

Bible Readings

1 Kings 8:1-21 and Hebrews 9:1-15

The Ark Brought to the Temple

8 Then King Solomon summoned into his presence at Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families, to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from Zion, the City of David. ² All the Israelites came together to King Solomon at the time of the festival in the month of Ethanim, the seventh month.

³ When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark, ⁴ and they brought up the ark of the LORD and the tent of meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. The priests and Levites carried them up, ⁵ and King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.

⁶ The priests then brought the ark of the LORD's covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷ The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its carrying poles. ⁸ These poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today. ⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.

¹⁰ When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. ¹¹ And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple.

¹² Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; ¹³ I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

¹⁴ While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them. ¹⁵ Then he said:

"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David. For he said, ¹⁶ 'Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built so that my Name might be there, but I have chosen David to rule my people, Israel.'

¹⁷ “My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ But the LORD said to my father David, ‘You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.’

²⁰ “The LORD has kept the promise he made: I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ²¹ I have provided a place there for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt.”

Hebrews 9:1-15

Worship in the Earthly Tabernacle

9 Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. ² A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand and the table with its consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. ³ Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, ⁴ which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. ⁵ Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now.

⁶ When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. ⁷ But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. ⁸ The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning. ⁹ This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. ¹⁰ They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.

The Blood of Christ

¹¹ But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a

heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

¹⁵ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Sermon: The Glory of the Lord enters the Temple

17-October-21

G'Day Church Family

We're **continuing** our **series** on the OT book of **1 Kings**.

It would be great to have your **bible opened at 1 Kings 8** – starting at verse 1. You may have a sermon **outline** - if you'd like to **take notes**.

Let me **ask God** to grant us **understanding** this morning

Let's pray...

Intro

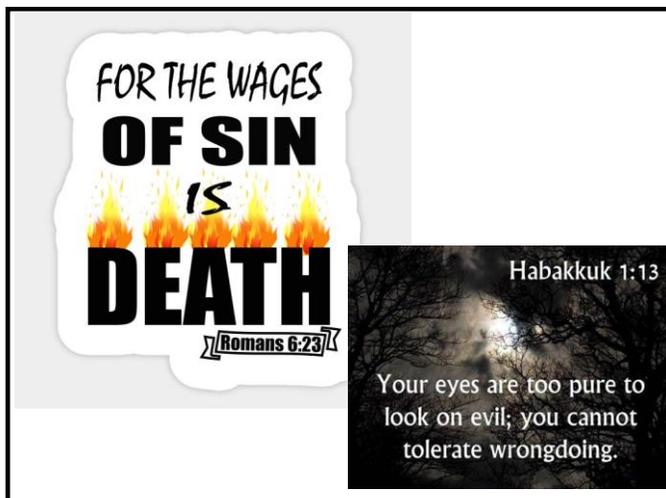
[PowerPoint 1-Holy]

- Before we begin this morning – we need to understand that **God is Holy** –
- Holy {Hebrew Kadosh} means – **sacred** – **set apart** – totally **unique** – **one of a kind** - **one and only** – none like Him – He's **incomparable** - He's **infinite** - and **His perfection cannot be improved upon**
- In comparison to God - We are not **Holy** – we are **sinful** – but what is Sin anyway?

[PowerPoint 2-Sin]

- **According to Augustine of Hippo** (354–430AD) sin is "*a word, deed, or desire in opposition to the eternal law of God*" or as scripture states, "*sin is the transgression of the law.*" (1 John 3:4)

[PowerPoint 3-Punishment]

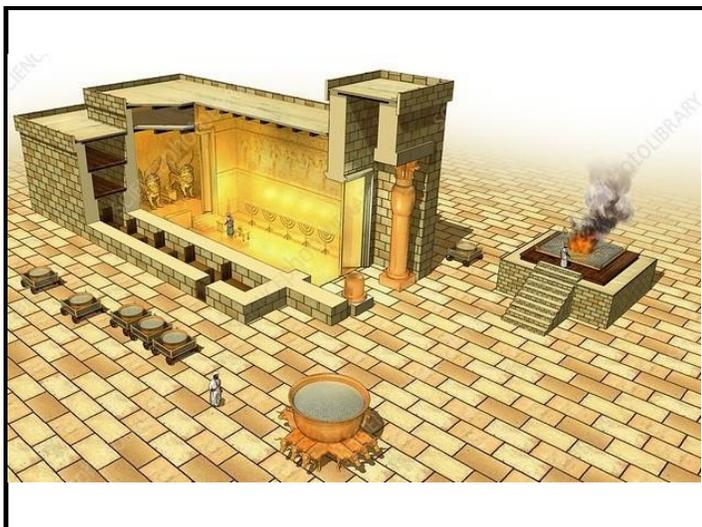


- And according to the Bible – the **punishment for sin is death** (Gen 2:17; Lev 26:14-46; Psalm 145:20; Rom 6:23)
- That **might seem harsh** to us – but remember **God is Holy** and we're not – and *God cannot look at sin and cannot tolerate wrongdoing* (Hab 1:13)
- **God being Holy** and us being sinful is key to understanding His Temple

Context (1 Kings 8:1-2)

- Last week we saw how King **Solomon furnished the Temple** he had built for the Lord
- This week in **chapter 8 of 1 Kings** – the **Temple becomes operational!**

[PowerPoint 4-Temple]



- Starting at v1 – all the **elders** of Israel, **heads of the tribes** and **chiefs of families** were **summoned to bring up the Ark of the Covenant** to the new Temple
- And v2 – **all the Israelites** came together – it's a **national event** (a bit like the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games)
- And it's **God's perfect timing** – because it's the **Festival of the Tabernacles** (Leviticus 23:33-43) – an annual festival which God appointed – where the **people lived in temporary shelters for 7 days** to remind them of their ancestors' **time of wandering in the wilderness** without permanent dwellings
- It's like **God's saying** – *hey guys this is a new era – the people and God both have a permanent dwelling place now!*

What's important to God (1 Kings 8:3-21)

- Then in verses 3 to 21 – as the Temple is operational- **God shows what's important to Him**
- **#1 The Ark of the Covenant** - is important to God

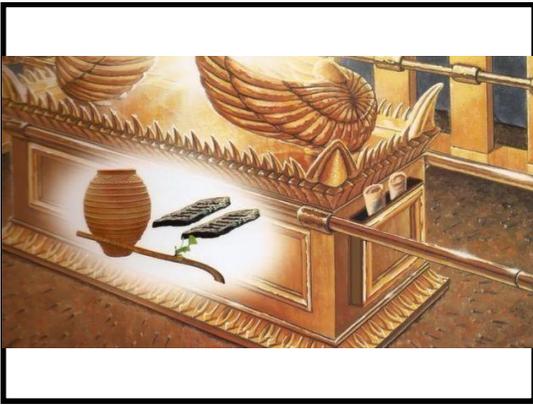
[PowerPoint 5-Ark]



- In v3 & 4 the **priests** brought the **Ark of the Covenant of the Lord** to the temple

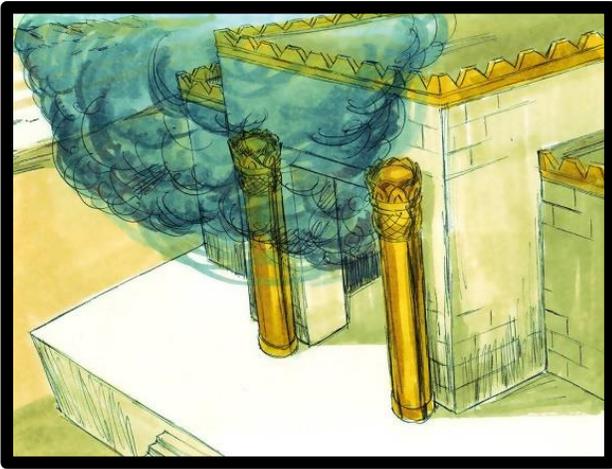
- The Ark was a **golden chest** containing the **10 commandments** – it **had to be carried by long handles** – and could only be **transported by the priests of the tribe of Levi** – a job assigned to them by God (Num 4:15)
- The **Ark is important** because it is **symbolic of the agreement** (or covenant) made **between God and His people** – **God would bless His people if they kept His commandments stored in the Ark** – and **God would punish (curse/woes) His people if they disobeyed His commandments**
- In v5 – all the **people brought animal sacrifices** [introduced by God as a way to pay for sins] – these animal sacrifices and offerings – paid for all the times they had broken God's commandments
- The Ark's was to be placed in the **inner sanctuary of the Temple** – the Most Holy Place – where it was placed beneath **2 huge cherubim figures** – that **symbolically guarded the way back to the Holy God**
- **Inside the Most Holy Place - God** was to **meet the High Priest** (who represented the people) once a year – on a special day – called the **Day of Atonement** – where the priest **sprinkled blood on the cover of the Ark**
- The cover was called the **Mercy Seat** - symbolic of God's grace and mercy – where **God met the High Priest** and **accepted the blood** as **payment for the sins of the people**.
- Why **blood**? Well – **the life of a creature is in its blood** (Lev 17:11) – and **God required blood to show that a life had been taken to atone for the sin** of the people (Heb 9:22)
- **#2 God's Word – His commandments** - are important to Him

[PowerPoint 6-Tablets]



- Inside the Ark of the Covenant was the **10 commandments on tablets** [and Aaron's rod and jar of manna]
- If the people kept these commandments – **God was pleased with them!**
- Application – how important is God and His Word to us? - **Do we seek to obey His Word** or are they just guidelines to us? - Do we have a **proper reverent fear of God?** - **Are we coming to God** with heartfelt sorrow when we fail to obey Him? - Are we genuinely wanting to please Him by obeying Him? As Jesus says **"If you love me, keep my commands"** (John 14:15)
- Application – Also - **God's Word gives details** on how things are to be done? The priests followed them. What about us? Do we follow God's detailed instructions? Or is near enough - good enough?
- **#3 God's presence with His people** - is important to Him
- In V10-11 – The Priests could not perform their service due to the Glory of the Lord entering the temple – and filling the temple **in the form of a cloud**

[PowerPoint 7-Cloud and Glory]



- What is the glory of the Lord?
- It's **hard to define God's glory** –
- In Isaiah 6 –The prophet **Isaiah** has a **vision of God's glory** - and in Isaiah 6:3 it says angels were calling to one another saying, **“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty,”** the next thing the angels say is: **“The whole earth is full of His . . .”** We might have expected the angels to say, **“full of His holiness,”** but they don't say that. They say, **“full of His glory.”**
- From this we can make an attempt at a definition of the glory of God, by saying that *the glory of God is the manifest beauty of his holiness*. **It is the going-public of God's holiness.** **It is the way God puts his holiness on display for people to see.** So, **the glory of God is the holiness of God made apparent to His people.**
- But notice here in 1 Kings 8:10-12 – **God's glory is in the form of a cloud!**
- The **cloud signifies** that there is a **certain hiddeness about God** - **God is knowable** – **yet not fully** – **God is mystery too**– the **cloud both reveals God's glory** and **yet at the same time conceals God's glory** – He **gives both clarity and mystery!**
- The **cloud is also** symbolic of the glory of God **giving approval of the Temple building** and a **statement** that **He is pleased to “dwell” there.**
- The Jews use the word **Shekinah glory** **to express God's presence with His people**
- **The use of a cloud to show God's glory is nothing new**

- We see God went ahead of the Israelites in the wilderness in a pillar of cloud to guide them (Exodus 13:21-22)
- God **appeared to Moses in a cloud** (Exodus 19:9, 11, 16, 20:21)
- When Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus at the time of the Transfiguration – God spoke to Jesus’ disciples from a cloud (Luke 9:33-35)
- When Jesus ascended to Heaven in Acts 1:9-11 – He ascended in a cloud and according to the angels present – Jesus will return in a cloud one day (see also 1 Thessalonians 4:17)
- And so back to 1 Kings 8 - in V12 – Solomon acknowledges that God dwelling in a dark cloud is something God has done before.
- And V13 – not surprisingly Solomon is very pleased that He has built a permanent dwelling place for God

Application: For us – we can see that God cares so much about His relationship with His people – that He comes and dwells with them – He is not a distant God – but a close and personal God

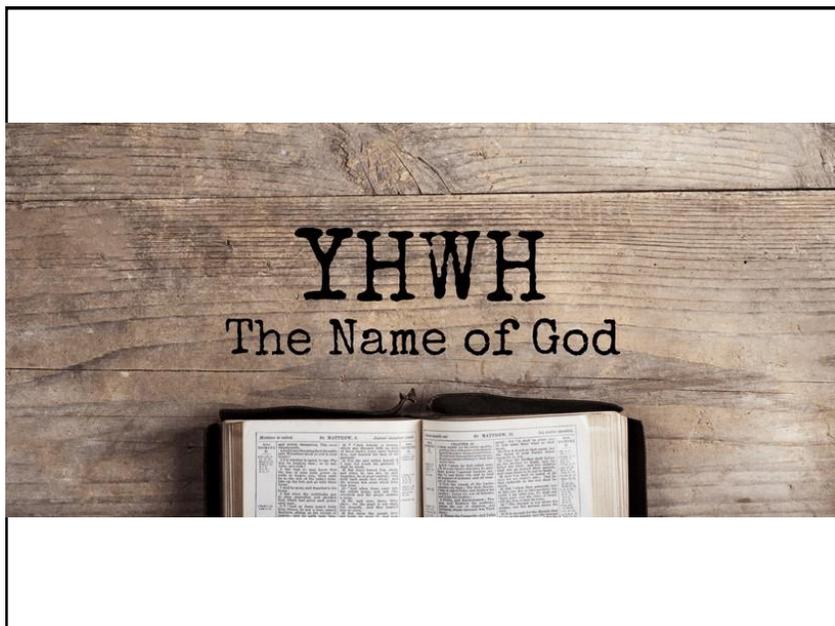
- #4 **God’s Promises** - are important to Him – that’s verses 14 to 21

[PowerPoint 8-Promises]



- In vv14-21 – **Solomon reminds the people of God's promises**
- **Solomon says God has been consistent with His people since He brought them out of slavery in Egypt** – and He has **never chosen a city to have a temple built for His Name**
- **But Solomon says – God did choose David to rule God's people – and even though David had it in his heart to build a Temple for God's Name – God promised it would be David's son who would build the Temple**
- **And so, Solomon declares – v20 – that today is the day that this promise is fulfilled – and a Temple for God's name has been built – and in that temple is what is important to God – The Ark of the Covenant**
- **Application** – God always keeps His promises in His own perfect timing – His promises cannot be broken!
- There's **one more thing of importance to God here**
- #5 That's His Holy Name – YHWH – **the Temple is built for God's Name**

[PowerPoint 9-YHWH]

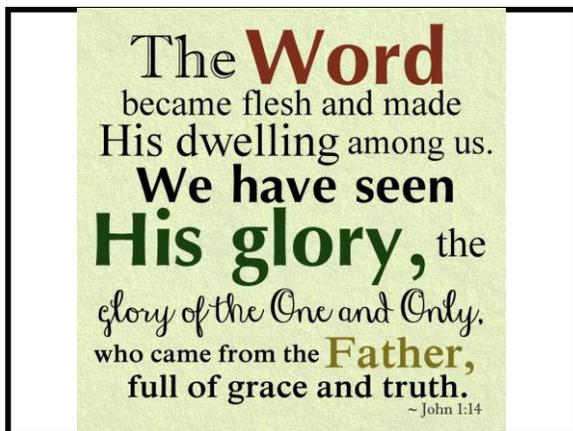


- The name **YHWH** comes from God's name used in Exodus 3:14 – in Hebrew HAYA meaning "I AM" [I AM WHO I AM – I AM HAS SENT YOU] and the name YHWH comes from HAYA and literally means - The Existing One
- So, when we see God's name in the Old Testament in our English Bibles – and we see **LORD** in capitals it will be the Hebrew word YHWH – the name used for God when God is being referred to in His covenant relationship with His people
- When we see the word God used in the Old Testament – it will be the Hebrew word ELOHIM – which is the name used for God when He is doing things or creating things– and not acting relationally
- The Jews today don't like to even say YHWH – God's name is too Holy for them to say - so they use the Hebrew word ADONAI which means my Lord.
- **The Temple is built for God's Name** because His Name symbolises that covenant relationship with His people
- Application: I wonder how much importance we put on God's name – do we use His name disrespectfully or carelessly? – You might hear people on the news say – OMG – or when someone tell us something shocking or surprising – we might say OMG?
- **God's name is Holy and Important and deserves the highest respect and honour!**
- **The 3rd commandment says – “Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain”** (Exodus 20:7)

God fully revealed in Jesus (John 1:14 and Hebrews 9:1-15)

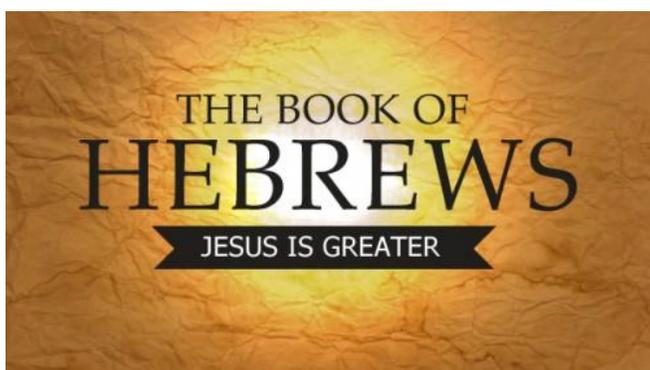
- As we leave 1 Kings 8 though – we are left still with questions unanswered and God as mysterious.
- It's like the things of God and things about God are not revealed to us fully
- If we fast forward to the birth of God's Son Jesus – 1000 years after Solomon
- We read this in John 1:14

[PowerPoint 10-John 1:14]



- The **Word** became flesh and made his **dwelling** among us. We have seen his glory, the **glory** of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- We see in this verse the things that are **important to God** – have come - **in the person of Jesus** – Jesus is the Word of God – **Jesus comes and dwells** with His people [And note where John 1:14 says *Jesus made His dwelling* - dwelling literally means He's **pitched His tabernacle or tent with us**] – and we see God's glory in Jesus -
- One of Jesus' titles is **Immanuel** – which means God is with us
- **Jesus is God's Word** with skin on
- **In Jesus** - we start to see the things of God more clearly
- Which brings us to our **NT passage**
- [Please turn to Hebrews 9:1-15]

[PowerPoint 11-Hebrews]



- If we want a summary of the book of Hebrews – it's basically a book in the New Testament that says Jesus is greater than everything mentioned in the OT – and that's because the Old Testament is literally a signpost pointing everyone to the coming of Jesus
- In Hebrews 9 verses 1 to 5 – the tabernacle – the mobile version of the Temple in the Old Testament – is described in some detail
- We're told about the Ark of the Covenant– and what was in it.
- Then in verses 6 to 10 – we're told how the priests came to make sacrifices for people's sins – and then v7 the High Priest came into the Most Holy Place once per year – on the Day of Atonement - and the High Priest offered a sacrifice for his own sins and the sins the people had committed in ignorance
- Sins committed in ignorance were the specific aim of the Day of Atonement – as it was assumed that people's known sins - would be taken care of - through the regular sin offerings and the daily sacrifices.
- But we see from v8 – that this process done by the Priest was not God's full revelation yet – there needs to be a greater tabernacle - with a greater High Priest - and a greater sacrifice still to come
- And we see v9 – that the sacrifices offered by the priests and the High Priests on behalf of the people were not able to fully clear the consciences of those worshipping
- And so, when Jesus came
- V11 – He came as a greater High Priest – because He's God in flesh – and He's sinless and perfect
- And He went through a greater tabernacle – not made by human hands – but one made in Heaven

- And v12 – **Jesus’ sacrifice is greater than the ones in the Old Testament because He **offers** His own sinless blood for our sins by dying on a cruel cross – rather than offering the blood of animals (goats and calves)**
- And v13 – **the blood of the animals** only made the people back in the Old Testament - outwardly clean – but v14 - **Jesus’ blood** makes those who believe in Him **clean inside and out** – **He cleans our consciences** of all the sins we have committed - past, present and future
- And so, we don’t have to **keep offering dead sacrifices** (dead works) on a **daily basis** for our sins to be forgiven – **Jesus’ sacrifice is once and for all.**
- And it’s not just our sins that are **forgiven** by Jesus’ sacrifice
- In v15 there’s more
- Jesus’ new way of cleansing our consciences – is **called the New Covenant** – it’s a new agreement - between God and humans
- In the Old Covenant **God promised to protect and keep His people** if they kept His laws and were faithful to Him – but they were unable to do this fully – **animal sacrifices were put in place**
- In the New Covenant with Jesus – the **animals sacrifices are replaced by Jesus’ once and for all sacrifice** and even though we can’t fully keep God’s laws – **God promises to bless us** because of Jesus’ obedience - rather than our obedience
- We do however, have to **have faith in Jesus** – and admit we sin and disobey God – and genuinely say sorry to God for our disobedience - and genuinely believe Jesus died for our sins to be forgiven
- If we agree to that – the New Covenant as v15 says – promises us **we are redeemed by Jesus** (that is, we are bought back to God –by the price of Jesus’ death) – and the New Covenant promises us an **eternal inheritance** – i.e., a **forever life with Jesus** in Heaven

- And this **New Covenant of Jesus is so amazing** – v15 it also buys back the people under the first covenant who made all those animal sacrifices. Every sin sacrifice and offering made in faith in OT Law was like an IOU which was cashed in – when Jesus died on the cross!

Our Response (Hebrews 9:14b)

- Because of all that God has done in Jesus – it **requires a response** from us
- Notice at the end of verse 14 we have our response – the **reason** our consciences are cleansed by Jesus' sacrifice – **is to serve the living God**

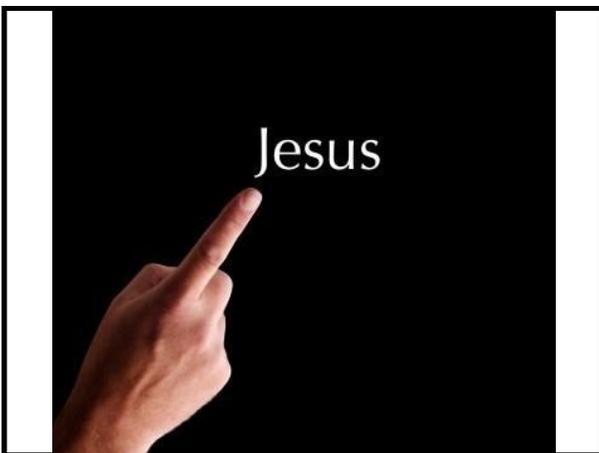
[PowerPoint 12-Serve]



- The **Greek** to serve here means **priestly service** [it's like we're all priests]
- **Charles Spurgeon** puts it this way:
- *“And, dear friends, from now on you are to ‘serve the living God.’ You that are acquainted with the Greek will find that the kind of service here mentioned is not that which the slave or servant gives to his master, but a worshipful service such as priests give to God. We that have been forgiven our sins by Christ are to give to God the worship of a royal priesthood. It is ours to present prayers, thanksgivings, and sacrifice; it is ours to offer the incense of intercession; it is ours to light the lamp of testimony ...”*

- To serve the Living God as priests - we need to be able to explain to people – that **God is holy and we are not holy but sinful** – and to **explain** that **Jesus** is the **only way back into a right relationship with the Holy God**. Just like the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant - was the **only way** back to the Holy God for the people of Israel – believing in the Cross of Jesus is the **only way back to the Holy God - for us**.
- Because Jesus has entered into the Heavenly tabernacle (Temple) – **he has left us God's spirit** – to give us a personal close relationship with Him – and to give us the words to say at the right moment (Luke 12:12) and if we live by the Spirit – we will produce the **Fruit of the Spirit** - joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control

[PowerPoint 13-Point to Jesus]



- Jesus also left His **Church** as the **vehicle** to help people to get back into a right relationship with God - Just like the OT is a signpost to Jesus - we as the Church are to be a **signpost to Jesus** – as we live our lives as Christians – everything we say and do – **should point people towards Jesus.**

Let's pray...

Father God, we thank You that You have revealed Your Glory to us - in our Lord Jesus – and that through His once and for all sacrifice we are forgiven and have eternal life. Help us to bring glory to You by being signposts to Your precious Son, Jesus – in His name we pray, AMEN.