

# Jesus, The Mediator

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] But it's not yet. Can you hear me now? All right. That's been off the entire time. But you've been able to hear me, so that's good. All right.

So as we come to Hebrews 9, verses 15 through 28, we're going to look at Jesus the mediator. And as I was reading through this passage over and over and over again this week, I've got to admit the book of Hebrews has been a very difficult book to preach.

The content itself is not particularly difficult or hard. It's just very repetitive. And that's what I was finding this week with this passage. But as I wrestled with it and I was reading through it, reading about it and such and just praying over it, I just got to thinking about what we're seeing with the Old Covenant and the transition into the New Covenant through the blood of Jesus, I got thinking about different religions in the world.

See, religions are abundant throughout the world. Each religion has their own claims to truth. They have their own adherents. And that's been the case for thousands of years since man has been cast out of the Garden of Eden and separated in their relationship with their creator.

And it's approximated that over 80%, just over 80% of the world population adheres to some form of religious expression.

[ 1 : 3 4 ] Mankind as a whole has retained the idea that this world is not all there is. That there is a deep-seated belief that there's something more beyond our experience here.

In Ecclesiastes 3.11, we're told that the preacher, the preacher tells us that God has placed eternity in the heart of man.

And that's why you have all this religious expression. That's why you have all these people interested in understanding that which is greater than them and that which is beyond this life.

And so, the conclusion is, by and large, that there must be something greater that started all this and got this going.

There must be a being that is responsible for our experiences and what we go through day in and day out. The fact that we are even here.

[ 2 : 3 4 ] And thus we see the evidence of man's attempt to reach out to and to please the God or gods in the form of different religious ceremonies and rituals. I didn't want to overwhelm you with this.

I've got four very thick books on world religions. I didn't want to go there and look at every one of them. It would be redundant and very, very boring to do.

So I'll just put it in three different summary statements. First, you've got different gods for various phenomena, including weather and crops and health. So people worshipping the God of the sun and the God of the seas and the God of the corn and so on and so forth.

All these different gods and ideas that they have to try to please these gods in order to receive a blessing from them. You've got different types of offerings that take place that include food, animals, and even humans.

Humans sacrificing humans. Such a tragedy in the world, but yet not so far from many of us in the form of abortion.

[ 3 : 41 ] Different types of ceremonies, utilizing drugs, alcohol, and orgies. Just debauchery, and what we would refer to and look at as sin, but are ways in which people are trying to reach out to and understand God or their gods.

So ultimately, mankind has been desperately reaching out for an understanding of God. And that's consistent with what we see in Acts chapter 17 and verses 26 and 27.

It says, He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods in the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God and perhaps feel their way toward Him and find Him.

See, God created mankind with the intent that we would seek Him and we would know Him. And even though these myriad attempts through history have failed, God is still desirous of people to know and worship Him.

Therefore, in verses 1 through 10 of chapter 9, as we looked at last week, the author of Hebrews laid out the benefit of the Old Covenant. There's a tabernacle established where God's presence resided and priests could come to Him on behalf of the people.

[ 5 : 04 ] See, God chose one nation. God chose the Israelites. Not because they were big and magnificent and awesome, but because they were little and weak and He could be glorified through them. There would be the testimony, the ones who represented God and spoke for God and showed God to the people and the nations around them.

The pagan nations, by the way, who were indulging in these different sacrifices, indulging in these different ways in which they were trying to please their gods. And so God chose the Israelites.

He brought them out of Egypt. He took them to Mount Sinai and with Moses on Mount Sinai, gave them the law, gave them the tabernacle. And so the tabernacle is where God's presence resided and the priests could come on behalf of the people.

And there were different elements of the tabernacle that served different purposes in the worship, such as the table of showbread and the altar of incense. There were instructions given to priests and the high priests on what they could do and when.

There were instructions given to the people on what they were to bring to the tabernacle and when. There were instructions on how people could have a relationship with God, how they could come to Him and worship Him, how they could know Him.

[ 6 : 15 ] If you're like me, you may now, or for years, have looked at the Old Testament, read through the Old Testament and the Old Covenant and wondered, why in the world is this happening?

How does this make sense? And you may have even looked at it as a bad thing. You may have looked at the Old Testament and the law as a bad thing for people.

Because when we look at the law, we know what Paul says. Paul says that, you know, because of the law, sin abounds. Sin is magnified. It becomes more evident because of the law.

But I want to propose to you that ultimately the Old Covenant, the law, was an act of grace by God toward people. It was a gracious act by God toward people.

Think about it. Right? We're talking about hundreds, maybe thousands of religions and gods and supposedly in Hinduism there's somewhere between 30 and 300 million gods.

[ 7 : 21 ] Either way, there's more than one. And it's just, it goes on and on, right? Man trying to understand their creator. Created with the, you know, understanding in their heart that there's eternity.

There's more than this temporary world. And so, man is, is constantly groping and trying to find their way toward God and understanding.

And in a culture where pagan worship reigned and people were trying to figure out how to approach and please their gods, Yahweh took the initiative to reveal himself and his expectations to Israel.

Think about that. In the midst of a pagan culture and world, God chose a group of people that he would share his truth, share his character with, and to give them instructions on how they can know him.

That's grace. But the Israelites still failed to uphold their side of the covenant. That's to say they could not please God perfectly.

[ 8 : 31 ] Therefore, the old covenant had to be replaced with the new covenant inaugurated by the blood of Jesus. And we read that in Hebrews 9, verse 12. It talks about Jesus entered once for all into the holy places not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood thus securing an eternal redemption.

Since it was his sacrifice, his blood that secured eternal redemption, God saw it fitting that he would also become the mediator of the covenant. Now, a mediator is a person who attempts to make people involved in a conflict come to an agreement.

Right? They're kind of a go-between between two parties who are at odds. In this situation, in our situation, Jesus is the mediator between God and man because there's a conflict.

There's a conflict because Romans 3, 23 says, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And Romans 6, 23 tells us that the wages of sin is death.

And we understand through other extra-biblical study or other, you know, study in other passages of scripture that death is eternal separation from God. It's not a good thing.

[ 9 : 45 ] There is this conflict. There's a holy God and sinful man. All men are sinners and God must judge all sin. But Jesus, as we see here in chapter 9, verses 15 through 28, Jesus, as a mediator, plays a special role.

And I want to look at three actions that Jesus performs as a mediator in these passages, in this passage. First, he's a mediator who redeems.

We've already looked at this a little bit with the fact that he took his blood into the holy place and the holy of holies in heaven in order to offer it for the forgiveness of the sins of the world.

Look at verse 15, chapter 9, verse 15. He is the mediator of a new covenant so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

So in our society, we understand that a mediator is someone who gets two opposing sides together and tries to effect a compromise between them in order to come to an agreement.

[ 11 : 12 ] Every off-season in baseball, you have the time of arbitration hearings. And you've got players who think they should be paid so much and you've got ball clubs who say, no, they should be paid this much and they're trying to negotiate.

They go to arbitration. It goes before some court that I never see or hear of. But anyway, it gets tried. It gets decided. And then usually, it's a compromise of terms.

Usually, it's somewhere in the middle, the middle ground there that they come to an agreement. And so that's what we'd understand with mediation. That there's this compromise. Okay, player, you're not going to get quite this much but team, he has shown and made a good case that he deserves more than what you're offering.

Let's make it this much. But when it comes to this, God's holiness cannot be compromised. Think about that.

Man is sinful. God is holy. So there's the conflict. There's the divide. And we need to somehow come back together.

[ 12 : 23 ] But God's holiness can't be compromised. Because if it's even compromised a little bit, he's no longer perfectly holy. So, rather than suggesting a compromise between opposing positions, you see that Christ agrees with the Father.

He's in perfect agreement with the Father. He's part of the Trinity, the Godhead there. He agrees with the Father that we deserve infinite outpouring of His wrath. That's what sinners get.

The infinite outpouring of God's wrath on them. He agrees with the Father about the ugliness of our sin. He agrees with the Father about the necessity of a sacrifice. And He, as our moderator, our mediator, excuse me, agrees to be that sacrifice.

So, God set the terms, but then He also provided the means. He provided the sacrifice that was necessary.

The sacrifices that took place in the Old Testament in the law were temporary. That's what we've gone on for, you know, it feels like weeks and months here in Hebrews. Like I told you, it's very repetitive, but it's purposeful.

[ 13 : 31 ] That the high priest had to go in year after year to the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement to make atonement for the sins of the people for the past year, every year. And He had to atone for His own sins.

And it had to constantly be done. But Jesus, once for all, no longer needs to be done. So Christ secured an eternal inheritance for those who are called, those who come to Jesus, calling Him for salvation, those who are drawn to Christ through God.

Picking up in verse 16, chapter 9. For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.

So the author here draws attention to the nature of one's last will and testament. You ever heard that term? Someone's last will and testament? You know, as we call the two sections of the Bible, the Old and New Testament?

Just thought I'd make that clear for you. So a will does not take effect until one who made it dies, right? We don't go to the reading of the will at somebody's birthday.

[ 14 : 46 ] That would be an interesting birthday party. Maybe it wouldn't be a party at all. But the point being made in verses 16 and 17 is simple and obvious.

He builds on verse 15. He's saying that God gave a legacy, an eternal inheritance to Israel in the form of a covenant or a will. And as with any will, it was only a type of promissory note until the provider of the will died.

Well, when did that take place, anybody? I'll open it up for opportunity to answer. When was this will enacted?

At the death of Christ. Right? So this is all making sense. I'm following with the author of Hebrews here a little more now.

Okay, I see why we're going there. Again, Hebrews is written to a Jewish audience so that's why he focuses so much on the law. He's focusing so much on Jewish tradition and on what their practices were.

[ 15 : 48 ] But it is still very applicable to all of us. And it's because of that new covenant, that new will that God established and promised in the Old Testament to bring about that is then enacted, inaugurated by the death of Christ.

And that doesn't affect just Jewish people. That affects us as well. Because it was brought to the Gentiles. Verse 18. Therefore, not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.

For when every commandment of the law had been declared, by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, this is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.

See, the focus has been on Jesus that we need to also look at the fact that even the Old Covenant was inaugurated with blood. That will, that testament, was started as the death and sacrifice of, in this case, an animal.

And the commands were given by God to Moses, and Moses sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on the law and on the people, indicating that they're being bound to adhere to what God had commanded them.

[ 17 : 08 ] And remember, when Moses came down, they promised to do so. They said, yes, everything you said, we will do. And that lasted all of maybe 30 minutes.

You know? So the blood of animals initiated the Old Covenant with Israel, and the blood of Jesus initiates the New Covenant with Israel and with those who would believe.

So verses 15 through 20, we see that Jesus is a mediator who redeems. He's the one who's paid the price. You know, it's not just, it's not just, you know, arbitration and, you know, coming to an agreement on an amount.

He paid the cost as well. There was, all right, there's no giving by God who is holy, and sinful man can't really do anything to help himself out.

This is the price that needs to be paid. It's in the form of a sacrifice, and Jesus as mediator says, I recognize that's what needs to be paid, and I'm going to pay that bill. How great is that?

[ 18 : 13 ] That is amazing. Verses 21 through 26, Jesus is a mediator who purifies. Now, this is a topic I could have spent weeks on, but my intention is to go through the book of Hebrews and what it is and not get too far out of it.

But I'm telling you, there's a lot as far as purification in the life of a believer, and sanctification ultimately. Let's read verses 21 through 23. And in the same way, he sprinkled with blood, so we're talking about Moses still, he sprinkled with blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship.

Indeed, under the law, almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. That's important to remember.

Blood purifies, and without the shedding of blood, there can be no forgiveness of sin. That's a big deal, considering the fact that all have sinned. Verse 23, thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things, that is, those things that were given to Moses, remember, they're copies of the heavenly, they're shadows of what already exists.

So Moses saw the heavenly tabernacle, he saw the different instruments used in worship, and God said, go and make in the tabernacle what you've seen.

[ 19 : 40 ] So it's necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves were better sacrifices than these.

So the blood of the sacrifice did not just merely inaugurate a covenant, it purified the vessels of that covenant. In the case of Moses, the tent and the vessels in the worship, used in worship, were sprinkled with blood, with the blood of the sacrifice to represent the purifying it for the use of worship to God.

If it wasn't sprinkled with the blood, it wasn't made pure according to the law, according to the rights that they were given, then it couldn't be used. God had set expectations. 24 through 26, for Christ has entered not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf, nor was it to offer himself repeatedly as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own.

For then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

So in the case of Moses, you had the animal sacrifice that purified the tabernacle, it started the covenant, purified the tabernacle and its elements for worship to God. In the case of Jesus, his blood is what grants him access before God on our behalf.

[ 21 : 16 ] He couldn't have gone in there with the sacrifice of the most recent goat offering here on earth. That wouldn't suffice. We're told here that it is a better sacrifice than those at the end of verse 23.

That better sacrifice has already been established as being Jesus himself. It's also the means through which we, the vessels of God, are purified through the forgiveness of sins.

We are God's vessels for worship. We are used of God to bring glory and honor to him. And we are purified, made pure through the blood of Jesus, through the forgiveness of sin.

1 John 1, 7-9, but if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[ 22 : 26 ] when you come to Jesus, and you look at the gospel message throughout the New Testament, over and over and over again, it talks about repenting.

It talks about, you know, repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. That repentance, you know, is the change of mindset. It's the, you're walking in one direction.

This is the life I'm living. I'm living for myself. I'm pleasing myself. I'm chasing after the things that I want to feel good with, and God calling me into his son Jesus calls me to repentance.

I need to change my mind. The things that I am chasing after, the things of this world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, they are not pleasing to God, and I need to recognize that, and I need to turn, and I need to start following his ways, and his commands, and his expectations.

I need to start following Jesus and the life that he lived, the life he wants me to live. So there's this repentance, so when we confess, I love that, if we confess our sins, I'm sure you've heard this before, that word confess, it's the Greek word homo homo homo means same, homo means to speak, or to say, so when you homo homo homo homo you are saying the same thing, or in this case, when we confess our sins, we are saying the same thing about our sin that God says, that it is not good, that it displeases him, so if we are recognizing that, so if we recognize, God, oh man, Lord, that's not good, man, my eyes, my eyes, what they've looked at, what they've seen, that I should not be looking at or seeing, things that I've lusted after, things that I desired, I stole that item, and I sold it so I can get some money, well for me that was good and beneficial and advantageous, but in your eyes,

[ 24 : 19 ] Lord, that was wrong, and that was sin, and you recognize that, and you say, Lord, I don't want to do that anymore, think about Zacchaeus, right, Zacchaeus was a thief, right, he wronged people, and when he encountered Jesus, he said, Lord, if I've wronged anybody, I'll pay it back, well, no, what did he say?

If I've wronged anybody, I'll pay them back four times as much. he knew his guilt, he understood his sin, and what was beneficial to him as he was walking this way, he had time with Jesus, and now God has got his heart, and he's repenting, he's saying, I recognize what I've done is wrong, I want to make it right, and not only do I want to make it right, I want to be an abundant blessing on people the way Jesus is an abundant blessing on me.

If I've taken anything, I'll pay back fourfold. That might make him go into debt. Yeah, yeah, it might.

But you know what? His conscience is clear before God. God does not forgive sin by looking down and saying, oh, it's all right, you know, I love you so much, I'll overlook your sin, don't worry about it, it's nothing.

You know, that's what a lot of people in our world want to believe and say. Well, if God is so good, and God is so loving, he'll just forgive my sin. I don't need to call on Jesus, I don't need to, it's, he'll forgive me.

[ 26 : 14 ] When I stand before him, it'll, everything will be bare before him, and I just won't have anything to do but say, Lord, please forgive me, and he'll forgive me then and there. That's not how it works.

God's righteousness and holiness will not allow him to overlook sin, and God is giving you the opportunity now to make it right with him. Sin demands payment by death, and the only death great enough to pay for all mankind's sin is the death of his son, Jesus Christ.

God cannot ignore our sin, but he will forgive our sin if we trust in the death of his son for that forgiveness. I was thinking about this song, what can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Not only is Jesus a mediator who reams and purifies through his sacrifice, but he's also a mediator who saves. Read me verses 27 and 28.

And just as it is appointed for man to die once and after that comes judgment, so Christ having been offered once to bear the sins of many will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

[ 27 : 28 ] Verse 27 emphasizes the finality in human existence. Life is lived one time, and then there's death and judgment. Man will die, and God will judge him.

We can't escape it. We can't ignore it. We can't say, it doesn't make me feel comfortable. I just don't like to talk about forever and eternity, and oh, I don't like to talk about heaven, and oh, what are we going to do for all that time anyway, really?

Or maybe hell's not going to be so bad. All my friends will be there, and we'll just throw a party and all this stuff. We just try to poo-poo it away.

We shoo it away. We don't want to deal with it and come to terms in our mind what God will do to those who don't believe in him. That's it. Man's appointed once to die and then the judgment.

Matthew 25 verses 31 and 32 tells us about this. When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations.

[ 28 : 35 ] I'm going to emphasize that word all again because all means everybody in all the nations. He will separate people from one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

It's going to happen. That's what we're told is going to take place. Bank it. Go to the bank with it. It's going to happen. God says it. Believe it. Death is not just some natural process in the world.

This is one thing that I've had the unfortunate reality of dealing with death quite a bit this summer. one common thing I hear and I heard and maybe even said myself is death is just part of life.

People are sad and upset but no, death is just part of life. death is a normal experience but no because it wasn't supposed to be that way.

See, death is not just some process in life in this world. If it were so then we could maybe give some ground to evolution as being possibly true and factual.

[ 29 : 56 ] rule. But the fact is death is part of a divine judgment on sin. Death is a verdict established in Genesis 2 by our creator.

Genesis 2, 16 and 17, the Lord God commanded the man saying, you may surely eat of every tree of the garden but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat for the day you eat of it you shall surely die.

God gave the terms. Eat from the tree, you die. Don't eat from the tree, you don't have to worry about that thing called death. And it's amazing how much we try to make excuses.

I mean Eve did it, right? She made excuses, Adam made excuses when they did what they weren't supposed to do. If you have kids or grandkids you understand they make excuses too. And why they didn't do what you told them to do.

Or why they didn't understand it. Or why they did the opposite of what you wanted them to do. All that stuff. Making excuses. In the sight of God, one time along those lines of that logic is disobedience and sin.

[ 31 : 00 ] It doesn't matter your excuse. It matters the reality. God said, hey, you eat of this tree, you're going to die. One time. One opportunity for obedience.

Or I should say for disobedience. And then the rest of all creation is affected. Romans 5, 12, therefore just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin.

So death spread to all men because all sin. Not only is death a verdict handed down to all who have sinned, but it's the last enemy that will be defeated by Jesus. 1 Corinthians 15, 26 says that the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

1 Corinthians 15, 54, and 56. When the perishable puts on imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law, and all this in the end is done.

[ 32 : 13 ] I love that. Death is swallowed up in victory. Death is a seeming defeat. But in the end, when Jesus returns, it will be a great victory for those who are in Christ.

So Hebrews 9, 28 introduces the fact that Christ is coming back. And unlike the earthly high priest, he's not coming back to repeat his sacrifice. He's not coming back to forgive sin.

He's coming back to save those who are eagerly expecting him. Christ is returning to rescue those he's saved and to claim his church solely for himself.

I love it in verse 28. Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

So it points to the fact that we as believers should be longing for Christ's return. We who are alive should be consciously and readily anticipating his second coming.



[ 33 : 23 ] I think the world we live in and the way we see our society going as a whole, America specifically, the world as a whole in its lunacy and sinfulness, it's probably not too hard to say, Lord, please come back now.

We are eager for your return because sin will no longer run rampant. Righteousness will reign and we will be saved by our mediator.

He's a mediator who saves and will save. For millennia, mankind has known that this life is not all there is.

They've known that there's a being greater than they are, but they have not always known how to reach him. And thanks be to God that he chose one particular group of people, the Israelites, to be his people and his testimony to the nations.

He chose them to be the ones through whom he would reveal himself to his creation. He revealed himself through the prophets and the law and ultimately through Jesus. But even though the Israelites failed to perfectly uphold the law, God did not leave them in the lurch.

[ 34 : 39 ] He himself came to earth to be the perfect atonement for sins. Jesus dying on the cross, for the sins of the world. And this Jesus is also the mediator of a new covenant.

He's the mediator who redeems the people from the punishment of sin. He's the mediator who purifies the people from their sin. He's a mediator who will save the people from this present evil age.

He's perfectly provided for salvation for all those who call on him. Our salvation is a past, present, and future salvation. I read this in Al Moeller and his commentary on Hebrews here.

He said, it's past in the sense that what Christ accomplished by his blood happened long ago. It's present in the sense that we are saved and united with Christ right now. And it's future in the sense that we will be saved out of this broken world into eternal communion, peace, and freedom from sin when Christ returns.

Jesus, the mediator, does some pretty amazing stuff for us. Let's give thanks. Father God, I thank you for your word.

[ 35 : 55 ] I thank you for this text in Hebrews 9, the opportunity we've had to go through it. It's been a lot going through the book of Hebrews, but Lord, what great reminders it is to us.

Thank you for Jesus. Thank you for the life he lived in perfection, the life he chose to give up on the cross for the forgiveness of sins, the fact that he is our mediator, the fact that he redeems us from the punishment of sin, that he purifies us from the sin that we have in our lives and calls us to righteousness, the fact that he will one day come and save us from this present evil age.

Lord, I thank you for your word. I thank you for the relationship that I have with you. Father God, I pray, Lord, anyone here who does not know you, has not called on Jesus for salvation, has not believed in his name, Lord, I pray that they would see the need, that they would understand that when this life, present life, is over and done, when death has come, judgment follows.

And Lord, I just pray they would not enter eternity forever without having first made right their relationship with you and call on you for salvation. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.