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From: [William and Beverly Salmon](#)

To: biblestudy@triumc.org

Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2003 3:35 PM

Subject: Re: Trinity UMC Bible Study: Study Sheet on Hebrews 9

Alright, now that I've caught a spirit/physical breath, I can share with you some of the insights from last week's IHOP Bible Study meeting. Karl's responses are in blue, and mine in red.

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

IHOP Bible Study

Tuesday, March 10, 2003

HEBREWS 9

Oh, what a lovely chapter this is. We are privileged to turn to one of the oldest Christian terms, that modern day Christianity abandoned; this is unfortunate, and to the church's peril. The is the concept of THE BLOOD SACRIFICE! I'll give you my answer why in the comment paper later in the week.

I. Read the chapter in one setting.

II. Look up the following reference on the web:

www.studylight.org/com/bcc/view.cgi?book=heb&chapter=009 Then, use your own study references, look at verses 9: 1 - 10. Paul examines the 'SACRIFICIAL RITUALS" used by the Levitical priests in the EARTHLY TABERNACLE. Note the curious reference in vs. 5: "Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, **overshadowing the atonement cover. but we cannot discuss these things in detail now.**" But later, watch out

DRIVE THE WORD "TABERNACLE" THROUGH YOUR GUT! THE TABERNACLE IS THE PLACE WHERE AT-ONE-MENT BECOMES REALITY. Hence, the "Earthy Tabernacle" is where the At-One-ment is demonstrated. Then, there is the "Heavenly Tabernacle" of Christ, and this is where PERFECT ATONEMENT takes place. Do you see the significance of running these words through your human experience?

See if you can discover the significance of the EARTHLY TABERNACLE, and then why Paul does not want to "discuss" these things now.

The EARTHLY TABERNACLE was where the OLD COVENANT laws were celebrated. It represented the whole symbolic system of Old Test. Jewish worship. My guess that Paul wanted to discuss Salvation later???

The purpose of the Tabernacle was to demonstrate or illustrate how Perfect At-One-Ment was achieved. So, my analysis digs into how it failed to achieve At-One-Ment. Attempting to fulfill the LAW is bound to failure. It is only by grace (gut level: agape love, acceptance) can At-One-Ment be achieved.

Rex noted that "Christ represents the new covenant and frees us from our sins. My affirming response was to say "OK, remind yourself, and us, that SIN is the antithesis of AT-One-Ment, and then explain what FREEDOM is: Liberation, unconditional acceptance, peace that passes understanding, etc. Freedom results in At-One-Ment." The opposite also is true: At-One-Ment results in freedom.

CONCERNING WHY PAUL DID'NT WANT TO DISCUSS THESE THINGS NOW IN MORE DETAIL, is because they were too detailed. If you've had a chance to explore the "studylight.org/com/bcc/view.cgi?book-heb&chapter=009, you's see page after page of details; i.e., **THECANDLESTICKS** foreshadow the gifts of the Old and New Testaments; **THE LOAVES OF BREAD**, foreshadow the communion table; **THE GOLDEN ALTAR** and **THE FIRST VEIL AND THE HIGH PRIEST** that foreshadows the life prayer; **THE ARK OF THE COVENANT AND MERCY SEAT** as the place with the High Priest came once a year to take upon himself the sins of the whole nation and then to offer the gift of blood of the sacrificial lamb, and the second sacrifice of a goat that was freed representing the "scape goat" and **this WAS THE DAY OF THE ATONEMENT (THE AT-ONE-MENT)**.

III. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. vss. 11 - 15.

Research what you can find out about this Perfect Sacrifice, and share with us your summary. **The perfect sacrifice is Christ's blood which is the perfect AT-ONE-MENT. Bravo!**

Why was this sacrifice necessary in the first place? It is necessary to re-balance the human equation. Go back to Genesis 2 and 3 that is the story that illuminates the human condition: i.e., we experience life as broken; we experience life as being un-full-filled. How did this happen. The story continue to explain that we human beings chose not to be obedient to God's plan for humanity -- we wanted to be gods.

One of the illustrations theological philosophers have used to explain why we have male and female, is that God understood our need to be "god," and separated us into two genders, thus making At-One-Ment impossible. Yet God was a sympathetic God. God provided intercourse as a way to almost become god-like. Hence, at the moment of climax, human beings are transported into a near heavenly experience -- the experience of near At-One-Ment.

Because we were "kicked out of the garden into The Way Life Is" we will live forever is a state of separation -- which is the antithesis of At-One-Ment. God invented The LAW as the means by which we could demonstrate our obedience, yet the LAW only convicts because it can never be fulfilled!

In order to restore humanity to live At-One, God needed the sacrifice of Perfect Obedience that is provided in Christ and embodied in Jesus. His death--THE SPILLING OF HIS BLOOD--is this PERFECT OBEDIENCE.

Now, when I have a relationship to Jesus Christ and his sacrifice, and you have a relationship to Jesus Christ and his sacrifice, then our separation is overcome in our relationship to the spiritual gift. Now, it is possible to live whole, peaceful, healthy, etc. lives when we all have this relationship.

One caveat: This gift is from the obedience of THE CHRIST. The Christ is not something we can store in a cardboard box and label it "Christian." No, the Christ leaks out everywhere. In this regard, sometimes it is easier to see the activity of the Christ is "secular events," rather than in "church events"; such as, the video "Vanilla Sky," and "Joe Vs. the Volcano," etc. For me, Christ was revealed in Stephen Sondheim's musical "A Little Night Music." One other way to put this is to say, wherever you see the work of At-One-Ment, you see the work of Christ.

IV. In vss 16 - 28, Paul demonstrates how The Earthly Sacrifice OVERSHADOWED the

Heavenly Sacrifice to come.

Essentially, again Paul is using this to proof-text so that his readers could not refute his argument. Research what you can, and share the result with us.

EARTHLY SACRIFICES = Repeated sacrifices of the OLD COVENANT

HEAVENLY SACRIFICE= Christ's Sacrifice (NEW COVENANT). U-m-m-m, this is true, but what in heaven's name is a "heavenly sacrifice." Earthly Sacrifices are easy to understand, because we don't run them through our HEADS. It is so easy to use Head Trip Analysis rather than Gut Trip Analysis. For me, "HEAVENLY" (Happy, wholesome, joyfilled, authentic, real) when combined with "SACRIFICE" (those events that result in bringing things TOGETHER) illustrates the meaning of what the Greeks called the "heavenly sacrifice." The Jews would call this the "illuminating event," or the "Revelation," or the "Epiphany."

Gosh people --- does this help? Doesn't it make the reading of this scripture more meaningful? Please let me know -- all of you -- whether this helps or hinders? Please do this soon. Frankly, it turns me on, upside down and inside out. In a word: I like it a lot. However, I can't speak for you, but I'll try my hardest to clarify it, because I yearn for you to capture the excitement and relevance of it too.

Thanks -- Pastor