

The Nature of Yeshua in the Pauline Epistles and Hebrews

one to rely on an incomplete Levitical system for eternal redemption, when the author of Hebrews says that eternal redemption can only be accomplished through the blood of the Messiah and His priestly service.

Our author attests that the Messiah offered Himself *dia pneumatos aiōniou* (διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου), “through the eternal Spirit.” We see the Spirit operating through Yeshua, as prophesied by Isaiah:

“Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations...The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners” (Isaiah 42:1; 61:1; cf. Luke 4:17-20).

It is quite noticable that in Hebrews 9:14 we see all three, principal members of the Godhead mentioned: “how much more will the blood of Messiah—who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God—cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (TLV). We see God, meaning the Father; we see the Messiah, meaning the Son; we see the eternal Spirit or the Holy Spirit. Contrary to anyone believing that a trinity of the Godhead was something solely invented by Church leaders of the Third and Fourth Centuries, we see evidence of it right here in the Epistle to the Hebrews, even without the formulation of “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

Hebrews 9:24-26

“The Single Sacrifice of the Messiah”

“For Messiah did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

When Yeshua entered into Heaven at His ascension, He “did not enter a man-made sanctuary” (Hebrews 9:24, NIV).²²¹ This is because the original holy place on Earth, be it a Tabernacle or a Temple, was “a...copy of the true one.” Note that the NASU has added the adjective “*mere*” in *italics*—adding a description that is not seen in the Greek *antitupa tōn alēthinōn* (ἀντίτυπα τῶν ἀληθινῶν). While it is true that the Earthly Tabernacle is “only a pointer to the reality” (REB), the addition of something like “*mere*” or “*only*” by Bible translators, may be placed to somehow subtract from the fact that the Earthly Tabernacle and Temple did have value. The author of Hebrews does not demean the Earthly Tabernacle in ch. 9, but he does show how highly he regards it, in spite of the fact that the Sanctuary in Heaven is much more important.

The Tabernacle or Temple, as it is seen to readers of the Scriptures, is widely the most that common human reasoning can comprehend of the extra-dimensional dwelling or residence of the Lord. This is where Yeshua is now seated beside the Father, “to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Hebrews 9:24, RSV). The profundity of this is that “He did not do this to offer Himself many times, as the high priest enters the sanctuary yearly with the blood of another” (Hebrews 9:25, HCSB). Yeshua only had to enter into the Holy Place in Heaven a

²²¹ This entry has been adapted from the author’s commentary *Hebrews for the Practical Messianic*.

single time to offer the final atonement for people, with His priesthood thus inaugurating the New Covenant.

If Yeshua's offering of Himself were not a sufficient sacrifice, as our author stated earlier, "once for all" (Hebrews 9:12), then He would need to be offered up again, just as the high priest on Earth would have to go again into the Holy of Holies. The community of Israel would surely sin again after the blood of the *Yom Kippur* offering was spread on the mercy seat by the high priest. But Yeshua entered into the Holy Place in Heaven, having offered up Himself and shedding His own blood for the sins of humanity. As the author of Hebrews astutely testifies, "he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26, RSV).

What would these words mean for a largely First Century Jewish audience, likely on the verge of seeing the Second Temple destroyed? Would they be assurance to those who had, even after their coming to Messiah faith, still derived a great deal of comfort or security from knowing that sacrifices were being performed in Jerusalem? Consider the amount of faith a Jew in the Diaspora would have put in the Levitical priesthood, living separated from it, versus a Jewish person living in the Land of Israel who would have encountered it on a much more frequent basis. This is why our author writes that Yeshua's sacrifice is sufficient to be offered only once.

It is absolutely true, that only those who had received Yeshua into their lives, can see beyond the Earthly shadow of the Levitical priesthood and Tabernacle service, into the Heavenly reality of Yeshua's priesthood and service, that our author writes about. It is only those who have experienced a spiritual renewal by acknowledging Yeshua's permanent offering of Himself, who can really know how Yeshua's service in Heaven is more important than the service of human priests on Earth.

Hebrews 10:11-14

"Yeshua Has Sat Down in Heaven"

"Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD [Psalm 110:1], waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET [Psalm 110:1]. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

Hebrews 10:11 says that "Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices" (NIV), speaking of the fact that the work the Levitical, human priests perform, cannot bring final redemption.²²² This goes back to our author's previous words in Hebrews 10:2,²²³ because if the animal sacrifices of the Torah could provide a permanent covering, they would only have had to be offered a single time, and then never again. Yet, Yeshua is attested in Hebrews 10:12a to have "offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins" (RSV). Concurrent with this, our author once again quotes from the venerable Psalm 110:1, indicating that Yeshua has sat down at His Father's right hand, and is presently waiting to return to Earth to defeat His enemies (Hebrews 10:12b-13). Bruce fairly summarizes, "Christ...by his self-oblation has accomplished once for all what generations of Levitical sacrifices had never done...The sacrifice of Christ has purified his people from the moral

²²² This entry has been adapted from the author's commentary *Hebrews for the Practical Messianic*.

²²³ "Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?" (Hebrews 10:2).