

## **"A New And Living Way ..."**

*"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our body washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:19-22).*

Once more we meet a *"therefore"* in our study. The appeal which follows *"having ... boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Christ"* is made in view of an earlier statement. The statement which produced such an appeal is, first, his citation of Jeremiah's promise of a new covenant *"and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"* with the following assertion, *"Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin"* (10:18). Since the blood of Jesus is able to forever remove sins and iniquities -- all sin; past, present and future, there is no need that Jesus make a further sacrifice of Himself. His sacrifice was *"once for all," "one time for all time"* which offering opened for us a *"new and living way"* by which way we are urged to enter the holy place.

The writer's urging that Hebrews enter *"into the holy place,"* is an appeal for them to enter heaven, just as his appeal that they give diligence to enter into his rest was an appeal to enter heaven (4:10f). Earlier Christ has been described as *"a minister of the true tabernacle"* (8:2). It was said that Christ *"entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true, but into heaven itself"* (9:24). While the first tabernacle stood *"the way into the holy place had not been made manifest"* (9:8). Since the holy place is heaven, we are urged to enter it through a new way, through the blood of Christ. Entrance into it was not possible by the inferior blood of animals.

We draw near to heaven through the great High Priest God appointed for us, Jesus Christ. We draw near with a true heart, not a feigned or impure one, in fullness of faith. We draw near, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. How interesting to compare the Hebrew writer's comments here with those Peter made in 1 Peter 3:21. *"Which after a true likeness doth save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation (answer, KJV) of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."* The Hebrew writer tells of an *"evil conscience"* being sprinkled. To what end? Obviously it was sprinkled that it might be a *"good conscience"*! In chapter nine the writer said, *"How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself,*

*without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (9:14)?*

The element in which the conscience of Hebrews was cleansed was the blood of Jesus, of course. Earlier it was said, *"the law ... can, never make perfect them that draw nigh. Else would they have not ceased to be offered? because the worshippers, having been once cleansed would have had no more consciousness of sin"* (10:1f). It is the blood of Christ in which this wondrous work of grace is wrought and several passages speak of the *"sprinkling of the blood of Christ"* (1 Pet. 1:2, Heb. 12:24). Yet it must be noted when this cleansing -- this *"sprinkling"* of the blood of Jesus occurs. In Hebrews our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience at the same time our bodies are washed with pure water; an obvious reference to water baptism. Peter concurs. *"Baptism doth now save you ... the answer of a good conscience toward God."* And while we believe Paul the author of the Hebrew letter, his words in Romans 6:3-4 add further strength to this. *"Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death."* When one is immersed in water, Christ "sprinkles" His blood upon his heart, cleansing it from an evil conscience. How simple. How plain. And yet how often disputed!

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