

NO FEAR, ONLY FORGIVENESS

We are all familiar that Christ came into the world the first time to die. Christ fulfilled the Law--born during the Feast of Tabernacles, died during the Feast of Passover, rose from the grave on the Feast of Firstfruits, and sent His Spirit at Pentecost to write a new Law *in the hearts* of His people--and then *took away* (abrogated) the old Law to establish the New Covenant (Heb. 10:9). The promises of the New Covenant in Christ are so much superior than the conditional promises of the Law. Pity the believers who have no understanding of their freedom in Christ.

When New Testament churches try to replicate what the Hebrews had-- turning the church into a Temple, the pastors into authoritative priests, and Spirit-led service and worship into obedience to commandments--then the entire joy of New Covenant living is shattered. "*You shall know the truth* (notice the definite article "the" truth), *and the truth* (Christ) *shall set you free!*" One of the tools some preachers use to keep their congregation subservient and obedient to laws the preacher wishes to impose on God's people is fear. Fear of Christ coming to judge them for their disobedience. Fear of Christ's return to earth when every thought and deed of His people will be revealed for what it is--insufficient obedience to God. Many evangelical preachers seem to know no other means to motivate God's people than through fear.

Hebrews 9:28 knocks the legs out of any preacher trying to motivate Christians through fear of Christ's second coming. This verse states, "*So Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time **without reference to sin**, to those who eagerly await Him.*" The imagery here is powerful. The writer of Hebrews has already explained how Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law in His *first* coming. He came to earth as the Lamb of God to die. He shed His blood for God's people at the cross. He rose from the grave. He entered true Temple (the one not made with human hands) and presented His blood as the payment for the sins of God's people. He cleansed forever those who place their confidence in Him. He cleanses them by the one-time offering of Himself. Every command God gave the Hebrews to atone for sin--every feast, every festival, every sacrifice, every ritual, every oblation, every offering--finds fulfillment in the first coming of Jesus Christ to deal with sin.

But Christ also is coming a second time to earth for His people, and it is this second coming which is referenced in Hebrews 9:28. The second coming of Jesus Christ corresponds to what the Old Testament Hebrew high priest did after he applied the blood in the Temple to atone for the sins of the Hebrew people--*the priest came out of the Temple to bless the people*. This blessing brought pure joy and pure delight to the sinners for whom the blood had atoned. *The priest made no reference to their sins in his blessing*.

The writer of Hebrews and the other biblical authors are just as clear that our Great High Priest is coming a SECOND TIME to do the exact same thing for us that the Hebrew high priest did for the Hebrews (Hebrews 9:28). The second time Christ comes, He comes "*without reference to sin.*" When He comes for us, either in death or in His coming to earth to usher in eternity, He will make no reference to our sins. He will say nothing about them. Nada. Nothing. They are lost in the desert of forgetfulness. The scape-goat bears them and the goat cannot be found. Of course, the persons for whom Christ did not die--those who are not part of the many of Hebrews 9:28 -- will give an account to God for their sins against Him (see Hebrews 9:27). The judgment they will receive from God for their sins will be just, fair, and right; but this judgment comes upon those whose confidence is not in Christ's death. *Christ comes for His people the second time and He will make no reference to their sins at His coming*. Just as the Old Covenant high priest typifies the first coming of Christ in the offering of the sacrifice, the taking of the blood into the Temple, and the intercession for God's people before the mercy seat of God, so too **the second coming of Christ** is typified when the Old Covenant high priest came out of the Temple to bless the people. **No reference to their sin is made.**