

Behold I Have Come
Hebrews 5-10

Isaiah 49:1-13

Ephesians 1:1-14

Responsive Psalm 135:1-7

This morning we are going to be picking up where we left off from last week in Hebrews Chapter 10, we will be focusing on verses 5-10 which is a continuation of the Author's argument of Christ being superior to the old covenant sacrifices. As I was reading these passages this week in preparation for today there were a few overwhelming thoughts that came to mind. One, is noticing the sovereignty of God in these passages, and the second is God's provision through his sovereignty. As we read this morning keep these two themes in your head and rejoice in them. So let us start this morning by reading, starting in verse 1-10.

So the author here is obviously talking of Christ being sacrificed for us, for the atonement of our sins but I can't help but in this argument also see not an argument but a praise to God for his sovereign plan of salvation, for his mercy in providing his Son, and his grace toward us in this provision. Look in verse 5, it says, "a body you have prepared for me." and in verse 7, is the response, "Behold I have come." There is the preparation, and the fulfillment of the coming Messiah, and his arrival, but not only that we see here the purpose, which in the end of verse 7 says, "To do your will, oh God." Is this not a beautiful representation of God's sovereign mercy and grace? He has ordained from before time that his Son would come and be the perfect sacrifice needed to atone for the sins of his people. But not only has he ordained the ministry of Christ on the cross, he ordained us as well!

Isaiah 49 verse 1, says "The Lord has called me from the womb, from the matrix of my mothers womb he has made mention of my name. Also Psalm 139, verse 14" I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, Marvelous are your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in your book they all were written, the days fashioned before me, when as yet there were none of them." Wow, what a beautiful passage, what a wonderful promise! "I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." What a message for this world eh? In a world full of people who despise themselves, who abhor who they have been made to be, yet we have been made wonderfully. This doesn't leave any room for doubts in the believers mind, God made each and every one of us exactly as he saw fit. Do not despise what God has made, whether that be yourself, or others, we have been made in the image of God, for the glory of God.

But not only that, not only are we fearfully, and wonderfully made, we were seen, we were known before we were even conceived. Wow, what a mystery that is eh? And look at this in verse 16, "Your eyes saw my substance being yet unformed," before we were, God saw, God Knew, and God formed us, and in his book we are written.....in his book, we are written. What certainty, what a promise, we all have areas that are struggles in our lives, in our heads, there are things about ourselves we may despise, or in the very least be frustrated with at times, wishing we could be something different..yet we are made just how God desired for us to be, he has fashioned our days, when yet there were none. God set our path, before we were. After all this, verse 17 David praises God as he says, "How precious also are your thoughts to me, o God! How great the sum of them. If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand, when I awake, I am still with you."

God thinks of you, not only has he made you, not only has he fashioned your days, he doesn't set it in motion and leave and just let it all play out, he is there, with us, as the Psalmist says, When I awake, I am still with you. What a picture of his sovereignty, of his love for his children. We get even a better view of this in Ephesians chapter 1, starting in verse 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places with Christ." Feeling overwhelmed, feeling despair, or depression, remember God who made you, has also blessed you with every spiritual blessing! Verse 4. "Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Before we were, God chose us, he loved us, he made us, he prepared our days, so that we may be holy and without blame before him in love. With no work of our own, before the world was, as verse 5 says, he "predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he made us accepted in the beloved." Not what we have done, but what God has done so that praise is given to him, for his mercy, not to us and our ability.

Who are we to despise God's purpose? Who are we to despise God's plan for our lives? This is both a hard thing to bear, and a wonderful promise to stand upon. Through this life we face various trials, we have various hardships, and life can seem to be too much to bear, but take heart knowing that none of this is outside the will of God for your life. And we know why God allows such things, hardships always drive us toward him. When things are good, God takes a back seat in our lives..by that I mean we do not think upon him as we should, but as soon as a trial arises, we cry out to him for his help, and for his mercy, suffering brings us closer to him which is why James wrote that we should count it all joy, for suffering is a test of our faith, and in it we learn patience, we learn to rest upon God. This should change our mindset, in our crying out to God it should not be in anger, such as Paul said, "Why have you made me like this?" but rather, we must come to him praise for the potter having power over the clay has made us into his own creation, and a pot is not cured without fire. And that same goes for things in our own lives, we must not despise God's purpose, we should not cry out in anger," God this is unfair, why is this happening to me!" but rather, in praise and patience and wait upon his deliverance, meditate upon his mercy and love, that through such sufferings we are drawn ever closer to him, remembering what Isaiah said, before we were, he saw us, he knew us, and before our days were, he prepared them.

If we can have this mindset, if we can have this focus it will change our lives. Seeing that the suffering we bear in this life has purpose, it has meaning, it can change us as we are slowly being molded into the person that God has ordained that we become, perfected, and holy. Faith really only grows through trials, for it is then that our faith is put to the test, that is when we are driven to the point of despair we can do no other than to cry out to God for his mercy, we can only rely on him to carry us through, and through such times we grow in faith, as we learn to praise him all the more for his love, and grace toward us. That is what stood out to me the most when studying this passage. It is God's sovereign work, for he says in the first 4 verses that the sacrifices which he had ordained could not accomplish a remission of sin, but rather they served only as a reminder of sin, then in verse 5 it says, "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me." This is a quote from Psalms which was written by David, yet the author here attributes these words to Christ. Again showing that the fulfillment of the Old Testament, is found in Christ, and it shows God's sovereign work even through the words of David in the writing of this poem of praise.

And since Sacrifice and Offerings were not the point, they were not truly what God had desired, and in burnt offerings for sin God found no pleasure, a body was prepared for Christ, to come and do the will of his Father which was to offer atonement, once and for all for the sins of his people. Then in verse 7 we see Christ has arrived, he says, "Behold I have come, in the volume of the book it is written of me." The whole bible is written and speaks of, and points to Christ. We have seen that as we have been going through this book of Hebrews as the author here has been systematically pointing out how each and every aspect of the old covenant's purpose was to point to the need, and the to the arrival of Christ himself. We see this point further argued in verse 9, where he says again, "Behold I have come to do your will o God, he has taken away the first so that he may establish the second." Again, the old covenant is passed, it is gone, it is no longer necessary for Christ the substance, the one in whom the whole volume of the book written speaks of, has now come to accomplish the fulfill the will and purpose of the father who sent him, to bring power, and glory, and honor, and praise to himself, the only true and worthy lamb who was slain, and in whom is found grace, mercy, and love.

Verse 10, says and "by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all." The sacrifice of Christ on the cross accomplished all that the offerings of animals could not, redemption, and atonement once and for all. Gone is the need for any sacrifices for they have been full, gone is the need for the reminders of sin, for we now have the Holy Spirit's indwelling ministering to us, convicting us of those sins. Gone is our need for an external law to point and to show us what rebellion and sin looks like, for again we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which takes that role in our lives ministering to us that which is holy, and convicting us of that which is sinful rebellion. Which brings us to trusting God at his word. This can at times be a tough thing to do, especially if we are in the middle of trials and sufferings. But the reality is that we not only can, but we must trust God at his word. Even as we look at our passage this morning, and we see this summary of God's work of salvation, sending his son to do his will, and by this will, sanctifying us, do you believe this? Do you take God at his word that this salvation has been accomplished and applied to you? God has not failed you in this, and if he has not failed in this, he will not fail in any other promise. For they are minor in comparison to the accomplishment of redemption.

His promise to keep us, to provide for us, is quite simple in comparison to his providing his Son that he promised to die for us. Yet at times we may doubt some of God's promises, but we shouldn't for they are sure, they are holy, they are just, and a part of God's sovereign will for us. In these promises is our hope, in Christ is our hope, knowing that each day, each trial, each moment of suffering is not without purpose, it is not without plan for we know that even that which was meant for evil, God has meant for good. What a wonderful promise, that even the evil we must endure and suffer is accomplishing God's holy and just purpose in our lives. We live in a fallen world, we are stained by the sin's of this world, but we do not need, nor can we be controlled by them. For God has provided a way in his mercy and grace for those sins to be forgiven, and our slates to be wiped clean by the blood of his Son.

And if this is true of you, then you should have no worries, for all that is suffered here is but a moment, and will pass, but God and his promises endure forever. He says that he will never leave us, that he will never forsake us, that we are his children, and that he loves us, he cares for us, and he will provide for us. These are eternal promises, given to us before the foundation of the world! He knew us, he chose us, he adopted us before the world was formed! If God is faithful in this, we can be sure that he is faithful in all things.

This must be our heart, this must be our mind. That we trust God at his word, that we trust that his word never fails. Knowing this, and believing this will put trials and suffering into perspective, for we should not focus our hearts and minds on the suffering, but upon God's purpose in it, and ultimately upon God's deliverance through it. Even if that suffering leads to death, is not God's will accomplished? Does death make his promises null and void? No, on the contrary, for it is then that all of these promises are fully realized, it is only then that we are truly reunited with our maker, with the Sovereign God of this creation. I think of those who suffer such things in this body which brings death, the crying out to God to remove the suffering, to remove the illness...but I am reminded what he said to Paul when Paul cried out to have his illness removed, God said, "my grace is sufficient for you." This is a type of suffering in the flesh which may not have an end until death, but even then it still serves God's purpose. And in the end, for his children the end of that suffering is the fully realized promise that he told the thief on the cross, "Today, you will be with me in paradise." So it may even at times seem that God has not been answering prayer, he has not given a deliverance from that suffering in the flesh, but ultimately he has given a deliverance from the eternal punishment of sin, so that we may be with him in the heavenly places.

God's promises do not fail. He does not promise us a life without trial, a life without suffering.. in fact he tells us the opposite. That this life is suffering, but be of good cheer, for he has overcome this life, he has overcome this world of sin and death, so that we may be one with him in his world of life and light. That is the ultimate promise, that is the hope of our faith, it is not bound in a deliverance in this world, but in the one that comes after. My point being here, is that even though God may not seem to answer our prayers, he does, he is faithful to do so, but it is not always in the way that we desire, but ultimately our prayers are answered according to his will, to accomplish his purpose, so that he may receive praise. This is a very hard thing to grasp I think, for we are yet in this body, and in this world which seems to be over run with sin and sufferings. IT can be hard, and even impossible at times I think to rest in God's promises when we are in the middle of it, we can feel alone, lost, forgotten, but we must know, we must be reminded that is not the case. God does not leave us, if we feel alone and forgotten, it is not God but us, it is our sin in said suffering that we do not trust God enough, it is those moments that we are not trusting him at his word. And I think many times we are expecting an outcome which is not given, we desire something that maybe outside of God's will for us our life so he therefor does not grant it, does not answer our prayers as we desire, as we think what is best for our lives.

We must rest in the love and mercy of our Lord and Savior, we may not see it, we may not know why we must endure that which we are suffering, but we must rest in the truth that there is nothing that operates outside of God's sovereign will for our life. I think in closing this morning, turn with me to Psalm 139, as we read this psalm of praise from David think upon all that was said this morning. David was a man with great sorrow, one who had also suffered, one who like us struggled and fought against the sinful stain and desires of this life. but he was also one who found great comfort in the promises of God, recognizing God's absolute sovereignty, and in that sovereignty is found his ultimate grace, mercy and love. Let these words of David be our words, let us trust God at his word and his promises, let us trust God that he would bring us the mercy and grace that he desires for us. For in all things, he grace is sufficient, his love endures forever, and his promises never fail. In closing, let us read the words of David, Psalm 139. 1-18.