

He Is Risen!

Long Beach Alliance Church • Easter Sunday • April 12th, 2009 • Pastor Chris Lankford

THEREFORE, BRETHREN, SINCE WE HAVE CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THE HOLY PLACE BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY WHICH HE INAUGURATED FOR US THROUGH THE VEIL, THAT IS, HIS FLESH, AND SINCE WE HAVE A GREAT PRIEST OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD, LET US DRAW NEAR WITH A SINCERE HEART IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED CLEAN FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE AND OUR BODIES WASHED WITH PURE WATER.

~HEBREWS 10:19-22 (NASB)

1) The Promise Of A Better Future

- A) From ancient days, Israel's hope was that God would come and relieve His people of their oppression (Isaiah 40:9-11).
- B) The 'Triumphal Entry' (Matthew 21:1-11) was the exuberant celebration and attempted inauguration of Jesus Christ as the 'Promised One' (Isaiah 61:1) who had come to save Israel (Hosanna!) from oppression (Psalm 118:25-26).
- C) However, Israel had largely forgotten that it was their sin and rebellion which had caused their oppression (Romans 3:23). They wanted the cure (a powerful king, Mark 13:4), without dealing with the root disease.

- D) Jesus did not come to provide Heaven alone, but came to provide a cure for the disease of sin (John 10:9-11). This is the message of the Triumphal Entry, that Jesus is the promise! However, this promise doesn't come without a cost.

2) The Cost Of The Cure For The Giver

- A) From the beginning, the cost for sin has been death (Genesis 2:17; cf. Romans 6:23). God established that the life-blood of sacrifice was necessary for the forgiveness of sins (Leviticus 4:4; cf. Hebrews 9:22).
- B) From the time of Moses to the time of Jesus Christ (around 1500 years), the High Priest of Israel would enter into the inner chamber of the Temple (Holy of Holies) to pay for the sins of Israel once a year (Hebrews 9:6-7).
- C) This "Day of Atonement" (Yom Kippur) followed the law of atonement from the Older Testament (Leviticus 16). This special day was designed to provide forgiveness of sins for all God's chosen people (Leviticus 16:29-34).

3) High Priest 101/Day Of Atonement* Duties

- A) The High Priest was warned to only enter the Holy of Holies (through the veil) once a year (Leviticus 16:2ff). Forgiveness of sins was not a common occurrence within Israel, and came with great fear and "affliction" for the Jews (cf. 16:29-31).

* The word "atonement" should be understood as a rich multi-layered term which is a capstone description of several contributing theological actions (substitution, reconciliation, propitiation, expiation). Substitution means that Christ's life is substituted for the life of the repentant sinner. Christ pays the penalty for sin (which He did not deserve or earn) and the repentant sinner enjoys the benefits of salvation and being a child of God (which mankind does not deserve or earn). Reconciliation is the restoration of the relationship between God and His creation. Propitiation understands the life and death of Christ in terms of a sacrifice which brings about the turning of God's wrath from mankind, allowing for reconciliation. Expiation is making amends for sin, it is more impersonal than Propitiation, but is also carried in the meaning of atonement. The "Day of Atonement," through its various movements, accomplished these many things. Further, Christ's crucifixion accomplishes a "better" (Hebrews 10) atonement, a sufficient and completing atonement for sin. Thus, the atonement, when practically applied has (like the word itself) great diversity.

- B) The High Priest first made a sin offering for himself (Leviticus 16:11). The High Priest would then sprinkle blood from the sacrifice on the "mercy seat" in precise fashion (16:14). Then the High Priest would repeat the same procedure with another sacrifice (16:15-16) for the people. The blood sacrifices were purification for sin.
- C) Finally, a goat (the "scapegoat," 16:8ff), with all the sins of the people, was sent into the wilderness as payment for sin (16:20-22). Israel observed Yom Kippur once a year.

4) Jesus Christ's Atoning Sacrifice For Sin

- A) Jesus Christ is pure, the perfect High Priest for making a sacrifice (Hebrews 7:26). Jesus was the perfect "one sacrifice for sins for all time" (10:12). He is the ultimate "scapegoat" who carries the sin of mankind away.
- B) When Christ died, the veil in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom (Luke 23:45; Matthew 27:51-53; Mark 15:38). The separation between God and man was abolished, and now we can approach God boldly because of a relationship with Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:19-25).
- C) The cost of sin is death, and the payment for sin (the sacrifice) was provided in Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:28). This is the message of Good Friday, that the payment for sin has been made!

5) The Assurance Of "Full Payment" Made

- A) Christ's payment for sin is fine, but did God accept His payment? This is the real question! Did His death "work?"
- B) The resounding answer from Scripture is YES! Jesus' sacrifice for sin was accepted by God! How do we know this? We know that Christ's sacrifice was good and acceptable because He was resurrected (brought back to life) by God (1st Corinthians 15:17, 20-22).

- C) Jesus' death paid for sin (once and for all, cf. Hebrews 10:12, 14, 18), and His resurrection seals that His sacrifice was sufficient and good (1st Corinthians 15:56-57).
- D) This is the message of Easter Sunday, that complete payment for the sins of many has been made and that Jesus is not dead, but alive! He is Risen! He is Risen INDEED!

6) The Cost Of The Cure For The Receiver

- A) From the beginning, God had a plan for saving people from sin's death-grip (Acts 2:22-24, 32-33, 36; cf. Psalm 32:1 & Romans 4:7-8). But how?
- B) The only way to take hold of salvation from sin is to have faith (trust) in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). What are we having faith in? Simply, it's faith in Jesus.
 - i. First, we must "have faith" in Jesus Christ through the teaching of God's Word, the Bible (Romans 10:17). This is the "content" of our faith.
 - ii. Second, we must "believe" that Jesus is Savior and that salvation is through Him alone (Hebrews 11:6). This is the "trust" element in faith.
 - iii. Third, we must be "faithful" and live righteous lives (Romans 1:17, 2 Timothy 2:11-13). This is how we "persevere" in faith.
- C) This is the message of Jesus Christ, that He has come to establish a "New Day" in our lives EVERY DAY (Romans 6:4). The story doesn't end at Easter! It is just the beginning!
- D) How will you respond to Jesus Christ? What will you do with the truth of His life, death, and resurrection? Will you respond to His promise of a better future, His payment for sin, His fantastic resurrection, and His plan for life which never ends (Romans 6:23)?