15For 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.***

***16In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, 17because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. 18This is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood. 19When Moses had proclaimed every command 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. 20He said, “This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep.” 21In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. 22In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.***

Verse 15 starts with “**For this reason**” –“*that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance”.* Christ is the mediator of a new covenant so ***that*** *we who are called* (effectual call of the gospel) may receive the promised *eternal inheritance*.

Romans 8:30 *And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*

According to verse 15 Christ is the mediator of this new covenant ***now that he has*** ***died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*** Christ’s sacrificial death not only fulfills the promises of the old covenant for those who died under the old covenant, but also inaugurates the new covenant. Under the new covenant God’s people don’t just receive the promises but they receive the promised eternal inheritance itself, the Sabbath-rest for the people of God, the city that is to come. Jesus as Mediator guarantees that God’s promises will be kept.

Hebrews 1:3b *After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven*.

He did not continue standing like the High Priest in the Most Holy Place. He sat down in a throne at the right hand of the His Father God’s throne. His priestly ministry is emphasized and continues in heaven as he intercedes for us before God. Yet he also assumes his kingly role as he sits on the throne.

Romans 8:34 *Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

Hebrews 8:6 *But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.*

Referring again to the better promises of Jeremiah 3.

Let’s look at verses 16-22 regarding covenants. These verses bring together the themes of atonement and covenant. Through Christ’s atoning blood the promises of the new covenant are fulfilled.

verses 16-17

***16In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, 17because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.***

Vs 16-17 The Greek word translated as either will, testament or covenant in this passage is transliterated as *diatheke*. There are differing views as to how to translate this word here. Most translate it as ‘will’ as in a last will and testament in verses 16-17. I’ve always struggled with understanding these verses in the context of verses 18-22 because in those verses the same word is translated as covenant.

But I’ll present the majority view first.

Verses 16-17 present a legal illustration to emphasize the benefits of the new covenant as well as the necessity for a death. The writer of Hebrews takes advantage of the double meaning of *diatheke.* The preceding verse 15 ending with eternal inheritance has associations of the will which reveals the inheritance to be bequeathed. Also, the statement in v. 17 that it is ***in force only when somebody has died*** seems to fit best with a will which is only enacted when the will’s testator dies. This presents an illustration as Christ’s last will and testament or the legacy he bequeathed through his death. This inheritance includes the present redemption of believers now set free from slavery to sin as well as the heavenly inheritance or eternal life.

*We have already tasted the heavenly gift, shared in the Holy Spirit, tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age.* Hebrews 6:4-5

Two of my three commentaries prefer the minority view, that diatheke should be understood as covenant throughout this passage, including vs 16-17.

This view understands *Diatheke* in verses 18-22 as referring to the broken Sinai covenant not to covenants in general. Death was necessary for the remission of sins under the first covenant, because the people transgressed after they had made the covenant with God. The sacrifice of animals, the shedding of their blood met this requirement partially under the old covenant. Covenants usually involved a conditional “self-curse” – if the one making the covenant failed to fulfill it – and the curse for breaking it was typically death. This curse was ritually enacted during the making of the covenant.

Lane’s commentary describes Christ’s death as a covenant sacrifice and verses 16-17 explain why it was necessary for Christ to die. He translates it as follows:

“*For where there is a covenant, it is necessary for the death of the one who ratifies it to be brought forward, for a covenant is made legally secure on the basis of the sacrificial victims; it is never valid while the ratifier lives.” The ratifier invoked the curse upon himself when he swore to keep the covenant. Animals were cut in half and the ratifying party would walk between them signifying that this will be done to him, or worse, if he breaks the covenant. When God’s people broke the covenant, which they did repeatedly, they activated that curse on themselves. Christ became the cursed one on behalf of God’s people.*

The Pillars commentary suggests a slightly different translation of vs. 16-17 *“Since there is a covenant, it is necessary that the death of the covenant maker be represented by animal sacrifices; for a covenant is confirmed over dead (sacrificial animals), since it is never valid while the covenant maker is still ritually alive.”*

Either way, the point is to explain why Christ the mediator of the New Covenant had to die in order to cleanse us and forgive our sins. This explanation continues in the following verses.

***18This is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood. 19When Moses had proclaimed every command 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. 20He 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. 22In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.***

There is a rhetorical or literary technique called chiasm or chiasmus in verses 18-22. This can help readers or listeners remember and emphasize certain points. I got a little side-tracked and found other chiasma in the passage for next week. I think they are probably throughout the book of Hebrews. They are fun to look for. I challenge any students listening who may be interested in literature or be bored this summer or looking for some intellectual stimulation to look for chiasms or chiasma in Hebrews. It’s fun! Trust me.

A v.18 not…without blood

B v.19 according to the law

C v.19 he sprinkled

D v.20 this is the blood of the covenant

C’ v.21 he sprinkled

B’ v.22 according to the law

A’ v. 22 not…without the shedding of blood

Notice that the blood of the covenant is placed at the center (letter D), thus being highlighted in terms of significance, centrality.

Moving on, verse 22 states unequivocally***, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.*** Verses 16-22 have highlighted the intimate and essential relationship between covenant making and breaking and sacrificial blood. And remember verse 15 – Christ died to set God’s people free from sins committed under the first covenant which Moses mediated. Christ became the mediator of a New Covenant in order that they would receive the promise of the covenant, an eternal inheritance (God’s part of the covenant which he did not break even though with their failure to keep it he was under no obligation.)

There is both continuity between the old and new covenants but even more discontinuity.

**Continuity**  **Discontinuity**

**Progression through tabernacle** Location – heavenly true tabernacle

**Blood sacrifice for atonement**  Sacrifice – His own blood

 Sinless High Priest

 Once for all

 Duration – eternal redemption

 Decisive Cleansing of conscience

 Unlimited access to God through Christ

 Freedom from slavery to sin

 **Contrasts**

earthly tabernacle – a copy heavenly tabernacle – the original

 animal blood sacrifice Christ’s own blood, Lamb of God

 external/symbolic cleansing Definitive, effective cleansing

 worshipper still sinful sin forgiven, not remembered by God

 conscience still defiled cleansed conscience to obey/worship

 repeated yearly Once for all

 sinful high priest Great High Priest without sin

 limited access to God Unlimited access to God through Christ

I want to end as we meditate on God’s Word to us today by picturing together **THE ultimate** Day of Atonement described in this passage. We watch from outside the Tabernacle as our Great High Priest progresses through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, from the outer court into the Holy Place, His blood poured out on the altar, His blood sprinkled over the items found in the Holy Place to cleanse them. He provides atonement not for Himself but for the sins of the world - past, present and future. He is both the High Priest and the atoning sacrifice – like Aslan in Narnia the Lion of Judah becomes the sacrificial Lamb of God on the altar which was the cross. Christ bears all our sin and guilt and God’s wrath for our sin on the Cross until it is all borne. It is finished. Then he dies, at which point the curtain into the Most Holy Place is torn from top to bottom. He enters the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood sacrificed for our sin and His body broken for us obtaining eternal redemption. Our Great High Priest and Sacrificial Lamb of God offers Himself unblemished to God the Father through the Eternal Spirit. He says “This is the blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” The Father accepts His sacrifice and regards us as having the righteousness of Christ. He welcomes back His Son who sits at His right hand where he will continue to intercede for us. We wait anxiously in the outer court to see if God accepts the high priest’s sacrifice for our sins, like the Jews under the old covenant. But when Christ comes again, once more, He will come to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him, like the High Priest coming out of the tabernacle and reassuring the people that their sins have been atoned for. Like them but so much more we will rejoice in so great a salvation. But unlike them, our Great High Priest cleanses us from a guilty conscience, redeems us, pays the punishment for our sin, delivers us from slavery to sin and gives **us** access to the Most Holy Place through His blood. He sends the Holy Spirit to be our helper. And Christ will come again not to bear our sin, for that he has done once for all, but to bring the consummation of our salvation. We will rise with Him in our glorified bodies into our eternal and heavenly inheritance. Halleluia!

Summary (not comprehensive)

The blood of Christ signifies or accomplishes:

 Christ’s death in all its saving aspects

 The blood of the New Covenant

 Christ’s offering of himself to God as sinless sacrifice

 Evidence of Christ’s lifeblood poured out for our salvation

 Atonement for our sin –

* a sacrificial death for our sin (Christ died in our place)
* propitiation for our sin (Christ bore our sin and God’s wrath)
* reconciliation – brings us back into fellowship with God
* redemption – sets us free from bondage to sin and death

 Cleansing our guilty consciences

 Sanctification – our progressive cleansing

 The new and living way into the Most Holy Place to worship God