

Is the Blood of Jesus Christ in Heaven?

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Is the blood of Jesus Christ in Heaven? Did Christ present His blood sacrifice on the heavenly altar after His ascension in fulfillment of the Old Testament typology? It's my understanding of Scripture that Christ's literal blood was shed on the cross and is now represented in Heaven through Christ's priestly ministry. The cross was God's altar upon which Christ shed His blood and died. We must understand that "We have an altar" (Heb. 13:10) as God's children and this altar is the cross where Christ sacrificed Himself. This is the altar that God recognized as taking away our sins (not the altar in Heaven). It's the cross that fulfills the Old Testament typology of Christ's blood offering. Christ also rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven as our High Priest to present the saving value of His blood that was shed on the cross before the Father after He purged our sins (Heb. 1:3). Today, Christ's blood is made known in the sanctuary of Heaven through His risen life and priestly ministry.

Over the years, expositors have differed regarding the interpretation of Hebrews 9:12 and whether or not Christ offered His literal blood on the heavenly altar. Some claim and teach that Hebrews 9:12 and 12:24 reveal that Christ literally carried His blood into Heaven and offered it on the heavenly altar of the Tabernacle in fulfillment of the Old Testament priestly ministry (Heb. 9:1-7). However, it seems better to understand that Christ shed His blood on the cross ("the blood of the cross" - Col. 1:20) which is God's altar upon which Christ offered Himself and died. He then ascended to Heaven, as our High Priest, to present before the Father the saving merits of His blood (1 John 2:1-2). However, this presentation of His sacrificial blood and death did not involve a one-time literal sprinkling of His blood upon the heavenly altar. This occurred on the cross in fulfillment of Old Testament typology.

It is my understanding of Scripture that Christ's literal blood that He shed on the cross, along with His entire sacrificial sufferings and death on the sinner's behalf is represented today in the sanctuary of Heaven, through His ongoing priestly ministry as the risen Christ. The blood offering occurred once (Heb. 9:26), when Christ shed His literal blood on the cross and "offered himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14) and finished His sacrifice (John 19:30), but the presentation of His blood sacrifice in Heaven occurs perpetually through His priestly ministry (Heb. 7:25).

In summary, Christ's literal blood that was shed on the cross was not taken to Heaven since the cross was the altar upon which His Son was slain in fulfillment of the Day of Atonement (Heb. 9:25-26; 10:1-12). However, Christ rose from the dead and today appears before the presence of God in Heaven in fulfillment of the typology of the Holiest within the tabernacle (Heb. 9:24). Christ appears before the Father on behalf of each believer, declaring and representing the value of His blood, which He shed upon the cross. The *offering* of blood was on the cross but the *remembrance* of the blood is in Heaven through Christ's priestly ministry.

“No blood, no altar now,
The sacrifice is o'er!
No flame, no smoke ascends on high,
The lamb is slain no more.
But richer blood has flowed
From nobler veins
To purge the soul from guilt
And cleanse the reddest stains.”

Let's support the above conclusion from the Scriptures.

Meeting with Mary

The idea that Christ transported His blood to Heaven is often based on the meeting Jesus had with Mary Magdalene before He ascended to the Father. Jesus said, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). Some expositors extrapolate from this passage that Christ ascended to Heaven, to present a sample of His blood sacrifice on the altar of Heaven, between the time He talked with Mary Magdalene and appeared to His disciples. In other words, He had to ascend back to the Father after His resurrection to sprinkle His literal blood sacrifice on the altar of Heaven. They then conclude that it was inappropriate for Mary to hold Jesus since He had not yet ascended to the Father to present His blood sacrifice. However, it was appropriate or okay for Thomas to touch Jesus (John 20:27) since He had ascended to the Father in-between these two meetings. Therefore, it's concluded that Jesus must have ascended to the Father to present the blood on the heavenly altar and returned between His appearances to Mary and Thomas.

This idea has been espoused and shared by various fundamentalists throughout the years. However, I find no Biblical evidence that Jesus ascended to the Father and returned from His presence between these two appearances. This view does not fit all the gathered facts in Scripture. The Bible says there was only one ascension and not two, as some suggest by John 20:17. There is no Biblical evidence that Jesus ascended to the Father to present His blood on the altar and then returned to once again re-ascend to the Father. There is only ONE ascension mentioned in the Bible and the angel informed His disciples that Jesus would not return to earth, following this ascension, until the time of His Second Coming (Acts 1:11). The ascension *follows* the offering on the cross; it is not *part* of the offering (Heb. 1:3; 12:2).

In John 20:17 Jesus was teaching that He would soon ascend to the Father and afterward Mary and the rest of God's saints would join Him someday. It would during this time that all of God's saints would enjoy the physical fellowship and presence of Jesus Christ. But now God's disciples had work to do! This is what Jesus taught when He said "that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3) and when Paul said, "so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). Until then, Mary needed to carry out a mission. His ascension had not yet taken place. This was the time for to share about Christ resurrection. There will be a future time (another time) when they would enjoy one another's physical presence and fellowship in Heaven. This interpretation seems natural and understandable.

It is Finished!

Christ's priestly ministry in Heaven does not mean He took His own blood to Heaven in order to reoffer it on the heavenly altar. This is because Christ's priestly ministry is an ongoing or perpetual ministry (Heb. 7:25) that never ends based upon His blood sacrifice on the cross. Jesus said that the redemptive price was paid and finished with His work on the cross. He cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30) after He had suffered, shed His blood on the cross, and just before dying on the cross. This means there was no need to offer His sacrifice on the heavenly altar. It was offered on the cross! There is no strong Biblical evidence that Jesus literally presented and offered His blood on the altar in Heaven.

Although some of my fellow-fundamentalist expositors strongly adhere to the idea that Jesus took a vial of His own sacrificial blood into Heaven and offered it upon

the altar, an equal number of other fundamentalists, who also defend the sacrificial nature and doctrine of the blood of Christ, suggest that the reference to the blood of Christ in Heaven best explains His work as our mediator and High Priest in Heaven (1 Tim. 2:5). This is my view and understanding of these passages. Christ's offered Himself on the cross, the sacrificial blood was shed on the cross, and our redemptive salvation was finished when Christ died (John 19:30). Although good Bible teachers disagree on this matter (Christ taking His blood into Heaven), we should never disagree on the substitutionary value of Christ's literal blood that was shed on the cross for the remission of sins (Heb. 9:22. Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14) and our justified and reconciled position before God based upon the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9; Col. 1:20-21).

I can respect any fundamentalist who espouses the view that Jesus offered His blood on the altar of Heaven because I highly respect the blood! However, it seems that the believer can tenaciously defend the doctrine of the blood of Jesus Christ without coming to the conclusion that the blood of Jesus was literally transported to Heaven. I believe the blood will never lose its power for it is perpetually represented in Heaven through Christ's priestly ministry. Christ's blood that He shed upon the cross (not the offering of His blood on the altar of Heaven) is made affective in the presence of God the Father on our behalf through the priestly ministry of Christ. Christ is in Heaven today declaring the efficacy and value of His blood that was shed on the cross on our behalf (Heb. 1:3; 7:25; Rom. 8:34). His priestly ministry looks back to the cross for it was on the cross, God's earthly altar, upon which Christ's blood was shed and presented to God, not the heavenly altar.

The Blood of the Cross



The Bible speaks of "the blood of the cross" (Col. 1:20). The epistle of Hebrews also repeatedly informs us that Christ offered Himself on the cross (Heb. 9:28; 10:12) and later ascended to Heaven (Heb. 1:3; 7:25; 8:1). No offering of His blood occurred in Heaven. The saving value and significance of Christ's literal blood is reflected in His blood

sacrifice on the cross and this same blood which was shed on Calvary's cross is now defended and represented through Christ's priestly ministry in the throne room of

Heaven. Yes, the literal blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross is represented in Heaven. However, it's not literally found in Heaven. Rather, it's represented in God's presence through Christ's priestly ministry being performed on our behalf in the throne room of Heaven, which is the Holy of Holies where God manifests His presence.

Hebrews 9:24 states:

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands (Old Testament Holy of Holies of the tabernacle), which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

The room or compartment called the Holy of Holies, with the mercy seat, was actually a type or picture of the great throne room in Heaven where the Father and Christ are now seated (Heb. 1:3). This room in the tabernacle depicted that Christ had to be sacrificed and His blood shed on the cross for mankind to enter God's presence. The “figures of the



“true” (Heb. 9:24) are looking back to the Old Testament tabernacle with the Holy of Holies and the mercy seat upon which the blood was sprinkled. However, the writer of Hebrews is suggesting that these were mere figures or types of the “true” (Heb. 9:24) arrangement in Heaven and the “true tabernacle” (Heb. 8:2) in Heaven, which is actually fulfilled by Christ's priestly ministry in the very throne room of God. The throne room of God in Heaven apparently reflects the earthly Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle in some way but the “true” fulfillment of the earthly priestly ministry is the heavenly priestly ministry of Christ in the throne room of God's presence. The “true” fulfillment could never be based on another physical room and altar in Heaven.

It should be noted that the nail marks on Jesus' hands and feet are in Heaven (Zech. 13:6) but the literal blood of Jesus is not there. Jesus as our High Priest is in Heaven REPRESENTING His shed blood and sacrifice on the cross before the Father and REMINDING the Father of His precious blood that was shed on the behalf of His

saints. The nail prints in His hands and feet are the eternal reminder of the shedding of Christ's blood – not His blood placed on the physical altar of Heaven.



“I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
And redeemed by His side
I shall stand,
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
By the print of the nails in His hand.”

I do not believe Jesus took His shed blood to Heaven but that He took Himself into Heaven, to appear as our Great High Priest. It's in Heaven (before God's throne) that He

presents Himself as our Savior who died on the cross and granted our complete pardon and acquittal. The wounds in His hands and feet are the constant reminder of His blood sacrifice and the redemptive price that He paid for sin upon the cross.

We know that the Levitical priest would enter the earthly Holy of Holies with the blood to sprinkle upon the altar (Lev. 16:8-10, 14, 19-20, 34; Heb. 9:7). But does this confirm that Jesus brought His own blood into Heaven to perform an act similar to the Levitical priests? I do not believe this is the case and is what the Scriptures teach. Let me give you a summary of what I think Hebrews 9:12 is actually conveying.

Hebrews 9:12

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by (NOT WITH – but by means of, on account of, by reason of, because of = through the agency of) his own blood (the blood that was shed on the cross – vv. 14-15 with 25-28 explain the meaning of this verse!) he entered in once into the holy place (the place where God manifests His presence in Heaven to become our High Priest, as the message of Hebrews and context suggests – Heb. 9:1-11), having obtained eternal redemption for us” (having already obtained redemption for us when dying on the cross as the message of Hebrews repeatedly verifies – 9:14-15; 10:11-14; 12:2).

Hebrews 9:12 is teaching that through the *instrumentality* or *agency* of Christ's blood, which was shed on the cross, Christ entered Heaven as our High Priest to begin His perpetual ministry of representing His blood sacrifice of the cross as the sufficient payment for our sins.

Ron J. Bigalke quotes Kenneth Wuest and confirms this understanding of the text: "Wuest comments that the word through [dia] is 'the preposition of intermediate agency.' In other words, the preposition contrasts the tabernacles. The Old Testament tabernacle was only a type, whereas the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was through the 'instrumentality' of the anti-typical, greater and more perfect tabernacle. It is expedient to interpret through [dia] consistently throughout the passage in Hebrews. The text is not speaking of locality when it states, not [through] the blood of goats and calves or [through] His own blood. Both prepositional usages denote instrumentality (by means of) and are not local in sense. The Old Testament high priest entered with blood, but Christ entered the Holy of Holies through [dia] (preposition with a genitive), or by virtue, of His own blood (Hebrews 9:12; 13:12).

"That Christ entered into heaven through His blood, and not with His literal blood is indicated in Hebrews 9:25, 10:19, and 13:20. The passage does not state that Christ brought His blood into heaven; rather that through His shed blood Christ ascended into heaven. Christ, as the entirely sinless High Priest, did not need to bring any blood into the heavenly sanctuary. The blood was the proof indisputable that He, the sinner's substitute, had truly died. He was both the offering and the offerer. Christ presented Himself in heaven as the risen Savior possessing complete right of entry."

The Bible teaches that Christ suffered once (1 Pet. 3:18), died once (Heb. 9:28), offered Himself once (Heb. 10:12) and entered the holy place once (Heb. 9:12). The "holy place" refers to God's presence and this is where Christ went after His ascension to become our High Priest. The preposition ("by" – dia) in Hebrews 9:12 does not necessarily mean that Jesus went to Heaven *with* a literal vial of His own blood in order to sprinkle it upon the altar. The preposition can also be understood to mean "through," "by reason of," "on account of," "because of," and "for this reason." All of these acceptable translations of this Greek preposition, including the English preposition translated as "by" remind us how the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed on the cross, has become the *channel* and *ground* of blessing for all believers through His priestly ministry. This verse informs us that Christ's blood

which was shed on the cross is represented in Heaven through Christ's priestly ministry. It does not necessarily teach that He took His literal blood to Heaven.

Leon Morris aptly remarks:

"While the sacrifice Christ offered took place on a physical cross on a definite day in a definite land on the physical earth, the essence of that sacrifice was that it was effective in the presence of God."

Morris also comments that if Christ presented His blood in heaven, it would imply "that Christ's atoning work was not completed on the cross but that he still had to do some atoning act in heaven like the earthly high priest who took the blood into the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement."

Hebrews 9:12 is speaking of Christ's priestly ministry in Heaven, based upon the shedding of His blood on the cross (Heb. 9:14-15, 19-20, 25-28). Jesus went to Heaven after He shed His blood on the cross and He went there to present His sacrifice on the cross to the Father as the sufficient payment that takes away sin and which gives a person access into God's presence. In other words, it's because of the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross that Jesus became our High Priest. He went to Heaven to represent His sacrificial blood, which He already shed on the cross on our behalf.

As we will see in our following discussion, it seems better to understand the terms "sanctuary" and the "true tabernacle" of Heaven (Heb. 8:2) and "heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5; 9:23) in the epistle of Hebrews as a general reference to the spiritual fulfillment found in Christ's priestly ministry and work instead of identifying these things as specific structures, locations, and altars in Heaven. More on this later. For now, we must remember that an antitype is a New Testament event prefigured in the Old Testament but which is fulfilled in the New Testament. Christ on the cross (Heb. 2:17) and Christ in God's presence (Heb. 9:24) as our High Priest was repeatedly pictured when the priest entered the Holy of Holies in the Old Testament tabernacle with the blood sacrifice. Of course, this typology has already been fulfilled in Christ's death upon the cross, which was sacrificed in the sight of God (Eph. 5:2) and is also presently being fulfilled in His priestly ministry in God's presence who represents His sacrifice on our behalf. The "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched" is not in this case conveying a physical structure in Heaven or an

altar in Heaven in which placed His blood, but is portraying the fulfillment of Christ's priestly work on the believer's behalf.

When Christ entered heaven, He did so "having obtained eternal redemption" for His people (Heb. 9:12). In other words, when Christ ascended to Heaven, the purging of sin (Heb. 1:3) had already been completed by the blood that was shed on the cross. Therefore, not one drop of blood had to be placed on the heavenly altar since it was already shed on the cross. We must remember that Christ could have never entered into Heaven alive (after His resurrection) except "by His own blood" (Heb. 9:12) or through making His sacrifice for sin. He had to shed His blood on the cross and die before He could enter into Heaven and plead the efficacy of His sacrifice before the Father.

The True Tabernacle

This brings up an important question. Can we know whether or not there is an altar and mercy seat in Heaven? We do know that the tabernacle on earth represented on some grand scale a heavenly counterpart and reality (Heb. 8:5). In fact, it makes perfect sense to conclude that the throne room itself where God dwells is the antitype of the earthly Holy of Holies. It's within the heavenly sanctuary where the Son and Father manifest their presence. They are seated in the throne room which bears a resemblance to the structure of the Old Testament tabernacle and in particular the Holy of Holies. Only Heaven will reveal the final details of all this.



Although there is undoubtedly a physical structure in Heaven that resembles in some form the earthly tabernacle (Heb. 8:5; 9:23) with a Holy of Holies (Rev. 14:17; 15:8; 16:1, 17), the writer of Hebrews seems to be teaching that the "true tabernacle" (Heb. 8:2), "the figures of the true" (Heb. 9:24), "the patterns of things in the heavens" (Heb. 9:23) and the "greater and more perfect tabernacle" (Heb. 9:11) is fulfilled in Christ Himself and His priestly ministry – not a physical structure

in Heaven. This is because the physical structure was designed to portray God's plan of redemption through Christ's saving work.

Again, this does not mean there is no physical resemblance of some kind in Heaven of the earthly tabernacle. However, the writer of Hebrews for the most part looks past physical structures and centers upon the "true" fulfillment of the types which is Jesus Christ Himself – not a building structure. In the specific instances mentioned above, the emphasis should not be placed on a physical structure but a Person (Jesus Christ). These statements reference Christ's priestly service rendered in God's presence (Heb. 7:25). Jesus Christ Himself is the "true" fulfillment of what the physical tabernacle represented on earth.

The physical structure in Heaven is not the "true" fulfillment of the earthly tabernacle since the heavenly structure was also designed by God to be a reflection of Christ's saving work in the presence of God. The physical structure of the heavenly tabernacle was designed to ultimately point to the eternal and spiritual realities of the person and work of Jesus Christ. The structural model in Heaven points to Christ ("the shadow of things to come" - Heb. 8:5). So, to emphasize the "true tabernacle" (Heb. 8:2) is to emphasize Christ to which the heavenly model points. I think this is the best way to understand these references in the epistle of Hebrews.



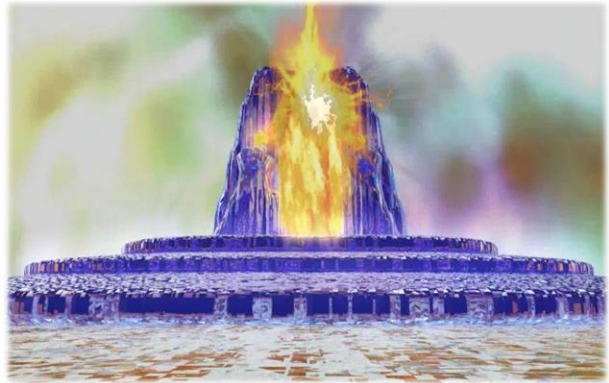
It's interesting that in Eternal State there will be no more physical temple in the heavenly city (Rev. 21:22-23). This is because in eternity the focus is going to be on Christ who is the spiritual fulfillment of what the Holy of Holies in Heaven portrays. The epistle of Hebrews anticipates "good things to come" (Heb. 9:11; 10:1) which are the good things related to Christ's redemptive work on the cross and priestly ministry within the presence of God. The emphasis in Hebrews is on typological fulfillment in Christ and not a typological fulfillment that relates to a physical structure in Heaven. For instance, the expressions "figures of the true" (Heb. 9:12) and "the perfect tabernacle" and "tabernacle, not made with hands" (Heb. 9:11) is

emphasizing the priestly work of Christ through His sacrifice on the cross and His present-day ministry before the Father's throne in Heaven. Of course, we should not deny that there is a literal sanctuary in Heaven but the main emphasis is on Christ and not the physical structure.

Hebrews 8:1-2 declares:

“Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary (Christ's ministering as our High priest in the throne room of God where He sits at God the Father's right hand), and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”

Christ as “the minister of the sanctuary” in Heaven confirms the reality of a heavenly structure of some kind that resembles the earthly tabernacle. The tabernacle on earth was built as a replica of the heavenly tabernacle and sanctuary. Its layout depicted some similarity to the heavenly structure which God originally created (Heb. 8:5; 9:23).



If we believe in the literal interpretation of Scripture, we must accept the reality of some kind of tabernacle structure in Heaven (Rev. 13:6; 15:5) of which the Old Testament tabernacle was but a faint picture. However, in the epistle of Hebrews the primary emphasis is not on a physical structure but on the spiritual work of Christ's priestly ministry. The heavenly counterpart and “true tabernacle” (Heb. 8:20) of the earthly Holy of Holies is intended to convey a *spiritual reality* which is represented in God's throne room, where Christ manifests His presence, and where today He is seated at the Father's right hand (“the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” – Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:11). It is here that Jesus Christ is fulfilling His role as High Priest. The heavenly counterpart (the true tabernacle) and pattern of the earthly tabernacle, as presented in the book of Hebrews, is actually a *spiritual counterpart*, which is fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ as our heavenly intercessor and High priest “which has passed into the heavens” to sit upon the throne (Heb. 4:15).

The epistle of Hebrews emphasizes the person and work of Christ as the “true” fulfillment of what the tabernacle portrayed. The real emphasis in Hebrews is not on the physical structure of the tabernacle but the spiritual fulfillment found in Christ. This means the shedding of His blood and death upon the cross fulfills the Old Testament typology of the sprinkled blood on the altar (Heb. 9:25-26) and His priestly ministry in the presence and very throne room of God (the heavenly Holy of Holies), where He is presently declaring the sufficiency of His blood sacrifice on behalf of His saints, is the “true tabernacle” (Heb. 8:2) and spiritual fulfillment of which the Old Testament tabernacle foreshadowed. The intent of the writer of Hebrews is to draw a *spiritual application* of Christ’s person and work from the physical structure of the Old Testament tabernacle. If we remember this, the epistle of Hebrews with its tabernacle terminology will be less confusing.

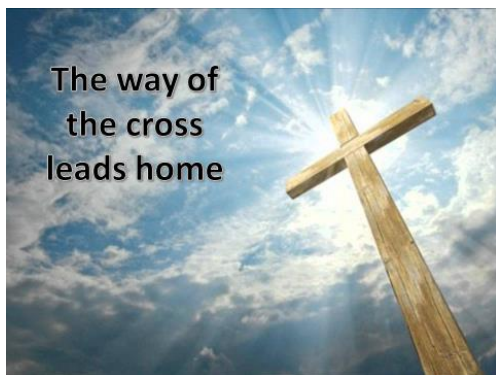
The application is very easy to see. As our Savior and Great High Priest, Christ not only gave His life, when shedding His blood on the cross (Heb. 2:17; 9:25-26), but He also was raised from the death to represent His blood sacrifice in Heaven on the believer’s behalf (Heb. 7:25). All of this means that Christ’s priestly ministry in Heaven is not reflected in the reoffering of His blood on the literal altar of Heaven, but is wonderfully portrayed in His ongoing or perpetual priestly ministry on behalf of every blood-washed believer, a heavenly ministry which is based upon the shedding of His literal blood sacrifice on the cross.

When bringing all the statements and facts together, I have not found strong, convincing, and Biblical evidence that Jesus sacrificed His blood on the altar in Heaven. This is because the writer of Hebrews focuses on the cross as the centerpiece of our redemption, and without rejecting the literalness of the heavenly structure, he is obviously comparing the earthly tabernacle to the spiritual work of Jesus Christ in shedding His blood on behalf of sinners in order to save and represent them as their High Priest in Heaven. Again, the Bible speaks about the blood of the cross (Col. 1:20). Thank God that Christ’s literal and efficacious blood was shed on the cross! Jesus said that the redemptive price was paid and finished (John 19:30) when He shed His blood and died on the cross. This means there was no need to offer this sacrifice on the heavenly altar. In my opinion, the theory that Christ needed to take His blood with Him into Heaven diminishes the work of Christ on the cross from being finished or completed.

It's Still the Cross!

The sprinkling of the Old Testament blood upon the altar is but a foreshadowing of the sprinkling of Christ's blood on the cross which is elsewhere termed as the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:2). The sprinkling is fulfilled in Christ's sacrifice on Calvary. The sprinkled blood is the blood sprinkled way of the cross!

"I must needs go on in the blood-sprinkled way,
The path that the Savior trod,
If I ever climb to the heights sublime,
Where the soul is at home with God.
The way of the cross leads home,
The way of the cross leads home;
It is sweet to know, as I onward go,
The way of the cross leads home."



When we read about "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12:24), it is not the blood sprinkled on the heavenly altar that is in the mind of the writer of Hebrews, but the blood sprinkled cross, which fulfills the typology of the sprinkled blood on the Day of Atonement. Christ "offered himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14) when He was on the cross. The altar and offering of the "precious blood" (1 Pet. 1:19) was upon the cross. It was upon the cross when Isaiah declared "thou shalt make his soul and offering for sin" (Isaiah 53:10). The offering of the blood of Jesus Christ occurred on the cross – not in Heaven. It's the way of the cross that leads home – not the way of the altar in Heaven. It's "the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:20) that saves us and takes us into Heaven – not the reoffered blood upon the altar in Heaven.

"We have an altar" (Heb. 13:10) and this is a clear reference to the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. The Bible teaches that the cross is God's mercy seat. The cross is said to be "the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2; 4:10). The word "propitiation" refers to Christ's *wrath satisfying* sacrifice which was offered to the Father on the



cross. It is translated elsewhere as expressing mercy (“God be merciful to me a sinner” – Luke 18:13). This is because the cross is the place where God expresses His mercy to unsaved humanity for it “was according to his mercy he saved us” (Titus 3:5). It was at the cross where “mercy and truth are met together” (Ps. 85:10). It’s the cross that fulfills the typology of the mercy seat. Any physical altar that is in Heaven is only a picture and eternal reminder of Christ’s ultimate sacrifice made on the cross and the expression of His mercy which was found at Calvary.

“Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found liberty at Calvary.”

Jesus was “the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8) which means that any physical structure of the heavenly Tabernacle with its accommodating altars is meant to portray God’s eternal plan of redemption through the cross. The blood of the cross was in the eternal mind of God. God’s focus has always been on the cross. It’s all about the cross and it’s the cross that fulfills the Old Testament typology of the blood that was sprinkled on the altar in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement (Heb. 9:25-26; 10:1-10). The sprinkling of Christ’s blood on the cross and which is represented in Heaven by Christ’s priestly ministry (Heb. 12:24) was linked to Christ and His New Covenant work (“the mediator of the new covenant” - Heb. 12:24). This covenant focuses on the offering of Christ’s blood on the cross – not upon the altar in Heaven.

Jesus said in Matthew 26:28:

“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Save from wrath and make me pure.”

To conclude that Christ offered His blood on the heavenly altar goes against the whole argument of the book of Hebrews and the rest of the Bible, which states that Christ offered His blood on the cross – not in Heaven. As we have seen, the cross is said to be God’s mercy seat for lost humanity – not the altar in Heaven (1 John 2:2).

The Bible says there was only “one offering” (Heb. 10:14) and that occurred on the cross. God gave His only begotten Son as an offering on the cross (John 3:16). Hebrews 9:14 interprets Hebrews 9:12 and states that Christ offered Himself and blood on the cross as God’s sacrificial saving sacrifice: “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

Hebrews 9:28 also confirms the interpretation of Christ’s offering on the cross: “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

Hebrews 10:12 reveals the same truth:

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.”

The Bible repeatedly teaches that the “offering” of Christ’s blood occurred on the cross and afterward He sat down on His throne beside the Father indicating the offering was complete (Heb. 1:3). This would negate an additional offering in Heaven on the heavenly altar.

Galatians 3:13

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

Ephesians 2:16

“And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”

Colossians 1:20

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

The cross is repeatedly identified as the place of offering and is where Christ’s offered Himself as the sacrifice for the world (John 1:29). It’s still the cross that is the centerpiece of God’s mercy and grace! Everything begins and ends with the cross.

“It’s still the cross, it’s still the blood.
It’s still His dying act of love,
Compelling me to spend my life
In giving everything for Christ!”

All of the Biblical references confirm that Christ offered His blood sacrifice while on the cross. The offering occurred on earth and not in Heaven. This is an important fact that cannot be dismissed. After Christ died on the cross, the Bible clearly teaches that there was “no more offering for sin” (Heb. 10:18). This would negate Christ having to offer His blood on the altar of Heaven. The Bible repeatedly states that there was only one offering and it occurred on the cross - not in Heaven (“after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever” – Heb. 10:12 and “For by one offering” – Heb. 10:14). After Christ expired on the cross, there was no more offering of His blood. Let’s do the math. There was only one sacrificial offering and the writer of Hebrews tells us again and again that it occurred on the cross. The sacrificial blood was shed on the cross and this was the offering that was presented to the Father “for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (Eph. 5:2).

Matthew 27:50-51 reveals what happened immediately after Christ’s death:
“Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.”

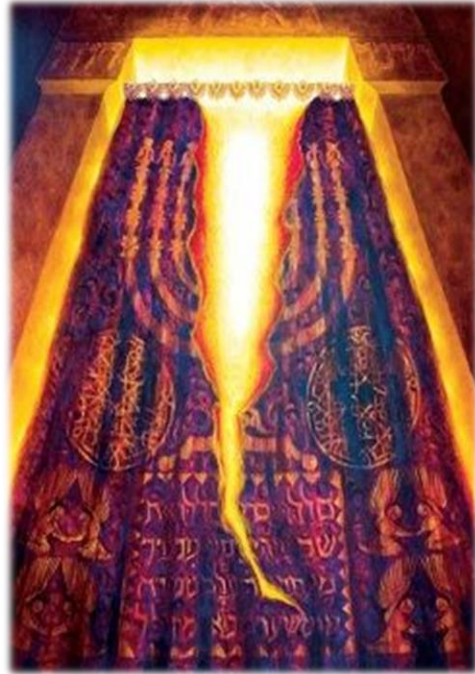
We must understand that Christ’s death rent the earthly veil in two indicating that the way of access was now open to God (Heb. 10:19-20) through His death on the cross. For this reason, there was no need to offer His blood on the altar in Heaven. Why? It’s because the veil was already taken away! The path was now open to the presence of God as a result of Christ’s death on the cross. Everything that God required to bring sinners into His presence was accomplished in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. He shed His blood on the cross and died in order to provide the forgiveness (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14), righteousness (Rom. 5:9), and reconciliation (Col. 1:20) that sinners needed to enter God’s presence.

There was no reason for Christ to enter Heaven to reoffer His blood once again on another altar. This is because the blood was already offered on the cross and the veil which leads into God’s presence was torn in two “from the top to the bottom” indicating that God performed this act! When God tore the veil He was indicating

that the work of redemption was complete. The propitiatory sacrifice was made (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10) and God was satisfied. The blood was sprinkled (1 Pet. 1:2) when Jesus died on the cross and God was satisfied. The tearing of the veil is a constant reminder of the finished work of Christ.

“Now He is with God the Father,
Interceding there for you;
For He is the mighty conqu'ror,
Since He rent the veil in two.

O behold the Man of Sorrows,
O behold Him in plain view;
Lo! He is the mighty conqu'ror,
Since He rent the veil in two.
Lo! He is the mighty conqu'ror,
Since He rent the veil in two.”



It seems best to conclude that the blood of Christ is *represented* in Heaven (Hebrews 9:12; 12:24) without being literally applied to a heavenly mercy seat. The representation of Christ's blood sacrifice occurs in Heaven when the Father sees the literal shedding of His Son's blood on the cross through Christ's priestly ministry, as sufficient ground for our total forgiveness and acceptance before Him. This is because it's the blood shed on the cross that maintains our standing before God (Rom. 8:34; Rom. 5:9; 1 John 1:7). The point is this, when Christ ascended to Heaven, He became our High Priest to present to God the Father the full value of the blood that He shed on the cross, as the satisfying and sufficient sacrifice to give us acceptance in His presence forever. As we have seen, the epistle of Hebrews repeatedly states that Christ offered His blood on the cross – not in Heaven.

Dwight Pentecost has observed:

“It was not necessary for Christ to physically transport His physical blood into heaven to provide a basis for His priestly ministry; but because of His blood on the cross, He was able to enter into His priestly ministry.”

Christ does not fulfill His priestly ministry in Heaven by offering His blood sacrifice on a heavenly altar. Instead, Christ sat down on the right hand of God (Acts 2:33; Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22) in the throne room of Heaven after He finished His work on the cross (not after reoffering His blood on the heavenly altar). However, it's before the throne where His blood sacrifice on the cross is faithfully and perpetually represented (not recreated) by Christ. It's in the throne room that Christ presents His blood sacrifice, which was offered on the cross, as the necessary payment for our sins. At this very moment, Christ sits on the throne beside the Father presenting His blood payment for sin, which He offered on Calvary's cross, as sufficient ground for our eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12). The epistle of Hebrews is teaching that Christ offered Himself and blood sacrifice on the cross as our priest (Heb. 2:17; 9:25-26) and then rose again to be our living priest in the presence of God (Heb. 4:14; 5:6; 7:17, 25; 8:1).

The Heavenly Things

Hebrews 9:23 declares:

"It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens (Old Testament furnishings of the tabernacle including the mercy seat) should be purified with these (Old Testament sacrifices); but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

What are the "things in the heavens" and "the heavenly things?" Although some identify them as the physical objects and structures in Heaven, it seems better to once again view these "things" through a spiritual frame of reference. In other words, they are intended to convey spiritual realities and not physical structures. Again, we must remember that the physical structures of the heavenly tabernacle were designed to point to the spiritual realities of the person and work of Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews does not emphasize the physical structure of Heaven's sanctuary, at the expense of Christ, to which they pointed.

Hebrews 8:5

"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

This verse speaks of how the earthly priests served in the Tabernacle which was said to be a “shadow of heavenly things.” Every year when they offered the blood upon the mercy seat behind the veil it was a picture of the future work of Jesus Christ who would shed His blood on the cross and then rise from the dead and ascend into Heaven to be our heavenly priest. The writer of Hebrews is suggesting that “the heavenly things” point to Christ’s saving work as our High Priest before the Father’s throne. The “heavenly things” apparently deal with the way of access to God through His new heavenly arrangement. They point to the priestly arrangement of Christ’s work as our High Priest and Advocate (the One who lives for us in God’s presence - 1 John 2:1-2; Heb. 7:17).

In general, the “heavenly things” refer to the believer’s way to approach God, how to obtain access and acceptance before God’s throne through Christ, how to draw near to God and experience intimacy with Him (Heb. 10:22), and how we “find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16) through our faithful High Priest (Heb. 4:14). These are the heavenly things that bring us into God’s favor, acceptance, and our new relationship with Him. In other words, the “heavenly things” speak of everything that has to do with our approach to God inside the veil.

I do not believe on this occasion the “heavenly things” are referring to physical objects such as the heavenly tabernacle, the brazen altar, the mercy seat, and the physical structure of God’s throne. The heavenly things are referring to spiritual realities such as the believer’s way of access, fellowship, and acceptance into the very throne room of God through Christ’s priestly work. This is what the book of Hebrews is emphasizing (Heb. 10:19-20). The “heavenly things” refer to the antitype or fulfillment of what the Old Testament Holy of Holies prefigured (access before God and acceptance in the throne room of God through Christ’s priestly ministry). Therefore, the heavenly things are pointing to what Christ is doing for us today in Heaven.

Beloved, we need Jesus! We need Christ’s High Priestly ministry, working on our behalf, so we can be accepted in the presence of God Almighty – the Holiest. Jesus declares the value of His blood sacrifice on the cross as a sufficient payment for all of our sins (Heb. 7:25). In Heaven, the blood of Christ speaks for me!

“He writes me down as righteous,
Where no righteousness has been.

Shielding me from wrath and judgment,
As it covers all my sin.
There's no work that I've accomplished,
Nor my goodness would I plead,
Just let the blood of Calvary, speak for me.”

Something wonderful is happening in Heaven right now! Christ as our High Priest has given believers direct access to God (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12) and we are declared eternally forgiven and accepted (justified) in the presence of an absolutely holy and righteous God. This is because Jesus Christ is in Heaven declaring before the Father the efficacy (value) and importance of His blood sacrifice on our behalf.

Hebrews 12:24 also speaks of heavenly things:

“And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

The writer of Hebrews had been speaking about God, the Church, and angels living in the “the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22). He ends in verse 24 by mentioning that Jesus is also in Heaven (“And to Jesus”) who ratified the New Covenant. But he also mentions that “the blood of sprinkling” is in Heaven. However, we must ask in what sense is Christ’s blood (“the blood of sprinkling”) in Heaven? Some expositors suggest that it is the literal blood of Christ that was sprinkled on the mercy seat in Heaven. However, this cannot be the case since Christ offered His blood on the cross (Heb. 9:14). What the author of Hebrews is teaching, as He does repeatedly in this epistle (Heb. 1:3; 4:14; 5:6-10; 7:25; 8:1; 9:11-12; 10:11-12, 21) is that Jesus is now in Heaven performing His High Priestly ministry.

In Heaven Jesus is declaring the value of His sacrifice on the cross (“the blood of sprinkling”) which is the fulfillment of the blood that was sprinkled on the mercy seat within the Holy of Holies (Lev. 16:14, 19-20, 34). The “blood of the sprinkling” reminds us how Christ’s shed His blood on the cross (God’s altar – Heb. 13:10) and how He is in Heaven today, as our Great High Priest, representing His blood sacrifice before the Father.



The blood-sprinkled way is the way of the cross!

This verse is teaching the same thing as Hebrews 9:12. Through the agency of the cross and the shedding of His precious blood, Christ has obtained eternal redemption for us, and He has now ascended to Heaven to become our High Priest and declare the sufficiency of His blood sacrifice on the cross (Col. 1:20) before the Father's presence. All of this fulfills the typology of the blood that was sprinkled on the altar during the Day of Atonement inside the Holy of Holies which was a picture of the presence of God. Today Christ represents His blood sacrifice which He made on the cross ("the blood of sprinkling") in the very presence of God.

William MacDonald states this:

"There is no suggestion that He literally carried His blood into heaven, but the merits of His blood have been made known in the sanctuary."

I think this is exactly what the Bible is teaching. Within the very throne room where God the Father dwells, within the Holy of Holies, He sees the blood-sprinkled cross of His Beloved Son as fulfilling the Old Testament practice of sprinkling on the Day of Atonement. Christ's blood was sprinkled on the cross and His risen life before the Father's presence, there within the veil, vouches for our eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12). As Christ is seated by the Father with the wounds of Calvary's cross in His hands and feet (Zech. 13:6), within the Holy of Holies (the heavenly room that portrays sacrifice), the Father knows His Son has fulfilled the requirement of the blood-sprinkled way to bring His saints into His presence, through the shedding of His blood on Calvary's cross (Heb. 9:24).

We must understand that when Scripture states believers are cleansed or forgiven by the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Rev. 7:14), this does not mean that the literal blood of Christ in Heaven is physically applied to them; rather, Christ's shed blood on the cross is God's righteous basis for forgiving sinners who have placed their trust for salvation in Christ alone. Let me state this in a clear manner. The blood of sprinkling occurred on the cross – not in Heaven. But the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross is represented in Heaven (Heb. 12:24), through Christ's priestly ministry, who at this very moment is declaring the value or efficacy of His literal shed blood as sufficient payment for our sins.

Romans 8:34

"Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

I can go to Heaven on this promise! This is because the blood will never lose its power!

The Sanctification of Heaven

Another question needs to be addressed at this point. Did Heaven need to be cleansed of literal defilement? Hebrews 9:23 teaches that “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these.” Of course, we know that Heaven itself is not spiritually defiled and has no need of spiritual cleansing from defilement. This is because no sin will ever defile the great city of God.

Revelation 21:27 states:

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

The purification of Heaven is not referring to spiritual cleansing from the actual defilement of sin or spiritual filth but to a ceremonial cleansing or sanctification of God's new ordained purpose to bring people into His presence through Christ. This ceremonial cleansing is depicted in the Old Testament (Lev. 16:15-16), as the priest prepared the Holy of Holies for God's sacred purpose of sacrifice and entrance into God's presence on the Day of Atonement, which has been called the Good Friday of the Old Testament.



In a similar way, the writer of Hebrews is speaking about the consecration and sanctification of a new heavenly process, whereby the believing sinner, through Christ's death and High Priestly work, can now be restored to God. When Christ died, rose again, and went back to Heaven, the Bible teaches that Heaven itself was newly consecrated to God's eternal plan and purpose of Christ's High Priestly ministry on behalf of His Church which is “the house of God” (Heb. 10:21). This was a *symbolic sanctification* related to God's new work of bringing people into His presence through Christ.



Think of it this way. As a result of Christ's death on the cross and His priestly work, Heaven would become a place where sinners can now be accepted and legally justified in God's presence, through Christ's shed blood and His ongoing priestly ministry in the presence of God (Rom. 3:25-26). In one sense, Heaven passed through

an official inauguration, sanctification, and consecration process that relates to God's new way of access into His presence (Heb. 10:20), which was rooted in Christ's death, resurrection, and High Priestly ministry.

The Expositors Greek Commentary seems to have the best explanation of this heavenly cleansing: "And so our heavenly relations with God, and all wherewith we seek to approach Him, need cleansing. In themselves things heavenly need no cleansing, but as entered upon by sinful men they need it. Our eternal relations with God require purification."

I think the phrase "Our eternal relations with God require purification" is the key to understanding this. In other words, it's not the objects of Heaven that needed cleansing but the way of approach to God which was officially and newly sanctified when Jesus died, rose again, and went back to Heaven to be our intercessor. Until Christ came to perform His ministry "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest" (Heb. 9:8). Therefore, there had to be "a new and living way" (Heb. 10:20) which would open the pathway to God and this was the way of Christ. I think this is what the writer meant when he says in Hebrews 9:23 that "the heavenly things" and "the heavenly things themselves" (the way a person approaches and obtains access to God – the way a person possesses a relationship with God – the way into the holiest) was in some sense officially cleansed or ceremonially consecrated and set apart to God's new purpose "with better sacrifices" (Heb. 9:23).

This is a reference to Christ's sacrifice. The plural emphasis on "sacrifices" (when relating to Christ's sacrifice) obviously means that the sacrificial work of Christ was typically represented in all the Old Testament sacrifices (plural) and they were all looking ahead to the final sacrifice of Christ on the cross (Heb. 10:12). Through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which was prefigured in the repeated Old Testament

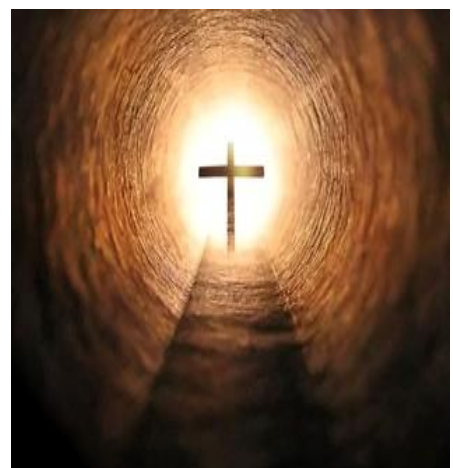
sacrifices, our access to God was officially opened and we can now be accepted in His presence through Christ's priestly ministry on our behalf, as He declares the value of His blood sacrifice on the cross before the Father's throne.

Hebrews 10:19-20

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness (the confidence of the child of God) to enter into the holiest (the purity of the presence of God) by the blood of Jesus (the accepted sacrifice by God), By a new and living way (the resurrection of the Son of God), which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (the death of the Son of God). And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near (in prayer, fellowship and worship knowing that we are accepted in the presence of God) with a true (sincere) heart in full assurance of faith (confidence that God accepts us unconditionally), having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (a conscience free from the guilt of sin through Christ's sacrifice), and our bodies washed with pure water (knowing that all of our sins are cleansed by the blood of Jesus).

This text talks about "the new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us." This speaks of an official consecration of God's new approach and way into His presence. In essence, the inauguration of Christ's priestly ministry in Heaven was like a ceremonial service, similar to when the items of the tabernacle were cleansed and prepared for God's service. God was sanctifying His Son's new work as our High Priest and this is what the writer means when he states: "the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified" (Heb. 9:23). God's approach into His presence was officially sanctified, consecrated, and dedicated to His eternal purpose.

Hebrews 10:19-20 clearly teaches that the veil between the two compartments of the tabernacle was a type of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. In order for us to have access in God's presence, the veil had to be rent, which means, Christ's body had to be sacrificed on the cross and die. Christ had to shed His blood on the cross of Calvary to grant us access into God's presence. Let us never forget that we can only draw near to God (Heb. 10:22), or be accepted in His presence, by Christ's vicarious death on our behalf. Only through the mortal wounds of the Lamb, only



through the suffering of the Lamb of God, which included the shedding of His blood, can we go into the presence of God.

Today, the living Christ, our Great High Priest, pleads the efficacy of His great sacrifice on the cross and brings us into the presence of God! We must remember that it's the living Christ that is inside the veil – not the literal blood of Christ. It was Christ's blood that was offered inside the veil when He died on the cross and it's the living Christ, as our High Priest, who is in the presence of God today. It's here that Jesus is pleading the sufficiency of His blood sacrifice as the ground of our legal forgiveness and righteousness before the Father.

In summary, the cleansing that occurred in Heaven ("the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified" - Heb. 9:23) was not a literal cleansing but a ceremonial cleansing just like the Old Testament tabernacle with its vessels were ceremonially cleansed and sanctified for God's sacred use and purpose (Exodus 40:9-15; Lev. 8:10-12). Hebrews 9:21 says that Moses "sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. Leviticus 8:10 adds, "And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* therein, and sanctified them." The Old Testament tabernacle and altar needed to be ceremonially cleansed which allowed the tabernacle to be officially set apart or sanctified for God's sacred purpose of sacrifice. In a similar way, an official ceremonial cleansing or sanctifying and consecration process occurred in relation to "the things in the heavens" and the "heavenly things" (Heb. 9:23). Remember that the "heavenly things" refers to the way of access into God's presence, how to approach an infinitely holy God, and be fully accepted in His presence.

In some unique way, God officially "consecrated for us" (Heb. 10:20) or sanctified "the new and living way" (Heb. 10:20). Again, this relates to Christ's priestly ministry in Heaven on behalf of His saints, opening a new way of access to God that was never previously experienced, and He secured the salvation of His people before the Father's presence ("the way into the holiest" – Heb. 10:19). The ceremonial cleansing which occurred through Christ, as our High Priest, was the official consecration and sanctification of God's new way of gracious access, approach, and acceptance before Himself through His Beloved Son.

Romans 4:25

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"

This means that Jesus died, rose again, and ascended to Heaven to give proof, verification, and confirmation that the Father was satisfied with His Son's sacrifice and that our justification before God was complete through His sacrifice on the cross (Rom. 5:9). Christ opening up the pathway to God by dying on the cross and becoming the Great High Priest for His saints, who maintains their legal forgiveness and justification in the presence of God, was God's "new and living way" (Heb. 10:20), which was ceremonially cleansed or newly consecrated by God. Thank God that it was! It would seem that the courts of Heaven rang when Jesus rose from the dead and became the High Priest of Heaven. It was a day of coronation.

Hebrews 1:5

"For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" No doubt "this day" was understood by the author of Hebrews to refer to Messiah's sitting at the right hand of God (Heb. 1:3). In one sense, Jesus was begotten in His resurrection who was said to be the first-born from the dead (Col. 1:18). Jesus was begotten from the tomb and not from the womb. This begetting, which speaks of Christ's preeminence and superiority as God's Son, was an official coronation day, the specific time when Jesus sat down beside the Father in Heaven and became our High Priest (Heb. 8:1). It was at this time when all of Heaven recognized that God was now dedicated and consecrated to His new and living way!

Conclusion

We learn from this that our salvation is not about what we are doing but what Christ HAS DONE for us on the cross (paying sin's penalty on our behalf) and what He IS DOING for us today in Heaven (representing us as forever pardoned, eternally forgiven, and justified in God's presence). The believer's assurance and security should be rooted in the shedding of Christ's sacrificial blood on Calvary which is faithfully represented in Heaven on behalf of every blood-bought and blood-washed sinner.

I have tried to deal with all of these subjects honestly, Biblically, and also gently, especially as we speak of the precious blood of Christ! It is not my intent to do any injustice to the sacrificial nature of Christ's shed blood, which is highly valuable in God's sight (1 Pet. 1:19), which was offered on the cross, and is now represented in Heaven through Christ's priestly ministry. The Bible repeatedly confirms that

Christ offered His blood sacrifice on the cross – not in Heaven (Heb. 7:27; 9:14; 10:11-14; 12:2; Gal. 3:13 Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20; 2:14). Hebrews 9:14, 10:12 and 12:2 specifically inform us that Christ offered Himself on the cross. The offering of Christ's blood did not occur upon the heavenly mercy seat but on the earthly mercy seat (the cross). The Father accepted the sacrifice of His Son (Eph. 5:2) and received His offering as payment for our sins.

The purging or cleansing of our sins and the offering took place on the cross (Heb. 1:3). Afterward, Christ ascended to Heaven (Acts 1:11) to declare and represent this purging of our sins as being complete. Hence, there was no need for His blood to be applied to the heavenly altar. The writer of Hebrews paints the lovely picture of "the true tabernacle" and "the heavenly things" as descriptive of the spiritual reality of Christ's priestly ministry occurring on our behalf, opening the pathway, access, and acceptance before God's throne ("the way into the holiest" - Heb. 10:19-20) through His blood sacrifice which was made on the cross.



Today we are invited into the presence of God. An open invitation is given to us (Heb. 4:16; 10:22) through Christ's sacrifice which opened the pathway to God for each one of us. The presence of God was once dreaded and feared (Exodus 20:18) but it is now something that we can look forward to and enjoy.

Christ's victorious and risen presence in Heaven, the Holy of Holies, the very throne room of God's presence, demonstrates that His sacrificial death and blood was already accepted by the Father upon the cross (Rom. 3:24) and that His blood paid the penalty for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2). Therefore, there was no need for Christ to offer His blood upon a heavenly altar. There is no need for the literal and physical blood to be transported to Heaven and be reoffered in Heaven.

Christ's risen and ascended life in the very throne room of God's presence represents the value of His shed blood on the cross. He still bears the wounds in His hands! For this reason, the blood of Jesus Christ will never lose its power and effectiveness and for this reason there was no need for His blood to be resprinkled and reapplied on the mercy seat in Heaven. Christ's blood was offered on the cross

(Col. 1:20), sprinkled upon the cross (1 Pet. 1:2) and it was upon the cross redemption's payment was finished (John 19:30).

The Old Testament sprinkling and application of the blood on the mercy seat within the tabernacle is fulfilled in Christ's offering for sin on the cross which is the New Testament counterpart and reality of all the Old Testament sacrifices and specifically to the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Heb. 9:25-26; 10:1-12). Once again, Christ on the cross (Heb. 2:17) and Christ in God's presence (Heb. 9:24) as



Day of Atonement Fulfillment

our High Priest was repeatedly pictured when the priest entered the Holy of Holies in the Old Testament tabernacle with the blood sacrifice. This typology has already been fulfilled in Christ's death upon the cross, which was sacrificed in the sight of God (Eph. 5:2) and is also presently being fulfilled in His priestly ministry in God's presence who represents His sacrifice on our behalf.

Christ's sacrificial offering was made on earth and not in Heaven. Isaiah prophetically spoke of Messiah's offering for sin on the cross "when thou shalt make his soul and offering for sin" (Isaiah 53:10). The emphasis in Heaven is "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. 5:12) which looks back to the cross and not to the altar in Heaven. The significance of the shedding of Christ's literal blood is always connected with the cross – not with Heaven. It was shed and offered up to God only once and this occurred when Christ offered Himself upon the cross, never to be reoffered again ("after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever ..." – Heb. 10:12 and "one offering he that perfected for ever..." – Heb. 10:14).

There were not two offerings, one on the cross and one in Heaven. There was only one offering for sin and that occurred on the cross. The blood of Christ was not *reoffered* in Heaven on the altar; it is *represented* in Heaven as the ground of our justification and salvation (Rom. 5:9). The offering of Christ's blood took place on earth upon the cross of Cavalry whereas the representing of His blood occurs in Heaven on a daily basis "where Christ ever liveth to make intercession for them"

(Heb. 7:25). Let us never forget that our salvation is based on the blood of Christ but is maintained by the living Christ (Rom. 5:9).

“And now for me He stands
Before the Father's throne,
He shows His wounded hands
And names me as His own.”

