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THE VERY LAST WORDS FROM THE CROSS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 140
HEBREWS 13:10-12

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In verse 8 we studied about the perfect stability of Christ. In verse 9 we saw the amazing grace of God. We now begin a new subject.

HEBREWS 13:10 "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." "We have" is the present, active, indicative of echo and it means "to have and to hold." This present tense covers the whole Church Age and means that this is a dogmatic truth for the entire Church Age. All in the Church Age keep having and holding an altar. The word "altar" is from the noun thusia sterion and it means an altar where there is a function of worship. This contrasts the Royal Priest of the Church Age and the Levitical Priest who used to stand before the brass altar and offer animal sacrifices.

Pointing To The Cross

The brass altar of the Levitical Priests pointed to the cross and was designed to teach grace, but this altar of the Royal Family not only looks back to the cross but it looks to the fact that Christ gives us stability which is consistent with the glory of God. The key to our altar is grace. The sin and trespass offering represent the principle of rebound and this is also grace.

God's Perfect Plan

How can a perfect God with a perfect plan have imperfect creatures to deal with and still make that plan work? The cross fulfilled the Levitical priesthood and offerings and they are now defunct. They have been replaced by the cross and now we have a new altar. The shadows of the old Levitical altar have been replaced with the doctrine of the Church Age reduced to writing.

A Dictatorship

This Royal Priesthood has a dictatorship, and this dictatorship of the Royal Priesthood is Bible Doctrine resident in the soul. If you do not have this dictator in your soul, you will get off course and you will not be able to live up to the demands of Christ. This dictatorship must be enthroned inside of your mind. You must transfer the printed word into your mind. A ship without a rudder is a believer without doctrine. A plane without power is the believer without doctrine. You must think all the time in terms of doctrine. You cannot think beyond your vocabulary. You can be clever and creative and even enthusiastic without doctrine, but you can't be stabilized without this dictatorship within you. We have an altar, and this altar is constructed just as definitely as the altar was constructed in Israel. Moses was told specifically how to construct that first altar of brass. It was many times destroyed and had to be constructed over again. We must see to it that we have this altar constantly there in our souls.

Can't Let Others Dictate Your Life-style

You cannot afford to let others dictate to you your life-style. You must allow Bible Doctrine to determine what your life-style will be. You must learn enough doctrine so you can stand on your own feet and have doctrine in your own mind to guide you. Jesus Christ has this stability and he will transfer stability to you if you will let him. By grace we can have this stability if we erect an altar. Bible Doctrine in the soul constitutes this altar. Bible Doctrine in my soul is my authority. The Lord Jesus Christ is the living Word and he can only become yours as you assimilate the written Word. We partake of Christ every day and this becomes our stability. So the literal brass altar has been replaced by another unseen altar, but it is definitely there. Ours is just as real.

The Elements Of This New Altar

Ours is an altar of thoughts and words and categories of truth. They had brass and horns and pans and fire and animals. We have words and concepts and thoughts. We need to come to this new altar for here is where we learn right from wrong. This altar is the place of guidance. This was the problem of those people who were the original recipients of the epistle. They were always reverting to the shadows, going back to the brass altar and to animal sacrifices and to fire. But that altar was out of date. They were neglecting the real altar which was the altar of Christ and doctrine. Just imagine dropping a brass altar into the middle of a worship service in the Church Age.

The Altar In Your Soul

The thing that really counts in the believer is the altar in the soul. I have struggled through passages when you were bored and couldn't wait to get out of the room. But some of you have stuck with it and have erected an altar in your soul and you worship every day at that altar. With the coming breakdown of this nation, you are going to need that altar in your soul. That brass altar was melted down in Jerusalem when the Romans came in and burned the temple, but those few who had altars in their souls found that the altar of doctrine was sufficient to save them. This is comparable to the churches who ignore the Word of God today and built other lesser altars. Think of offering animals on a Jewish altar when they had a new altar of perfect truth. It caused them to revert to spiritual blasphemy.

Next in this verse after the words "We have an altar" is the word "whereof" from ek and hos and this preposition and relative pronoun should be translated "from which." The word "they" refers to the Levitical Priests and from the Greek words exousian phagien ouk, we get "they have no right to eat." "To eat" is the aorist, active, infinitive of esthio. This was their means of living. They lived by eating the meat of the animal. We do not eat the animal in worship, but we eat the spiritual food from the Word of God. Bible Doctrine becomes our altar. This aorist tense of "to eat" is a constative aorist and takes the action of this verb in its entirety and refers to the total spiritual feeding of the Levitical Priesthood. They ate animals and we eat spiritual food. The infinitive shows that this

was the purpose of God for them to do this. Why is it called an altar? It was called an altar of sacrifice, and sacrifice is necessary for the living of the Christian life. It also takes sacrifice to take in doctrine on a daily basis. It is a sacrifice to study, to listen, to learn. The living of the Christian life is a sacrifice all along the way.

The next word is the present, active, participle of latreuo and this is the word used for the spiritual service of the Levitical Priesthood, and it is also our spiritual service in the Church Age. But we have an altar from which they who served the tabernacle have no authority to eat.

Summary

1. The Levitical Priesthood had authority to serve in the tabernacle and later on in the temple.
2. However, in the Church Age, because the Jewish contract and dispensation had been abrogated, we now have a new contract and a new dispensation.
3. Under the new contract and the new dispensation, we have the Royal Priesthood of the Church Age which has replaced the Levitical Priesthood. We have a new altar which has replaced the old altar. Instead of the old brass altar, we have Bible Doctrine resident in the soul.
4. The Levitical Priesthood was limited and based on being born into a certain family and tribe, but the Royal priesthood is unlimited and based on regeneration.
5. The Levitical Priesthood ate the flesh of the animals that had been offered on the altar, which the Royal Priest eats Bible Doctrine offered by the pastor-teacher in the classroom of the local church.
6. The Levitical priest was physically sustained by eating a portion of the animal sacrifice. The Royal Priest is spiritually sustained by eating Bible Doctrine every day.

We have a dictator and that dictator in the soul is Bible Doctrine. This is the only way to be free.

In verses 11 and 12 we are going to have an explanation of these sacrifices and their meaning. They had two goats in this sacrifice. One was the scapegoat which was turned out into the wilderness and one goat that was offered on the altar. The blood from these animal sacrifices were scattered by the High Priest once a year on the mercy seat and the animals were burned outside the camp.

HEBREWS 13:11 "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp." We begin with an explanatory gar translated "for". The word "bodies" is not found in the Greek. We next have a genitive plural of the word zoon and this refers to the bullocks used on the Day of Atonement. This is described in Leviticus 16:5-28 and Numbers 29:7-11. The ram was used for a burnt offering. The bullock

was used for a sin offering for the priests. (Leviticus 16:3)
 Next we have the two goats of Leviticus 16:5. So we will translate this opening phrase, "For with reference to those animals." Next we have hos to haima and it means "whose blood." Now this has nothing to do with the blood of Christ. The blood for the Levitical Priesthood was the blood of the animal offered on the altar. The blood for the Royal Priesthood is the blood of words, doctrine, reconciliation, redemption, propitiation. Our altar is made up of doctrine. The blood of Christ becomes a reality to us as we come to understand the words that spell out these doctrines. The blood of our altar is doctrines that pertain to salvation. The next word we have in this verse is the present, passive, indicative of eisphero and it means "carried into," this blood was carried into the holy of holies by the high priest. The words eis hagios means the holy of holies. The words dia archierus means "by means of the high priest." Then we have peri hamartia and it means "on behalf of sin."

Look What Happened To The Animal Afterwards

The great emphasis in this passage is what happened to the animal afterwards. "Are burned" is the present, passive, indicative of katakaio and it means to burn up completely. Then we have the words exzo parembole and they mean "outside the camp." This is a picture of how Jesus would go outside the gates of Jerusalem and would die outside the camp.

Summary

1. The function of the Royal Priest does not cease after passing the point of propitiation. It just begins there. Once you become a believer, your responsibility just begins there.
2. The burning of the animal outside the camp pictures the sacrifice of Christ outside the gates of the city, outside where the temple was located and it means he died outside religion. The burning of those animal bodies is a picture of the physical death of Christ but the sprinkling of the blood on the holy of holies is a picture of his spiritual death. (Christ died twice on the cross.)

So this verse correctly translated says, "For with reference to those animals whose blood is carried into the holy of holies on behalf of sin by the High Priest and whose bodies are burned outside the camp."

Look for a moment at Isaiah 53:12, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isaiah 53:11 tells us that God is satisfied with the cross. Verse 12 will now outline how God will distribute the spiritual dividends in his kingdom.

The Very Last Words Of The Cross

MATTHEW 27:50 "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."

Matthew says, "Jesus, when he had cried" and this is the aorist, active, participle of krazo and shows that Matthew is giving emphasis to the loud scream, the loud cry. Jesus exhaled and dropped his head over and died. We have the aorist, active, indicative of aphiemi and this means "yielded up." He never inhaled again. This is the way he died. Matthew doesn't describe what he said, just the loud cry.

MARK 15:37 "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost." Mark is going to describe this same cry, but he is going to give it different emphasis. For the word for "cried with a loud voice" here in Mark is aphiemi and it doesn't mean to cry, but it means to exhale. So Matthew emphasized the loud cry and Mark emphasized the exhale of air from his lungs as he died of his own volition. Mark ends with the word ekpheno and it means "gave up." In other words, at the end of the exhale, he refused to breath again and this is the way he died. So Matthew gave emphasis to the sound and Mark gave emphasis to the exhale of air and his death.

LUKE 23:46 "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." Matthew said a scream, and Mark said an exhale of air. Luke says that the scream and the exhale were words that he spoke. And the word for "Jesus cried" is phoneo and this means the cry was broken up into words. Jesus enunciated while he screamed. Matthew with a culminative aorist says it was a loud scream. Mark says with a culminative aorist that it was the exhale of air. But Luke says that the scream was a sentence and it is the aorist, active, participle of phoneo and it means that at the same moment he was screaming, he was saying something. He enunciated. This is what he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." This is a present, middle, imperative of paratithemi and it is the imperative of a mild exhortation. "I deposit" my spirit into your hands. "Into your hands I deposit my spirit." Then it says, "And having said this, he expired." The word for "expired" is the aorist, active, indicative of ekpneo and it means he did not inhale again. So in these three passages we have three participles followed by three main verbs.

1. Matthew--Aorist, active, participle of krazo--a loud shout.
2. Mark--Aorist, active, participle of aphiemi--breath control, exhale.
3. Luke--Aorist, active, participle of phoneo--the word is the exhale.

Look at the main verbs

1. In Matthew--culminative aorist of aphiemi--exhaled and died.
2. In Mark--culminative aorist of ekpneo--exhaled and died.
3. In Luke--culminative aorist of ekpneo--exhaled and died.

JOHN 19:30 "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

John used yet another word when he said "he gave up his spirit" and the word is paradiodomi. This is the word used of Judas when he betrayed Jesus. He gave him over to the enemy. So John says Jesus delivered over his spirit to God the Father when he died.

So Matthew 27:50 says, "Now Jesus having shouted again with a loud voice, sent away his breath."

Mark says in Mark 15:37, "And Jesus, having exhaled with a loud voice, expired."

Luke says in Luke 23:46, "And having enunciated with a loud voice, Jesus said, Father, into your hands I deposit my spirit and having said this, he expired."

Now back in John 19:30 the words "had received" is the aorist, active, indicative of lambano. Then we have the word oxos and this is referring to the cheap wine that had been issued the soldiers to drink that day. Then John says, "He said" and we have the perfect tense of teleo meaning "It is finished." It was finished in the past, with the result that it will stay finished forever. John didn't mention this seventh cry because he was giving emphasis to the spiritual death of Christ. So this verse says, "Therefore, at the time when Jesus had received the G.I. wine, he said, it has been finished in the past with the result that it stays finished forever, and having bowed his head he expired."

Luke 23:46 is very helpful, but none of the gospel writers give all that Jesus said that day. We have to go back and pick this up from the Psalms.

PSALM 31:5 "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." "Into your hands I commit" and this is the hiph imperfect of paqadh and it means "I deposit." Then we have "for you have delivered me" and this is the gal perfect of padah. Then we have adonai el emeth and this means "Jehovah, God of doctrine." The high priest didn't carry his own blood to offer it on the altar or to scatter on the mercy seat. But Jesus offered himself on the altar of the cross. Jesus was occupied with "Jehovah, God of doctrine."

So verse 10 says, "We (Royal Believers) have an altar, from which they who served the tabernacle have no authorization to eat."

Verse 11, "With reference to those animals, whose blood is carried by the high priest into the holy of holies in behalf of sin, and whose carcasses are burned outside the camp."

HEBREWS 13:12 "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." We have dio and kai and I will translate this "For this reason also." Then we have a purpose clause introduced by hina. Next is the aorist, active, subjunctive of hagaizo and it means "sanctify" but it really means the beginning of a new contract. This is the beginning of a new dispensation. It is the dispensation of sanctification, the dispensation of

the church. Next we have "his people." It means "His own born again people." Next we have dia idios haima and it means "through his own blood." The word for "suffered" is the aorist, active, indicative of pascho and this is a reference to the historical death of Christ. The last words are exo pule meaning "outside the gate."

So this verse says, "For this reason also Jesus suffered outside the gate in order that he might set apart his very own people through his own blood."