

## CHAPTER NINE: SACRIFICES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A RELIGIOUS FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING SACRIFICE IN HEBREWS

### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will briefly discuss sacrifices in the Old Testament as a background to an exegesis of the sacrifice of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews, indicating the significance of blood, fire and smoke as typical symbols in Israel's sacrificial performances. It will also look at the altar, including its name and shape. Afterwards, the researcher will provide an overview of Old Testament sacrifices, that is, Old Testament sacrificial typology and procedures. A brief overview of sacrifice in P will also be given. In this section, animals, techniques and basic types of animal sacrifices in P will be examined, namely: burnt offerings, peace offerings, usages, purification offerings, atonement offerings, the performance of purification offerings, order, and reparation offerings. This chapter will briefly discuss prophetic critique, as well as Deuteronomy and Israel's worship, before drawing conclusions.

The researcher will not go into too much detail here because this study is not interested in focusing on the theme of blood sacrifices in the Old Testament. Rather, this chapter will present a very short description of sacrifice in the Old Testament for the sake of background, as well as for positioning this dissertation. Similarly, blood sacrifices in each book of the New Testament will not be discussed, since the focus is on the exegesis of sacrifice in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and especially the sacrifice of Jesus.

Almost universally, people from ancient cultures offered sacrifices in order to obtain divine favours or even to sustain their gods, as in Mesopotamia (Ryken et al, 2000). The religion of the Hebrews was not the exception, although the idea that sacrifices feed Yahwey is an infrequent echo of other religions, and not seriously entertained (Lv 21:6; Ps 50:12-14). Rather, among other functions, sacrifices were gifts to honour a deity [God, Yahweh from Hebrew's perspective] (Mckenzie, 1976:754). Besides the slaughtered animal sacrifices, the burning rite upon the altar constitutes a common element of all types of sacrifice, as an offering to Yahweh (Eberhart, 2004:285).

The burnt offering fulfills the goal of biblical sacrifice, that is, "communication with God" (Eberhart, 2004:285). Blood, fire and smoke constituted the most typical symbols in the Hebrew Scriptures (Ryken et al, 2000). As already mentioned in the discussion of this study's methodology, the two analytical categories of objects and actions, as related to blood, fire and smoke, including the altar, will be used here, in order to show the factors that influence people to use them, and how they use them. Therefore, this chapter will now attempt to clarify this, beginning with the symbolic element of blood.

### 9.1.1 Blood

Tenney describes blood (Hebrew *דָּם*, *ḏām* “blood”, see Myers, 1987:440) as the following: “The viscous fluid essential to life which circulates throughout the body in veins, in arteries, and capillaries (Tenney, 1975:626). The term ‘blood’ is “understood in biblical writings, not only as that which is essential to life, but also the seat of life’s power. Though sometimes used simply to designate mortal life (usually in connection with flesh), it was often with God, the life giver” (Achte-meier, 1985:136). In the Old Testament, the word appears about 362 times (Harrison, 1999:99), of which 203 instances refer to death through violence, and 103 have to do with sacrificial blood, and Mckenzie (1976) also suggests such a tendency. The Old Testament also relates the concept of blood to life (Mckenzie, 1976:99), and that atonement is life (Harrison, 1999:99). Leviticus 17:11 contends that atonement is achieved through blood “by reason of life” (Mckenzie, 1976:757). This seems to point to the fact that the offering of blood through sacrificial rituals shows that a pure life is being given to God (Harrison, 1999:467).

Blood in sacrificial rituals stands for life, and is symbolically offered to a deity [or the God of the Bible]; it was the means by which the Old Testament covenant between God and the Israelites was ratified (Ex 24:3-8). It was “dashed” on the altar base (Lv 1:5+), or sprinkled before the sanctuary, poured at the base of the altar (Lv 4:6+; 4:7+), or smeared at the horns of the altar (Lv 4:25+). The blood of an animal eaten outside the sanctuary had to be poured onto the ground (Dt 12:24). The blood of the Passover lamb smeared on the doorposts was endowed with protective power (Ex 12:7, 13). The blood of the animal victim was dashed on the altar and on the people, conveying the understanding that covenant partners share a common life (Mckenzie, 1976:99). The significance of the sacrificial victim seems therefore to lie in the offering of life, not death. This means that the New Testament phrase “the blood of Christ” would have little more meaning than the “body of Christ presented”, because the “blood of Christ” contains “the life of Christ”, since life is in the blood (Gn 9:4; Dt 12:23). The Old Testament predominantly associates blood with death rather than life, and the “life of the flesh” can convey the meaning of “life yielded up in death just as readily as life set free for surrender to God” (Tenney, 1975:627).

Sacrificial rituals in the Old Testament uniformly emphasised the seriousness of sin, and the blood shed in sacrifices stood as an acceptable substitute for the life of the rebellious sinner, and as an act of atonement which allowed him to be restored to fellowship with God (Achte-meier, 1985:136). The shedding of the blood of the animal signifies life offered up in death on the sinner’s behalf, thus granting him the right to live and not to suffer the consequences of his sins. The Old Testament shows that the forgiveness of human sin was acquired through the death of an acceptable substitute, and this basic focus on the old covenant is transferred to the New Testament, with specific bearing on the work of Jesus Christ in the new covenant (Tenney, 1975:627). The significance of blood is

stressed in the theology of the Old Testament, “the institution of sacrificial atonement, and the work of the priest. Applied to the altar, blood becomes a powerful expiatory agent as sin offering, especially on the annual Day of Atonement” (Lv 16). The priest, who is himself set apart by blood consecration (Ex 29:19-21), alone is qualified to apply the blood (Achtemeier, 1985:136, cf. Lv 1-6). The Passover celebration reminds one of the blood on the doorposts of the Israelites’ houses in Egypt (Ex 12:7), and the redemption accomplished by the God of the covenant (see blood of the covenant: Ex 24:6-8; Ps 50:5; Zch 9:11). Finally, blood can also symbolise woes and terrors (e.g. 1Chr 22:8; 28:3; Ex 7:14-24; Jl 2:30-31). Therefore, after the above explanations concerning the significance of blood in Israel’s sacrificial worship and in the New Testament with regard to Christ’s work, this chapter will now look at the concept of fire in Israel’s sacrificial performances.

### 9.1.2 Fire

Several Old Testament words are usually used to denote various kinds of fire (Hebrew “*Aḥar*”, see Pfeiffer, 1975:608): “flame, light, that which burns, firebrand, torch, or fiery serpents” - corresponding verbs include “to set fire”, or “to burn” (Buttrick, 1962:269). Words related to fire are used both literally and figuratively in the Old Testament scriptures (Myers, 1987:442).

Literally speaking, fire was used for domestic purposes of cooking (Is 30:14), irradiation and heat, melting, casting, working and refining of metals (Myers, 1987:442). See Jeremiah 36:22; Zachariah 13:9; and Malachi 3:2. It was also used for burning waste and infected articles, as well as for the destruction of objects of idolatry (Lv 13:52, 57; Dt 7:5; 1Chr 14:12). Fire was used as a destroying energy in the form of lightning (Ps 29:7). In times of war, fire served to burn whole cities - it was an exorbitant instrument of retribution in the case of distressful offences (Gn 19:1-29), and as the usual means for offering sacrifices to God (Mckenzie, 1976:277).

Figuratively speaking, fire was symbolically used in the Old Testament to portray the image of divine “presence (Buttrick, 1962:269), holiness, glory, guidance and protection (Ezk 1:4, 13, 27; 8:2), God’s jealousy and wrath against sin, and the retribution of sin (Ezk 36:5; Is 10:16-17), against evil, lust, greed, war, trouble, suffering and affliction” (Job 5:7; Is 29:6). It was used for purification and testing, and as the power of the word and the truth of God (Jr 5:14; 20:9; Ps 39:3; 119:139), for prophetic inspiration, and for the zeal of saints and angels (Myers, 1987:442).

The most significant use of fire in the Old Testament was that fire was seen in sacrificial rituals as a consumer of the holocaust and for the burning of incense (Gn 8:20-21). Fire came to be a central part of intercepted sacrificial performances and continuous worship in the tabernacle, and later in the Temple,

upon the altar of which the fire was kept burning (Lv 6:12-13). It was miraculously provided by God (Lv 9:24; 2Chr 7:1-3), and in His provisions (Pfeiffer, 1975:608).

Any fire initiated by man or obtained from any other place than the altar was considered to be “a strange fire” (Lv 10:1-2) - it was ritually inappropriate and would cause the culprit to incur divine wrath. For instance, Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, were annihilated by the fire before God, because they had used a “strange fire” (Mckenzie, 1976:277) upon the altar (Lv 10). The immemorial altar fire had to be kept burning through wood supplies every morning (Lv 6:12). The acceptance of the sacrifice was revealed by divine fire, which suddenly consumed the offering (Myers, 1987:442).

The fire from God symbolised the acceptance of special sacrifices (1Ki 18: 24, 38; 1Chr 21:26). According to 1Kings 18:24, 38, “Yahweh is the God who answers by fire” (Pfeiffer, 1975: 608). Animal victims that were slaughtered were consumed by fire outside the camp (Lv 4:12, 21; 6:30). The book of Numbers 6:18 indicates that at the end of his vow, the Nazarite had to shave off his hair and throw it into the altar fire, in which the peace offering was being sacrificed (Pfeiffer, 1975:608).

Fire is definitely related to God. This is indicated by God’s manifestation to Abraham in making His covenant with him (Myers, 1987:442): a “smoking firepot and a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces” of the sacrifice (Gn 15:17). God manifested Himself to Moses through the burning bush, to Israel through the pillar of fire at night over the Israelite’s camp (Miller & Miller, 1973:194), and on Mount Sinai, God came down in fire and the outlook of His glory appeared as a consuming fire (Ex 3:2; 13:21; 19:18; 24:17). Leviticus 9:24 indicates that fire fell down from the Lord and consumed the burnt offering, causing the people to experience joy and fall face down in adoration (Buttrick, 1962:269).

The fire of God burned among complaining Israelites and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp (Nm 11:1). Fire is connected with worship in a special way in the Old Testament. The entire system related to the holocaust and the burning of incense shows that fire was very important at certain stages of Israel’s worship - offerings were consumed by fire and the “aroma was wafted up to God symbolically” (Pfeiffer, 1975:608). These are just some thoughts in connection with the concept of fire in Israel’s sacrificial worship. The next section will focus on the concept of smoke in Israel’s sacrificial worship.

### **9.1.3 Smoke**

The word “smoke” may be defined as a “phenomenon accompanying the appearance of God in acts of self disclosure” (Buttrick, 1962:392). It is viewed as a “visible concomitant of the presence of God in divine self-manifestation” (Tenney, 1975:462). Firstly, the word “smoke” primarily “refers to the physical

phenomenon itself, the evidence that something is burning”. Secondly, it “is used as a symbol of all that is transitory” (see especially Hs 13:3, where “smoke” is grouped together with “cloud”, “dew”, and “mist”). It is “a manifestation of God’s mighty presence and more particularly of His fierce wrath”. Hebrew words connotating “smoke” are found in the following passages Exodus 19:18; Deuteronomy 29:20 [MT19]; Psalm 74:1; 104:32; 144:5, Exodus 20:18, Psalms 37:20; 68:1; 102:3 [MT4]; Proverbs 10:26; Cantique 3:6; Isaiah 4:5; 9:18 [MT17]; 14:31; 34:10; 51:6; Joel 2:30 [MT3:3], Nahum 2:13 [MT14] etc., Judges 20:40, Genesis 19:28; Psalms 119:83: 66:15, Ezekiel 8:11), and Isaiah 30:27(Bromiley, 1988:554).

The word “smoke” figures in the whole of the Old Testament. The “smoke” and “fire” that accompanied Theophany manifestation on Mount Sinai, together with the quaking of the earth, led exegists to point to volcanic phenomena (Buttrick, 1962:392). Genesis 15:17 shows that in the context of the Abrahamic covenant, he saw a vision of a “smoking fire pot and a flaming torch” passing through the pieces of the sacrifice that he had cut (Tenney, 1975:462).

Exodus 19:18 indicates that when Moses encountered God on Mount Sinai, the mountain was covered with thick smoke. In Isaiah’s vision of the Lord in the Temple, the Temple was filled with smoke (Is 6:4). In Isaiah 4:5, the prophet declares: “the Lord will create over the whole site of Mt Zion...a cloud by day and smoke and the shining of a flaming by night” (Bromiley, 1988:554).

The fire of God’s wrath is followed by “smoke...out of His nostril” (Ps18:8; Job 41:20). In Deuteronomy 29:20, Moses cautions against idolatry lest “the anger of the Lord...smoke against that man”. In Psalms 71:1, the psalmist shouts at the top of his voice: “Why does Thy anger smoke against the sheep of Thy pasture?” (Tenney, 1975:462), referring to the smoke of sacrifices and incense burning in Ezekiel 8:11 and Psalms 66:15. Symbolically speaking, smoke is also used to refer to insubstantial enemies, idolaters and the heavens (Bromiley, 1988:554). This study’s aim has not been to discuss the symbolic elements of blood, fire and smoke exhaustively, as they are used in the Bible. It was only thought to be incumbent on the researcher to briefly highlight the significance of these elements within the Old Testament’s sacrificial ritual system. Before going further, something will be briefly said with regard to the altar.

#### **9.1.4 Altar**

The altar is the most prominent biblical image for worship and religious allegiance (Achtemeier, 1985:22). A person should not be charged with exaggeration if he says that the altar constitutes the most visible sign of a person’s devotion to the true God. Worship in the old covenant entailed the building of altars or travelling to them for acts of sacrifice. Biblical altars convey a number of meanings, one of which is a symbol of the deity in sacrificial rituals, since the presentation of the victim to the deity was evidenced by contact with

the altar, and the application of blood symbolised the life of the victim on the altar (Mackenzie, 1976:23). However, the main meaning of the altar is a place of slaughter and blood sacrifice (Ryken et al, 2000).

#### 9.1.4.1 The name

The typical word for altar in Latin is *ara*, *Altare* or *altarium*, from which the English word is taken as a noun coined from the adjective *altus*, which stands for “high”, implying any elevated structure with a flat top on which sacrifices to a deity were made (Buttrick, 1962:96-97) or offerings deposited (Tenney, 1975:118-119). The typical Greek word for altar is  $\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\eta$  ( $\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\eta$   $\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu$ , an altar for the true God, which seems to be derived from *baino*, “to come” and “go”. Therefore, the basic meaning would be an “approach”, since it had to do with a flat surface on which to place something. When  $\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\eta$  denotes a proper altar, *hieros* “holy” is added. The New Testament only uses the term once in connection with the Athenian altar of the unknown god in the Acts of the Apostles 17:23 (Achteimer, 1985:23).

#### 9.1.4.2 The shape

All ancient religious practices were based on the idea of an elevated structure of stone or “turf”, upon which blood sacrificial offerings, burnt flesh and agricultural products (Gn 4:3) were placed before the deities (Myers, 1987: 42). There was an ancient idea that gods dwelt in big stones, and that they gained their strength through the oblation of shed blood (Miller & Miller, 1973:13-14). Featured as a universal worship device, which was taken by the Old Testament and developed into an object of ritual and sanctity, the altar was the focus of every sanctuary and the place of sacrifice (Ex 20:24, 25). The altar horns (Ps 118:27; Am 3:14; Rv 9:13) were considered to be of great sanctity, and were smeared with the blood of sacrifice in Leviticus rituals (Lv 4:30; 16:18). It seems as if the altar disposed of the sacrifice on its platform, making it possible for the blood that had mystic importance in the ritual to totally drain away (Tunney, 1975:120), a truth “spiritualized and consummated” in the New Testament (Heb 9:9, 22).

There are a multiplicity of altars, including pagan altars, patriarchal altars (Ex 20:24-26), Abraham’s altar at Shechem, one near Bethel (Gn 12:6-8); another at Mamre in Hebron (Gn 13:18), and one on Mount Moriah (Gn 29:9-13). Isaac built an altar at Beer-sheba (Gn 26:23-25), and Jacob built one at Shechem (Gn 33:18, 20) and another one at Bethel (Genesis 35:1-7) (Pfeiffer, 1975:51). The altars of the tabernacle constituted a great object lesson and revelation of spiritual truth (Ex 27:1-8; 38:1-7; Ex 30:1-10; 2Chr 1:5, 6). The altar of burnt offerings, which was located in the eastern part of the court, was the first to be seen by whoever drew near the tabernacle (Miller & Miller, 1973:14). The altar of incense was located before the veil that hid the Holy of holies (Ex 30:6; 40:5). It was known as “the altar before the Lord” (Lv 16:12). Incense was burned twice a day on this altar, symbolising the prayers of saints (Rv 8:3). The Temple altar

was a huge altar of bronze located in the “upper court” (Jr 36:10) of Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem (Harrison, 1999:38). It was structured in a way that allowed worshippers to see the blaze of sacrifices from the courtyard below (2Chr 4:1).

The Hebrew word for altar “*mizbēah*” comes from the word for slaughter. However, they are biblical altars on which other kinds of offerings are made (Harrison, 1999:38). Besides the central altar of sacrifice in the courtyard, the temple also contains two altars in the sanctuary: A golden altar for the offering of incense, which represents the prayers of the people ascending to the Lord, and a table for the perpetual offering of the “bread of presence”. However, these altars and the sacrifices offered on them were secondary in significance and location (Ryken et al, 2000). The interest of this study has not been to discuss the concept of the altar in its entirety, because this is not the purpose of this dissertation. It is only for the sake of background that the concept of the altar has been briefly discussed here. A succinct overview of Old Testament sacrifices will now be presented.

## **9.2 OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICES: AN OVERVIEW**

The word “sacrifice” stands for the ritual through which the Hebrew people offered the blood or flesh of an animal (or grain, as in Lv 6:14-23) to God as payment for their sins (Lv 6:24-30). Sacrifice and sacrificing originated from the Garden of Eden, soon after the fall of mankind. Cain and Abel’s sacrifices were rejected or accepted, not on account of the nature of their sacrifices, but rather on account of their respective hearts’ attitudes (Gn 4). According to Youngblood, God’s provision of animal skins to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 presupposes the slaughter of a sacrificial animal, but what is evident here seems to be warmth and comfort rather than atonement (Youngblood, 1997).

Unlike Youngblood’s allegations, this study is of the opinion that it is also dangerous to dissociate the nature of the sacrifice from the disposition of the worshipper’s heart in this specific case, which involves Cain and Abel as representative worshippers of all time. This is because from a well-disposed heart naturally comes a good sacrifice, and the opposite is also true. Furthermore, the presupposed slaughtering of an animal in Genesis 3 cannot be dissociated from the manifestation of God’s love, the symbolic and typological redemption imagery that alone confers true, lasting and overwhelming warmth.

Abraham was the representative of all mankind who now recognised God’s gracious provisions and promises. Abraham worshiped God through sacrificial offerings - then, God taught him that the ultimate sacrifice would be the sacrifice of a human being, one of Adam’s descendants - an only Son miraculously provided by God.

The fuller designation of sacrifice is to be found in Mosaic Law, where it has three central ideas: consecration, expiation (covering of sin) and propitiation (satisfaction of divine anger), as will be seen later on in this dissertation. Sacrifice in the Old Testament ultimately typified the final perfect sacrifice of Jesus, the ultimate substitute (Youngblood, 1997).

The Old Testament contains the main biblical references to cultic sacrifice (Porter & Evans, 2000). Sacrifices were performed on the altar by Israel's priests, on behalf of the entire community of the Israelites or individual worshippers in Israel (Myers, 1987:899). The Old Testament contains both "special sacrifice like covenant sacrifices, and regular sacrifices", which are all described in detail in Leviticus 1-7 (Harrison, 1999:466). These include cereal offerings, meal offerings, drink offerings and animal offerings, the last of which this study will focus on (Mckenzie, 1976:754-756). Given the fact that the central interest is a thematic exegesis of sacrifice in Hebrews, especially the sacrifice of Jesus, the next sections will only give a brief description of types of sacrifices, as well as sacrificial procedures.

### **9.2.1 Old Testament sacrificial typology**

In Israel, sacrificial types included the following: regular sacrifices made by priests in the tabernacle during the wilderness journey and at Shiloh, and in the Temple while in the Promised Land. These types of sacrificial offerings were performed every morning and every evening, consisting of a one-year old lamb for a burnt offering, a tenth of an ephah of flour as a meal offering, and a fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering, as Numbers 28:3-8 reveals (Pfeiffer, 1975:1499).

The books of Numbers 28:9 and Leviticus 24:8 suggest that on the Sabbath, regulatory sacrificial offerings had to be doubled, and the same book of Numbers 28:11-15 points out that at the time of the new moon (monthly) regular sacrificial offerings had to be composed of two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs, three-tenths of an ephah of flour for each bullock, two for the ram, and one for each lamb, including a drink offering and a kid of the goat as a sin offering. Ashes mixed with water served as a purification agent, and in the case of a need for a new supply of ashes, the priest had to slaughter a red heifer and burn the whole animal (Buttrick, 1962:149). Among Old Testament sacrificial typologies, one can identify gifts and tributes consisting of:

- Propitiatory sacrifices, that is, sacrifices and offering primarily validated as gifts identical to those to be given to the king or other dignitaries seeking favours from them. The books of Judges 3:17; 1 Samuel 10:27; and Malachi 1:8 substantiate this (Buttrick, 1962:149-154).
- Tributary sacrifices (first fruits and tithes): sacrificial gifts offered to the superior, probably taking the form of a tribute (Mckenzie, 1976:754). The first-born of all living creatures had to in this sense be offered to the deities. However, human beings and unclean animals were redeemed

- through ransom payments in the form of money or any other equivalent valuables. See Exodus 13:11-16; 34:19-20; Leviticus 27:26; Numbers 18:15-17 and Deuteronomy 14: 23; 15:19 in this regard (Myers, 1987:900).
- Votive sacrifices: after being qualified as propitiatory or tributary, sacrifices could be characterised as votive, that is, subsequent to a vow or pledge to concretely pay a god in return for fulfilling a wish or promoting the interests of supplicant worshippers (Myers, 1987:900)). This kind of offering was made special for good use. See Leviticus 22:2; 27:2 and Numbers 15:3 in this regard (Buttrick, 1962:149).
  - Thanksgiving sacrifices are identical to thanksgiving offerings. See Leviticus 7:12-13, 15; 22:29; 2Chronicles 33:16; Psalms 107:22; 116:17; Jeremiah 17:26 and Amos 4:5 in this regard (Mckenzie, 1976:757).
  - The free will offering was performed at Pentecost, the restoration of the altar at Jerusalem, festivals and outside of designated festive offerings. The animal offered for the free will offering was not to be entirely without blemish. See Deuteronomy 16:10; Ezra 3:5; Numbers 29:39 and Leviticus 22:23 in this regard (Mckenzie, 1976:757).

In a more simplified form, a person can identify five main types of sacrifices in the Old Testament:

- The burnt offering, in which the sacrificial victim was slaughtered, cut into pieces, and then completely burnt upon the main altar as an offering to God (Lv 1:1-17; 6:1-6).
- The grain offering (Lv 2:1-16; 6:7-16), which was made of cereal, oil and frankincense. A cake was made from the cereal and oil and brought to the priest, who took a handful for himself. The remainder was burnt on the altar, together with the frankincense, so that the grain offering could be considered as an offering to God (Eberhart, 2004:488).
- The communion sacrifice (Lv 4:1-17; 7:11-34) consisted of immolating the sacrificial animal victim, and cutting it into pieces. The major part of the meat was eaten by the worshippers celebrating, and some was consumed by the priest. However, the fat, considered as the “most valuable part of the animal”, was burnt on an altar as an offering to God (Eberhart, 2004:588).
- The sin offering (Lv 4:1-5:13; 6:17-23) consisted of immolating the sacrificial animal victim and applying some of its blood to “sancta”. The remaining proceedings were similar to those of communion sacrificial offerings.
- The guilt offering (Lv 5:14-26; 7:1-7). Its ritual was identical to that of a communion sacrificial offering, that is, the sacrificial victim was slaughtered and apportioned into the worshipper’s part for consumption, and the celebration and priest aspects were also there. The fat was still burnt upon the altar as an offering to God (Eberhart, 2004:488, cf. sacrifice in P below).

It seems as though the inclusion of “first fruits and firstlings” in tributary offerings possibly resulted from a widespread ancient conviction that new things had a special value attached to them which made them inviolate (Lv 19:23-25), and therefore were to be sanctified for the gods or other holy beings (Myers, 1987:900). The common belief behind this was that the surrendering of a prime part would secure the protection of the rest from harm. Since inception, the value or quality of first fruits was not determined, but later on came to be stabilised as a tenth part or tithe, the identity of the two things. See Leviticus 27:30-32; 2Chronicles 31:5-6, 12; Nehemiah 10:38; 12:44; 13:5, 12; Amos 4:4, and Malachi 3:8,10; in this regard. It is evident from an examination of Deuteronomy 14:22-29 and 26: 1-15 that the terms “firstlings” and “tithes” came to be interchangeably used (Myers, 1987:900).

Peace offerings such as atonement sacrifices were partially burnt. This was a symbol of a harmonious relationship between an Israelite man and Yahweh. It served to express such a relationship and to strengthen it. Leviticus 3 describes the entire ritual. Among the types of peace offerings were the thanksgiving offering, the votive offering and the free will offering, whose rituals were essentially identical. See Leviticus 7 and Numbers 15:3 in this regard (Mckenzie, 1976:757). The peace offering symbolism was the “sacrificial banquet” by worshipping supplicants to the deity, who in turn expressed his acceptance of this act and his willingness to dine with them. This predicts a most hearty and friendly relationship (Mckenzie, 1976:757).

Atonement sacrifices were occasioned by a disruption in the relationship between a deity and a worshipper. These sacrifices are meant to appease the deity, and to urge him to restore his good favours. The ritual of the atonement sacrifices is described in Leviticus, chapter 4. The sacrifice of a human being was a perversion of religious devotional worship, and an abominable way of seeking divine favours (Pfeiffer, 1975:1496). The account of the attempt by Abraham to sacrifice Isaac stands as a theological affirmation of Yahweh’s rejection of this type of sacrifice (Mckenzie, 1976:757).

There were also alimentary sacrifices in Old Testament sacrificial rituals, such as blood and fat for gods as the seats of “vitality and energy” - the sacrifice was therefore intended to supply deities with quality “blood and suet”. Relatively speaking, this activity endured in the Hebrew sacrificial system, by endeavouring to keep for Yahweh only those parts of the oblation victim. There was also the daily fare of gods and the bread of the presence. See Exodus 24:5-11; Leviticus 3:14; Deuteronomy 32: 37-38 and 1Samuel 2:15 in this regard (Buttrick, 1962:150-151).

Covenant and communion sacrifices (blood sprinkling) were primarily meant to promote communion and social equity between gods and men. The sprinkling of blood on the people was the outward acknowledgement of the covenant. This sacrificial usage continued during the Passover sacrificial ritual. It signified that

participants were recorded as “kinsmen” to Yahweh, and therefore recipients of His protection from harm. See Exodus 12:7 and 13: 22-23 in this regard (Buttrick, 1962:151).

In an expiatory sacrifice, a sin offering was performed to deal with sin in general, as well as with moral misdeeds, “contagion” in the case of childbirth, and leprosy. It was also performed at the most important festivals and the consecration of priests, in order to remove pollution. There was also the guilt offering, surrogates and scapegoats. See Leviticus 6:1-26; 19:20; 5:16-17; 14:12-13 and Numbers 6:12 (Buttrick 1962:151) for a detailed description of sacrificial types in the Old Testament cf. sacrifice in P below. At this juncture, it is incumbent on the researcher to describe Old Testament sacrificial procedures before concluding this overview.

### **9.2.2 Old Testament sacrificial procedures**

In accordance with Leviticus, chapters one and three, the following procedure applied whenever an Israelite worshipper brought his sacrifice to God: The worshipper brought his offering to the North side of the forecourt of the tabernacle or temple (Harrison, 1999:466). The next step consisted of identifying himself with his sacrifice by laying his hand on the animal's head. Except during national sacrifices (Lv 16:15; 2Chr 29:24), the worshipper himself had to slaughter the sacrificial animal victim. The priest collected the blood of the animal by means of a basin, and sprinkled it by dashing or tossing it in small quantities against the altar. The rest of the blood was then spilled onto the base of the altar (Pfeiffer, 1975:1497).

Afterwards, the worshipper skinned the animal and apportioned it into joints (Lv 1:6, 12). The kidney, fat or suet, liver, entrails and the tail fat of a sheep were surrendered to God as a burnt offering (Lv 1:8; 3:3-4, 9-10; 4:8-10). The priest burnt and “offered it up in smoke” on the altar (Harrison, 1999:466). All the parts of the animal except the skin were consumed by the fire on the altar in the case of a burnt offering. During a peace offering, pieces of the vestige of the sacrificial victim were shared by participants, including priests. Such a communal meal was very significant as a means of fellowship with the Lord. See Deuteronomy 12:6-7 and Exodus 18:12; 24:5, 11 in this regard (Pfeiffer, 1975:1498).

The book of Leviticus 7:28-34 indicates that the pieces of the slaughtered peace offering kept for the priest and his family were called the “wave and the heave offerings”. The first was made of the breast of the animal, and was put on the altar and back as a symbol of presenting it to God and His returning it to the priest. See Leviticus 7:14, 32, 34, NASB; and Numbers 18:8-19 in this regard (Mckenzie, 1976:756). It is important to now take a look at sacrifice in P.

## 9.3 SACRIFICE IN P

### 9.3.1 Animals

As a general rule, sacrifices can be broken down into two categories in terms of which animals were used: those sacrifices which precisely and clearly called for a particular animal for each and every favourable sacrificial opportunity, and those which called for a series of different animals, based on the social standing or economic status of the individual offerer. In the former category, one can include the burnt offering, the peace offering and the reparation offering, while in the latter category, one would include the two forms of purification offerings. It would not be accurate to say that the prerequisites for the burnt offering, peace offering, and reparation offering were rigid - there was room for flexibility, but this flexibility was not the same as that reserved for the purification offering. For the burnt offering, one had to offer a male animal from the herd or flock, or a bird (turtledove or pigeon). The peace offering could be either a male or female from the herd or flock (Wright, 1986).

The reparation offering was always a ram, except for the Nazirites who were defiled and had to bring a lamb. The reparation offering was also unique in that most of the time this sacrificial prerequisite could be converted into an equivalent in silver. In contrast to these requirements, the laws for the purification offering in Leviticus 4:1–23 adhere strictly to the social standing of the offerer. The priest, community, ruler and individual had their own requirements which could not be varied. The additional situations for the purification offering listed in Leviticus 5:1–13 affirm a separate system altogether. In this text, the prerequisites for the purification offering are ranked in accordance with the economic standing of the offerer. The animals used for sacrifices were domestic animals. Even though there were wild animals that were fit for consumption, according to the laws of *kašrut* (e.g., the hart, gazelle, roebuck, wild goat, ibex, antelope and mountain sheep - see Dt 14:5), these animals were never used for sacrifices. What was acceptable as game was evidently not suitable for the altar (Wright, 1986). With this in mind, this chapter will now look at the technique of sacrifice.

### 9.3.2 The technique of sacrifice

In order to establish a platform for formal discussion, it is essential to note that since the P code constituted the ground and context of the Sinaitic revelation and the primordial location of Israel's cultic commandments, all sacrificial law was made in reference to the tent of meeting or tabernacle that was erected there (Ex 35–49). In accordance with the P source, all this material was thought to be equally applicable to the domain of the temple. The sacrificial act comprised six elementary steps which can be broken down into two groups: those which were performed by the layperson who offered the animal, and those which were confined to the priests. Laypersons were “responsible for:

- Bringing the animal to the sanctuary,

- Laying hands on the animal,
- Slaughtering the animal (included cutting up the animal and washing or cleaning the insides - see Leviticus 1:6, 9). The priests were responsible for :
  - Tossing the blood,
  - Burning the animal (or part of it), and
  - Disposing of the remains” (Wright, 1986 - see also Pfeiffer, 1975 for Old Testament sacrificial procedures above).

The first three actions of the layperson took place at the opening of the tent of meeting, a spot where the laypeople could also witness the Lord’s “consumption” of the sacrifice (Lv 9:23–24). The fact that the laypeople were entitled to accomplish actions 1–3 can be observed from the tone of Leviticus 1. Those actions for which the layperson was responsible are identified by the P writer with the third person singular: “he shall lay his hand . . .” (Lv 1:4). Those actions which the priest was to perform are rendered so: “and Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall present the blood . . .” (Lv 1:5). The meaning of the hand-laying rite, which is so fundamental to understanding the process of atonement in the expiatory sacrifices, has long been obscure to scholars. It has recently been suggested that the rite of hand-laying merely meant that the animal belonged to the owner (Wright, 1986).

This theory belongs to the generally prescribed law of laying one hand on the animal. The remarkable act of laying of two hands on the Day of Atonement must be explained differently. In this case, the act of laying of hands singled out a particular animal as the recipient of this ritual action. The actions that only the priest could do (tossing blood and burning the animal) were those which had to take place at the altar. Since only the priests were given access to this location, the responsibility was naturally theirs. Blood manipulation varied from sacrifice to sacrifice. With burnt, reparation and peace offerings, the blood was sprinkled around the altar. Contrary to these, the purification offering required that the blood be first smeared on the horns of the altar, and then the rest poured out at the base of the altar in the case of a ruler or commoner. For the priest or entire congregation, the blood was first sprinkled seven times before the veil of the sanctuary, and then put on the horns of the inner incense altar. The remainder was poured out at the base of the outer altar. In certain cases, the priests were also required to eat the sacrifice (Wright, 1987 - see also cereal and reparation offerings).

The allotment and ordering rites were different for each sacrifice. The burnt offering, of course, had no ordering rite: the entire sacrifice was burnt on the altar. For the other sacrifices, disposal rites varied, seemingly in accordance with sanctity. Thus, the peace offering, which was of lesser sanctity (“holy”), could be eaten for two days and only burned on the third, whereas the purification sacrifice (“most holy”) had to be eaten on the same day (Wright, 1987). Special laws (Lv 7:16–18) of disposal also applied to utensils used in preparing expiatory

sacrifices (Lv 7:28). With regard to disposal rites in general, see Wright (1987). At this point, a look at the basic types of animal sacrifices in P would be useful.

### 9.3.3 Basic types of animal sacrifice in P

#### 9.3.3.1 Burnt offering ( *ôlâ* )

The Hebrew term for “burnt offering” is *ôlâ*, literally meaning “an offering of ascent” or “an ascending offering” (Levine, 1974:6). The noun is used with its relative verbal root *ha ăleh ôlâ*, meaning “to make an *ôlâ* ascend.” It is not difficult to determine why this name is suitable for this particular offering. The *ôlâ* sacrifice was one which was entirely burnt on the altar and so its smoke—or better, its scent—was directed toward the heavenly realm, wherein the deity was thought to have “inhaled” it. The *ôlâ* was generally offered along with accompanying cereal and drink offerings (Nm 15:1–10). In Ugarit, this sacrificial type was called *šrp*, meaning “(totally) burnt”. This sacrifice was a widely used one in ancient Israel. Indeed, the phrase “burnt offerings and peace offerings” (e.g. Ex 20:24) could be used as a merism for the entire sacrificial system (Levine, 1974:21).

In the book of Ezra, the term *ôlâ* reflected both the purification and the burnt offerings that were offered by the returning exiles (Ezra 8:35). Levine has argued that the *ôlâ* sacrifice should be understood as one which drew the deity’s attention and requested the deity’s presence at a particular ritual occasion. Such a theory would explain the usage of the *ôlâ* for divination purposes, when the deity’s response to an urgent plea was desired, as in the case of Balaam’s oracles (Nm 21–24), or the usage of the *ôlâ* by Elijah as a means of testing which prophetic group truly “had YHWH’s attention”, so to speak (1 Ki 18). It would also explain the usage of the *ôlâ* as a term for child sacrifice, which was thought in some circles to show one’s consummate devotion to the deity (2Ki 3:26–27), and hence worthiness of divine assistance. Milgrom has argued that the *ôlâ* was the earliest form of atonement sacrifice in biblical writings (Cheyne, 1958:243).

Job 1:5 contains good evidence of this: “Job would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of his sons, for he said: ‘It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts’”. The atoning function of the *ôlâ* survives, inter alia, in the P source itself. Although P generally holds that only the purification and reparation offerings deal with sin, in Leviticus 1:4 it is said that the burnt offering “shall make atonement” for the offerer. In the researcher’s opinion, this is a remarkable usage because nowhere else does P spell out how this atonement would work. All ensuing discussion of atonement revolves around purification and reparation offerings. In Milgrom’s view, the development of these specialised offerings brought about a restructuring of the role of the more general *ôlâ*. One must be careful, though, not to assume that this restructuring of the system and perfecting of the typology of atoning

sacrifices was late, simply because they do not occur in pre-exilic sources. They probably did exist, but non-priestly sources took no interest in the more exacting classification of the priestly system (Cheyne, 1958:243).

Another level of meaning present in the *ôlâ* is that of a gift to the deity. Of course, this gift is not just any type of gift, but one which the deity consumes, a “soothing odor”. The consumable gift was thought to be in many respects the food of the deity. Just as the temple was thought to be the deity’s home, complete with furniture and other components, so this divine home had its furnace, the altar. The daily sacrifices for the deity are described in Exodus 29:38–42 (see Nm 28:3–8 and Ezk 46:13–15). These sacrifices took place in the morning and the evening, and consisted of the *ôlâ* (lamb), along with a cereal and drink offering. It was called the *tamid* offering in rabbinic sources, because the scripture says it was to be offered “continually (*tāmīd*) . . . throughout your generations” (Ex 29:42). It is no accident that Exodus 29:42 continues to require the sacrifice “at the door of the tent of meeting before the Lord, where I will meet you, to speak there to you”. This *tāmīd* sacrifice was symbolic, not only of the deity’s meal, but by extension, of the deity’s presence among the people. No greater cultic calamity could be imagined than the loss of this sacrifice, since it symbolised the severing of the divine-human relationship (Cheyne, 1958:243, cf. Dn 8:11).

### 9.3.3.2 Peace offering (*šēlāmîm*)

The translation and interpretation of this sacrifice has bothered scholars for many years. It seems clear that at least three terms can refer to this sacrifice: *zēbah*, *zibhê-šēlāmîm* and *šēlāmîm*. The history of the development of these terms has been dealt with by Rendtorff (1967). The *šēlāmîm* seems to be a special type of an earlier *zēbah* sacrifice. One should not infer that *zēbah*, meaning “slain sacrifice”, refers to any slain sacrificial animal. In spite of its name, which is quite general, this sacrifice name often occurs in the pair *zēbah* and *ôlâ*. In this regard, there can be no doubt that *zēbah* refers specifically to the *šēlāmîm* offering. The sacrifice has commonly been translated as a “peace offering”, but this is certainly an unfortunate rendering. It tells us little about the nature of the sacrifice. Just what is peaceful about this sacrificial rite? Some say that the peace refers to a harmonious relationship between humanity and God. Smith went even further, and said that it symbolised a communion between them (1889).

Others have argued that the peacefulness refers to a covenantal pact, either between God and humanity or simply between different people. Of course, the lexical root of the term *šēlāmîm* (*šlm*) does mean “peace,” and in certain cases, nouns formed from this root in Hebrew and Akkadian refer to covenantal relations. However, each one of these attempts to establish the function of the *šēlāmîm* in terms of etymology has not been persuasive. In the case of the

*šēlāmîm*, Gray’s dictum that usage is a more important determinant of meaning than etymology is certainly true (Gray, 1925:1–20).

In the P source, the *šēlāmîm* sacrifice is broken down into three subtypes (Lv 7:11–18): the *tôdâ* or “thanksgiving” sacrifice, the *neder* or “vowed sacrifice,” and the *nēdābâ* or “free will offering”. All of these sacrifices played a very important role in the life of the individual. Besides constituting the basic form of sacrifice brought on feast days (1Sm 1:3–4; Dt 12:11–12), the *šēlāmîm* also played an important role in the ritual of lamentation and thanksgiving that is so prominent in the Psalms. Very similar to the *šēlāmîm* are the *pesaḥ* or “Passover” and *millû îm* or “ordination” sacrifices. Although the *pesaḥ* sacrifice is prepared in a different manner (it is roasted and not boiled, according to Ex 12:9), it is a sacrifice that all of Israel must consume. The *millû îm* sacrifice is prepared almost exactly like the *šēlāmîm*, the significant difference being that the blood is applied to the ear, thumb and toe of the Aaronid priest (Ex 29:19–34). The *pesaḥ*, *millû îm* and *tôdâ* sacrifices were all to be eaten on the very day that they were offered, unlike the other *šēlāmîm* types. This is certainly due to the fact that the former rites are all obligatory ones. The fact that their flesh must be consumed within one day points to a higher level of sanctity. The other *šēlāmîm* rites were not obligatory, and therefore the prescriptions for consumption and disposal of the remains were more flexible. It is therefore quite logical to ask oneself what the role of these types of sacrifice was.

### i) Role

One negative conclusion that emerges from even a cursory look at the *šēlāmîm* material in the Bible is that the sacrifice had nothing to do with atonement. Although the fat and certain other organs of the sacrifice were burnt on the altar as a “pleasing odor” and the blood was sprinkled on the altar, nowhere does one hear of these acts as atoning for any sin. It seems that the peace offering, in this case, was nothing more than an accepted manner for slaughtering any animal that was to be used for human consumption (Lv 17:1–7) in the P system. The role of human consumption constitutes the primary level of meaning of this sacrifice, and helps to explain why the *ôlâ* and the *šēlāmîm* are routinely paired together in biblical (and Ugaritic) rituals. The *ôlâ* was the sacrifice that constituted the basic nourishment for the deity, while the *šēlāmîm* in turn nourished the people (Cheyne, 1958). This was recognised by the rabbis (see the discussion of the *Mekhila* above), who explicitly compared these two offerings on exactly this point. Indeed, so formative was the notion of celebratory eating to the *šēlāmîm*, that the rabbis even labelled one application of the *šēlāmîm* sacrifice as the “celebration sacrifice” (*šalmê-šimḥâ*).

The celebration role of the *šēlāmîm* is certainly its most prominent characteristic. If one defines the *šēlāmîm* as a celebration sacrifice, one cannot only explain its presence in the rituals of thanksgiving and fulfillment of vows, but also understand its role on feast days. In many texts in the Bible, the command “to

celebrate” (*lišmōah*) can only refer to the obligation to consume the *šēlāmîm*. So prominent is this association that the rabbis themselves say: “‘celebration’ means nothing other than consuming the flesh (of the *šēlāmîm*)”. Rabbinic materials also further subdivided the *šēlāmîm* to include both the *ḥāgîgâ* sacrifice, the sacrifice that all Israelite males were obliged to consume during the three pilgrimage festivals, and the *šimḥâ* sacrifice (*šalmê-šimḥâ*), which all Israelites, male and female, had to consume at these times (*Sifre* 138).

Because the *šēlāmîm* was symbolic of moments of joy or celebration, the *šēlāmîm* could be banned on days of public mourning in certain circumstances. This appears to be the logic of Isaiah 22:12–14. Isaiah reports that the Lord had called for public mourning, yet Israel was slaying her fatlings and rejoicing. Such a practice does not seem to have been uniform in Israel, for on other occasions, *šēlāmîm* was offered during times of public mourning. With regard to these latter examples though, one should note that the *šēlāmîm* was offered in conjunction with the burnt offering and, as Milgrom (Cheyne, 1958:244) has indicated, it was the *ôlâ* that had the primary role in these rites. Therefore, it is necessary to now consider the purification offering.

### 9.3.3.3 Purification offering (*ḥaṭṭâ t*)

Leviticus 4:1–5:13 and Numbers 15:22–31 refer to this type of offering. The traditional translation of this term has been “sin offering”. This translation, followed by the Septuagint, was based on etymological considerations. The Hebrew root *ḥṭ* means “to miss the mark, to sin”. However, as Milgrom (1983a: 67) and others have noted, the term would better be understood as referring to the process of purification. This seems clear from the verb used in conjunction with *ḥaṭṭâ t, lē-ḥaṭṭē*. This verbal form is best understood as a *Pi el* privative which conveys the sense of cleansing, purging or purifying an object. Even more important is the fact that the *ḥaṭṭâ t* offering is often used in situations that have no relation to sin. For example, consider the cases of the parturient (Lv 12), the person suffering from a discharge (Lv 15), the Nazirite who completes a vow of abstinence (Nm 6), or the installation of a new altar (Lv 8). In each of these cases, the act of sacrifice serves to purge or purify something, rather than to remove sin. This is not only logical, but the biblical text explicitly says that this is the function of the sacrifice. For example, in the case of the parturient, instead of the ritual closing with a formula for forgiveness, one reads: “and the priest shall perform purgation for her (*kippēr*) and she shall be clean” (Lv 12:8). The rabbis also noted this: “The sacrifices [the parturient] brought, are nevertheless, for the purpose of permitting her to partake of consecrated food and are not expiatory”. At this stage, it would be useful to say something about purification and atonement.

#### 9.3.3.4 Purification and atonement

The purification role of the *ḥattā t* challenges one to reconsider the role of the *ḥattā t* in rituals that seem to have an atoning function. Can these rituals also be understood in a purification sense? Milgrom (1983a) has argued in favour of this, on the basis of the atonement rituals found in Leviticus 4:1–5:13 and Leviticus 16. Milgrom pays particular attention to the role of blood manipulation in each of the rituals described here, for it is the blood itself which acts as the purging agent. In light of this fact, it is significant to note that blood is never placed upon the individual. If an individual was being cleansed, one would expect the blood to be placed on him or her. Instead, it is placed on various cultic components. Even more telling is the variability of this blood ritual with respect to the status of the sinner.

Leviticus 4 makes a very careful distinction between the statuses of various classes of people. The inadvertent sins of the priest and community as a whole are more serious than the sins of the individual, be he a commoner or a ruler. Most serious of all are avoidable offences of any kind. In each of these cases, as the seriousness of the sin becomes more pronounced, the blood is brought closer to the very inner sanctum of the Holy of holies. Thus, the blood used for the commoner is placed on the altar of the burnt offering outside the sanctuary per se (Lv 4:30). The blood used for the sin of the priest or community as a whole is placed within the sanctuary itself, sprinkled on the veil separating the Holy of holies from the outer chamber, and then placed on the incense altar. Finally, the blood of the purification offering at Yom Kippur, which atones for avoidable sins (so the sense of *peša* in Lv 16:16 seems), is sprinkled “in front of the mercy seat” within the Holy of holies itself (Lv 16:14).

Milgrom has argued that this sequence of the graded usage of blood with respect to the grid of the sacred shrine shows that what is being purged is not the sin from the sinner, but the effects of sin, i.e. cultic impurity, from the sanctums within the sanctuary. Since blood is understood to be a purging agent, one would expect the sinner to receive this material, if the primary intention of the ritual was to eliminate his/her sinful condition. Such an understanding would agree with what is said about the purification role of the *ḥattā t* blood in the case of those suffering from discharge: “Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst” (Lv 15:31, cf. Nm 19:13). Impurity, understood in this way, becomes “a physical substance, an aerial miasma which possessed magnetic attraction for the realm of the sacred” (Milgrom, 1983a: 77).

The purification offering is designed to remove this maleficent material from the sanctuary itself. If the impurity is allowed to accumulate, the deity will be forced to leave the sanctuary. This understanding of the process of atonement is quite distinct from previous theories (Gese, 1981; Janowski, 1982), which hold that the process is primarily concerned with removing sin from the sinner. Whereas the

latter stresses the role of the sacrificial victim's death in the atoning process, Milgrom stresses the role of purification. When stated in this general way, Milgrom's argument is very persuasive. Things become more difficult when Milgrom attempts to argue that the purification offering has no role to play whatsoever in removing human sin. Indeed, the scripture itself says that the purification rite is performed so that the sinner may be forgiven (Lv 4:20, 26, 31). However, Milgrom contends that forgiveness is not for the sinful act per se, but rather for the consequence of the act, the contamination of the sanctuary. How then is the actual act of the individual sinner forgiven? Milgrom argues that forgiveness of the original sin itself is accomplished by a feeling of remorse. This feeling is indicated in the biblical text by the use of the verb *āšēm* (Lv 4:13, 22, 27), which Milgrom translates as "to feel guilty". However, there are still problems here. If such an important atoning function is present in the act of feeling remorse, why is this term absent in Numbers 15:22–31? And why is it absent in the case of the priest (Lv 4:1–12)? This situation is complex, and does not offer any easy solution. Certainly, Milgrom's work is an important contribution, but it still leaves loose ends. The next section examines the performance of the purification offering.

### 9.3.3.5 The performance of the purification offering

The purification offering varies across four classes of individuals:

- Priest,
- Congregation
- Ruler, and
- Individual.

(Lv 5:1–13 constitutes a special case which this study will not have room to discuss). Not only does the act of blood manipulation vary in these four classes, but so do other elements of the ritual. The four classes can actually be reduced to two groups:

- Priest and congregation, and
- Ruler and individual.

The performance of the purification offering has six discrete steps:

- The animal is brought to the tent of meeting;
- The offerer lays on hands;
- The animal is slain;
- The blood rites are performed;
- The animal's remains are disposed of by burning or are eaten; and
- A forgiveness formula is cited, which formally concludes the atonement process.

Within this schema, there are two elements which serve to highlight and distinguish the offerings of the priest/congregation from those of the ruler/individual (see also Eberhart, 2004 above).

- Firstly, the blood and disposal rites are performed differently, depending on whether one is handling the animals of the priest/congregation or the ruler/individual. For the priest/congregation, the blood is brought into the sanctuary and sprinkled seven times on the veil that stands in front of the Holy of holies, and is then daubed on the horns of the incense altar (Lv 4:5–7a; 16–18a). The remainder of the blood is poured out at the base of the altar reserved for the burnt offering, which is outside the tent proper (Lv 4:7b; 18b). The fat of the bull, as well as certain organs, are burned at the altar of the burnt offering (Lv 4:8–10; 19–20); the remainder of the animal, including its edible flesh, is burned outside the camp (Lv 4:11–12; 21).

For the ruler/individual, the rite is quite different. The blood is applied to the horns of the outer altar and then poured at its base (Lv 4:25; 30). The fat is burned on the altar, but the remainder, that is, the edible flesh, is eaten by the priests (see Lv 6:17–23—English 6:24–30). It is difficult to know how to interpret the act of eating the meat. Is this an act of disposal parallel to the burning of the bull, or is the consumption simply a prerequisite for the priesthood? This asymmetry has been noted by Levine, who uses this data to reconstruct two originally separate offerings that lie behind our present text. The rite of the priest/congregation, he believes, is a “purification rite intended to safeguard the sanctuary and its ministering priesthood from contamination” (Levine, 1974:103).

- The other rite is similar to the peace offering, and originally had nothing to do with the process of purification - rather, its function was “to expiate certain of the offences of the ‘people’, of Israelites, individually, and even of their *něsî îm*, the tribal chiefs”. A later revision artificially fused two independent pieces of tradition. Levine’s hypothesis is quite different from the theory of Milgrom. Although several aspects of Levine’s hypothetical reconstruction are weak and have been appropriately criticised by Milgrom, his basic description of the problem posed by the present form of the text holds, and has not been adequately addressed by Milgrom’s own integrated reading (Milgrom, 1983a). What about the concept of order in these sacrificial processes?

### **i) Order**

The purification offering generally takes place in conjunction with other sacrifices. It is always the first sacrifice to be offered when it is offered in conjunction with other sacrifices, such as the *ôlâ* and the *ăšēm*. The reasons are quite obvious:

- The purification offering cleanses the sacred components so that they are able to receive subsequent sacrifices.

- In some lists, the purification offering is listed after the *ôlâ* (Nm 28–29). This is not an exception to the general rule. Rather, this phenomenon results from the particular literary genre of the sacrificial list.
- Descriptive lists often put the purification offering in the second position, whereas prescriptive lists, which describe the actual order, always put the purification offering first.

### 9.3.3.6 Reparation offering ( *āšām* )

This offering has generally been translated as “guilt offering”. This translation is based on etymological considerations - the root *āšēm* can often mean “to be or feel guilty”. However, as Milgrom has shown (1976), although feelings of guilt are integral to the atonement process, the basic feature of the sacrifice is its function as a means of reparation. Unlike other sacrifices which one “offers” (*hiqrīb*), the *āšām* can “be paid” (*šillēm, hēšīb*). Also, unlike other sacrifices, the *āšām* can be converted into a monetary equivalent and simply paid. Of all the offerings in the P system, the *āšām* is the most difficult to understand. Indeed, some scholars have claimed that even the P school no longer appreciated the distinction between the *āšām* and the *hattā t*. Almost every imaginable historical reconstruction of the relationship between the reparation offering and the purification offering has been undertaken. Needless to say, no overwhelming consensus has been reached. The most detailed recent study of the reparation offering is that of Milgrom (1976).

In many respects, Milgrom’s research represents a major advance over previous studies. He offers a persuasive hypothesis as to how reparation and purification offerings should be differentiated, but one should be aware that his proposal cannot account for every single example in the P source. Before presenting his theory, the following conditions for the reparation sacrifice should be mentioned:

- The act of misappropriating or misusing an item of sacred value (Lv 5:14–16); Sinning inadvertently and not knowing it (Lv 5:17–19);
- Swearing falsely with regard to damages done to another person (Lv 5:20–26—English 6:1–7);
- The rite of purification of the leper;
- The rite of renewing the vow of the Nazirite who has become unclean (Nm 6:10–12); having sexual relations with a slave who has been betrothed to another man (Lv 19:20–21).

Milgrom sees a thread of continuity between cases 1, 3, and 5.

In each of the above cases, something sacred to the deity has been violated. The first case is the most obvious - it explicitly states that the person has misused a sacred item. As Milgrom observes, this text is very similar in function to the problem of desanctifying an animal that is unfit for sacrifice, which is discussed in Leviticus 27:9–13. Here, a penalty is charged for this desanctification, a penalty equalling the value of the animal plus one-fifth. Milgrom (1976) believes that it is

not coincidental that Leviticus 5:14–16 charges the same penalty for misusing a sacred item. In both cases, one is dealing with a situation in which an item's sacred status has been profaned. Leviticus 25:9–13 stipulates the charge imposed for the right to do this, whereas Leviticus 5:14–16 stipulates the penalty imposed for the crime. The case of swearing falsely can also fall into this group, because a false vow necessarily entails a misuse of the divine name which was originally invoked by the person in question. Indeed, as Milgrom demonstrates, the violation of vows and desecration of sacred items are treated as parallel phenomena in Ancient Near Eastern legal materials.

Finally, the case of the Nazirite who has become unclean also represents a case in which a sacred item has been sullied. In this case, it is the Nazir himself who has become like a priest himself, and hence “holy to the Lord” (Nm 6:8). As Milgrom indicates, the example of the Nazir has a formal parallel with the case of land dedicated to the sanctuary (Lv 27). Both are results of a vow, both are for a limited period of time, but most importantly, both vows can be prematurely terminated and carry similar penalties for doing so. Whereas the Nazir brings an *āšām*, the donor of the land must provide the equivalent of the entire value of the land, plus an additional 20 percent (in other words, the equivalent of the *āšām*). The example of the leper and the betrothed slave girl are the most difficult in terms of Milgrom's theory. Neither are said to have violated a sacred item in any way. Milgrom tries to explain the case of the leper on the grounds that elsewhere in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible, leprosy is often the result of a serious sin against the sancta of a particular deity. On these grounds, Milgrom suggests that the leper must bring an *āšām* because he suspects that he may have offended the deity. The slave girl cannot be accounted for in terms of this theory (Schwartz, 1986).

The case of a person sinning and not knowing it also poses some problems. The text in question (Lv 5:17–19) is so similar in wording to the material in Leviticus 4 that some scholars have suggested that it is a duplicate of the purification rite that has been misplaced by the P editor. Milgrom presumes that the P source knew what it was doing when it put this narrative here. The crucial characteristic that separates Leviticus 5:17–19 from the purification offering in Leviticus 4 is that the individual in question sins and does not know it. Leviticus 4, on the other hand, deals with cases in which inadvertent sin is later realised or made known to the offender. Leviticus 5:17–19 therefore appears to presume a case wherein an individual suffers from either a guilty conscience or, perhaps like Job, the effects of divine retribution, but cannot pinpoint the cause. In the Ancient Near East, there are many cultic and ritual materials that deal with this exact problem. In each case, when an individual felt the effects of some divine chastisement, the presumption was that he or she had offended the deity in some way.

On the basis of this comparative model, Milgrom suggests that Leviticus 5:17–19 functions in the very same way. In this regard, its textual placement after Leviticus 5:14–16 is quite understandable: whereas vv 14–16 deal with a known

infraction against the sancta, vv 17–19 deal with a supposed or alleged infraction. In summary, one could say that the basic distinction between purification and reparation offerings is that the former deal with the issue of impurity, while the latter deal with profanation of sacred items. Although not every example in the P source can be explained this way, the overwhelming majority can. At this point, the issue of prophetic critique will be discussed.

#### 9.4 PROPHETIC CRITIQUE

It has been common for Christian scholars in the past to denigrate the entire enterprise of biblical sacrifice. One scholar went so far as to describe the system as a means of “self-help”. This obvious importing of an Augustinian-Lutheran reading of a Pauline soteriology into the Old Testament is unacceptable to biblical critics of the most recent past (Stendahl, 1963). In any event, there can be no doubt as to why Christian treatment of biblical sacrifice spends as much time as it does on the issue of the Old Testament prophetic critique of the sacrificial system: it calls into question one of the fundamental tenets of Mosaic law. For Christian interpreters, these prophetic criticisms suggest that routine observance of the law in all its particularity is not as important as a more general stance of obedience towards one’s God. If one can thus find a foothold in the Old Testament itself for questioning the validity and perhaps timelessness of Old Testament law, then the Pauline imperative that law is only made as a temporary measure will not seem that far removed from the Old Testament itself.

Perhaps it was just this type of thinking that prompted Milgrom to read at least one prophetic critique in a very different manner (see other examples such as 1 Sm15:22–23; Is1:11–14; Am 5:21–23 and Mi 6:6–9). Milgrom contends that the prophetic critique, at least in Jeremiah, is not a radical questioning of the cult’s very foundation (Milgrom, 1983a: 119–21). Milgrom’s hypothesis is all the more intriguing when one realises that the particular text in Jeremiah which he addresses is perhaps the most thorough cultic critique in the Bible: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh. For in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But this command I gave them, ‘Obey my voice, and I will be your God . . .’” (Jr 7:21–23).

The text appears to call into question the very foundation on which the sacrificial system rests: Mosaic legislation. Weinfeld (1976) argues that this prophetic text was a “slap in the face of the priestly code”. It seemed to overturn the priestly notion that all cultic laws had been part of Mosaic law. Weinfeld also notes that this text was adopted by Maimonides as proof of the secondary importance of sacrificial practice in the first place. However, Milgrom reads the text quite differently. He notes that Jeremiah’s rebuke only specifies the burnt offering and the peace offering (here called *zēbah*). In the P code, these two sacrifices only occur together in the context of voluntary offerings of the individual. The *zēbah*

never occurs in any cultic calendar of public sacrifice; it is not a statutory offering. The primary staple of the fixed temple cultus was the *tāmīd*. In terms of this offering, Milgrom argues, Jeremiah has nothing to say. “Rather he turns to the people and urges them to renounce their individual offerings because their ritual piety is vitiated by their immoral behavior” (Milgrom, 1983a: 274).

One problem with Milgrom’s argument, beside it being an argument from silence, is the context of Jeremiah 7 itself. Jeremiah’s indictment of the cultus in vv 21–23 occurs within Jeremiah’s temple sermon, which itself seeks to undermine the basis of the mythic nature of the temple. Hyperbole against the sacrificial cultus is just what one would expect here. Another problem is Milgrom’s attempt to overspecialise the meanings of *ôlâ* and *zēbāḥ* in this prophetic context. There is no evidence that Jeremiah is here dependent on an overly specialised priestly sense. Rather, the pair *ôlâ* and *zēbāḥ* are better understood as a merism, a cliché which indicates that the sacrificial cultus in general is not right. Levine has shown how this pair functions in exactly this way (Levine, 1974:21).

In summary, one should not mistake the prophetic critique of the cult for systematic theology. Prophetic discourse occurs in a highly charged atmosphere. It is a mixture of hyperbole, exalted rhetoric, and even polemic. A more balanced view of the prophet’s criticism of the cult can be found in the work of A. Davidson (1904). He argues that the Bible contains two models for dealing with human sin. The most prominent would be that of the P code. In P, sins are forgiven through a system of sacrificial atonement. The sins envisioned to fall within this framework are those acts of disobedience which are committed within the context of a larger covenantal bond. The prophets, on the other hand, are concerned with sins of a vastly different nature: sins that represent blatant, gross rebellion against the very fabric of the covenant charter. So heinous are these deeds that the whole covenant framework is called into question. It is not a question of rejecting P, but rather finding oneself in such a radically new context that P’s norms are no longer viewed as applicable.

Toeg (1974) and Childs (1986) have recently argued that this prophetic understanding of human sin is also to be found in the P code itself. Both scholars point to Leviticus 26, a chapter that lists the curses and blessings that will accrue to Israel, depending on her response to the covenant. This chapter moves beyond the concerns of purification and atonement found in Leviticus 1–25. Israel’s wanton disobedience, which is foreshadowed here, calls for measures of divine punishment that cannot be altered by the sphere of the cult. The language of judgment found in Leviticus 26, especially the threat to terminate the cultic order itself, is very close to prophetic thought. Toeg goes further and even claims that, in one sacrificial law found in P, Numbers 15:22–31, one can also find evidence of a quasi-prophetic critique. In this text, the P writer indicates that not only will all overt sins be unforgivable in terms of any cultic procedures, but the penalty will also be severe - banishment from the community. The threat of

banishment is conceptually very close to the prophetic warning of exile. But perhaps even more striking is the P writer's extension of this penalty to all who sin in this fashion. Elsewhere in the P code this penalty is used very sparingly, and only for the most heinous of sins. Here, however, any overt sinner is to be banished. Toeg (1974) argues that this text, which presents itself as simply another religious law, ought to be understood as a form of prophetic rhetoric, this time employed by the P writer to exhort his community to be obedient.

Fishbane (1985) has picked up Toeg's argument, and has provided additional support for the homiletic nature of this text and its role in the context of preaching, rather than strict legal enforcement. Whether or not the specific points of Toeg's and Fishbane's theories are accurate need not be discussed here. What is important to note is that within the P code itself, there are allusions to the type of criticism of the cult that one finds within prophetic materials. This evidence, in and of itself, should call into question any overly rigid typological distinctions which would isolate priestly concepts of the cult from those of the prophets. The difference has to do with emphasis and rhetorical purpose, rather than with outright contradictory evaluation of Israel's spiritual heritage. This leads this study to briefly examine Deuteronomy and Israel's sacrificial worship.

## **9.5 DEUTERONOMY AND ISRAEL'S SACRIFICIAL WORSHIP**

The reformation that King Josiah undertook revolutionised all aspects of Israel's religion. The centralisation of the sacrifice was in itself a sweeping innovation in the history of Israel's cult, but its consequences were, as one shall see, decisively more revolutionary in nature, in that they involved the collapse of an entire system of concepts that for centuries had been regarded as sacrosanct (Freedman, 1997). The elimination of the provincial cult made possible the transformation of Israel's religion into a religion that minimised external expression. Indeed, the very purpose of the book of Deuteronomy was to curtail and circumvent the cult, and not to extend or enhance it. The Deuteronomy conception of cult is, as shall be shown, vastly different from that reflected in the Tetrateuchal sources. It represents a turning point in the evolution of Israel's faith (Brown, 1993:149-150). In accordance with Deuteronomy, the sanctuary is "the place where YHWH chose to cause His name to dwell" (Von Rad, 1953:38-39). The new theological conception of the deity is repeated without digression. Therefore, the Temple is not God's habitation, but only a house of worship where Israelites and foreigners alike may deliver their prayers to the God who dwells in heaven (Freedman, 1997: 176).

The book of Deuteronomy cannot conceive of the possibility of seeing the divinity. The Israelites only saw "His great fire", which symbolises His essence and quality (Dt 4:24: "For YHWH your God remains in His heavenly abode"). The attempt to eliminate the inherent corporality of the traditional imagery also finds expression in Deuteronomy's conception of the ark. The specific function of the ark is to house the tablets of the covenant. (Dt 10:1-5). The sanctuary is

conceived as a house of prayer, not a cultic centre. This minimisation of the cult signals a religious turning point, materialised by the abolition of high places and provincial sanctuaries (Freedman, 1997: 177).

The first thing that catches one's attention when endeavouring to grasp the significance of sacrifice in Deuteronomy is that one does not find sacrifice being practised for its own sake. In terms of Deuteronomy, the Deity has no need of the "pleasing odor" of sacrifices, and nothing is mentioned of the "food of God", which is amply attested to in the Priestly Code (Lv 1:9, 13, 17; 21:6, 8, 17, 21). Neither is there any mention of the sin and guilt offerings designed to atone for involuntary sins, ritual impurity, perjury, theft and deception (Lv 4-5). The author's view seems to be that spiritual purification and repentance consist of confession and prayer, and that no sacrificial offerings expiate sin (Brown, 1993:125-133).

The only instance in which the book of Deuteronomy does mention a rite analogous to the sin and guilt offering in character is in the law of unsolved murder (Dt 21:1-9). However, the rite conducted here does not consist of a complete sacrificial offering with ceremonial slaughtering and blood sprinkling, but only involves the breaking of the heifer's neck in an uncultivated valley. This act, carried out by the elders, does not exclude the presence of the priests, who are there not to execute rituals, but merely guarantee the religious aspect of the ceremony by presiding over it (Brown, 1993:203-211). The whole thing has a symbolic value. The heifer's neck is broken at the scene of the crime, as it were, and the elders only cleanse their hands as a purification expression of innocence (Ps 24:4; 26:6-10; 73:13; etc).

There is no laying of hands on the heifer, nor the transference of sin to it, as in the case of the scapegoat ritual (Lv 16:21), because its beheading as such does not atone for sin - expiation is only effected by the confession and prayer uttered at the end of the ceremony. It is true that the custom itself originated from the elimination ritual (Wright, 1987). However, in the present elimination, nothing is said about removal of sin or impurity by the priests, as in Levitic 14: 53 and 16:22, or about transferring the evil to the open country, as in Leviticus 16:22 and the Mesopotamian incantations (Wright, 1987).

In this rite, God absolves the sin Himself without recourse to any intermediary, whereas in P all expiatory sacrifices are executed by priests, whose mediation alone effects the expiation of sin. In the law of Deuteronomy, atonement is possible through the elders, representatives of the guilty who seek absolution through confession and prayer, while in P, expiation is achieved through ritual sacrifice and incense burning, without prayer on behalf of the penitent (Brown, 1993:252-262).

Deuteronomy sacrifices consist primarily of offerings which are consumed in the sanctuary and shared with "*personae miserabiles*": the poor, the Levites, the alien resident, the orphan and the widow. Deuteronomy's constant emphasis on

sharing with the indigent person creates the impression that the main purpose of sacrifice is to provide food to Israel's destitute people (Dt 16:22). Therefore, sacrifice, according to Deuteronomy, is not an institutional practice but a personal one, with two major objectives: humanitarian, that is, to share with the poor, and private, to fulfill a religious obligation and express one's gratitude to God by means of a votive offering (Brown, 1993:261; see also 1Sm 12:6, 17, 26; 23:22-24).

Deuteronomy 12:27 describes the right attitude for sacrificial offerings, but also differentiates between the non-burnt and burnt offerings, and ordains that the flesh and blood of the burnt offering be offered entirely on the altar, whereas the blood of the non-burnt offerings is to be poured upon the altar and the meat eaten. The burning of the suet, the piece of fat that was set aside for God, thus rendered the meat permissible for consumption by the priests and lay people (1Sm 2:12-17). This study fully agrees with Freedman, Von Rad and Brown with regard to Deuteronomy's reforms in Israel's sacrificial worship, and is of the view that these reforms can even be applicable to church worship, whereby the internal attitudes of worshippers should matter the most, rather than external manifestations. These reforms also agree with Hebrews 13:15, 16, whereby the emphasis on sacrifice is placed on the confession of Jesus' name, praise deeds of mutual love, and sharing.

## 9.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to give a brief overview of biblical sacrifices and sacrificial offerings as background information to an exegesis of the sacrifice of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews. A few paragraphs have been devoted to briefly explaining some symbolic images within Hebrew sacrificial worship, namely blood, fire and smoke. Thereafter, the researcher looked at the altar, as well as its name and shape. Following this, Old Testament sacrifices were described by means of an overview, including Old Testament sacrificial typology and sacrificial procedures. The chapter then went on to describe sacrifice in P: animals, technique of sacrifice, basic types of animal sacrifice in P, namely burnt offerings, peace offerings and usage, purification offerings, atonement offerings, the performance of the purification offering, order and reparation offerings. While discussing the material concerning sacrifice in P, some parallels were identified, especially in the following cases:

- Desecration of a sacred item in Leviticus 27:9-13, and Leviticus 5:14-16 concerning a false vow. Both violation of a vow and desecration of sacred items are treated as parallel phenomena in Ancient Near Eastern legal materials.
- The example of Nazir in Numbers 6:8 has a formal parallel with the case of land dedication to the sanctuary in Leviticus 27.
- The example of the leper and the betrothed slave girl. Both in the Bible and the Ancient Near East, leprosy is often a result of serious sin against the sancta of a particular deity.

- There is also the case of a person sinning unknowingly in Leviticus 5:17-19 and Leviticus 4, which is also found in the Ancient Near East, where many cultic and ritual materials deal with the same problem.

Many parallels exist between Old Testament sacrifice and the Epistle to the Hebrews in terms of sacrificial types, animal victims, and the role of the blood of animals as a means of cleansing, as well as for covenantal ratification, and the paradigmatic sacrifice of a human being, which constitutes a notable shift in biblical sacrifices (Heb 9:19-28, cf. Ex24:5, 6; Lv 14:4,7; Ex 29:12, 36; Lv 17:11; Heb 10:1-18). This chapter went on to examine prophetic critique, as well as Deuteronomy and Israel's sacrificial worship, where significant reforms that were achieved in Israel's sacrificial worship were highlighted, which have injected fresh understanding into the knowledge and practice of sacrifice. Internal devotion, confession of sins, prayer and love for one's neighbour, sharing and concern for the poor, widows and foreigners, based on obedience to God, constitute the new meaning of true sacrificial worship. The above reforms in Israel's sacrificial worship appear to be a paradigm shift parallel to Hebrews 13:15-16, where sacrificial worship is no longer a matter of the shedding of animal blood, but rather confession of the Lord's name and performance of mutual deeds of love and sharing.

The next chapter will be devoted to the exegesis of the theme of sacrifice, especially the sacrifice of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Old Testament sacrifices were a divine provision which ensured a harmonious relationship between Yahweh and His chosen people. They were a means of reconciliation and forgiveness in the case of any kind of disruption in this relationship. They also served as a means of atonement, expiation and propitiation, and their sprinkled blood effected the purification of people and the sanctuary, as well as the cleansing of sanctuary furnishings and utensils. These sacrifices were effective, as they pointed to God's future redemption through the sacrifice of a human being, Jesus Christ, as will be seen in the exegesis of the theme of sacrifice, in particular the sacrifice of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

## CHAPTER TEN: THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS IN HEBREWS: AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS

### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

This theological exegesis will deal with the theme of sacrifice in the Epistle to the Hebrews and, more specifically, the sacrifice of Jesus. The aim of this study is not to analyse this theme in the minutest detail, but to achieve a thorough and proper analysis of the sacrifice of Jesus for the sake of comparison with African material. Therefore, this analysis will be centred on the last section of Hebrews 9 and the middle section of Hebrews 10, because this is where the theme is emphasised. Whatever overlaps in other parts of the text will be worked into this dissertation. This study will concentrate on the abovementioned texts in order to create a Christian framework, so that people coming from Africa can use the Epistle to the Hebrews to understand their culture better and how they can link together Christianity and African traditional religion, as far as the communicative power of blood sacrifices is concerned.

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the sacrifice of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews by looking at its nature, depicting the facts that it was representative, substitutionary and penal. The motivation behind it and its purpose will then be discussed, by attempting to show that its aims were to taste death for mankind, to bring sons to glory, to render the devil powerless, and to atone for sins. Following this, the chapter will go on to discuss this particular sacrifice's superiority, by pointing out the following: the sacrifice of Jesus accomplished God's will with regard to sacrifices, Christ's seated posture implies that His sacrificial mission has been accomplished once and forever, the superiority of the sacrifice of Jesus, the new covenant which confirms the fact that sin has been removed, and finally, how the sacrifice of Jesus dealt with sin.

This chapter will also attempt to show how Jesus' blood-life sacrifice sanctions the superiority of His sacrifice. Firstly, the following issues will be discussed: animal blood-life sacrifice as a prerequisite for the Leviticus high priest's entrance into the earthly sanctuary, the significance of animal blood-life sacrifice in the old order, the benefits of animal blood-life sacrifice in the symbolic earthly tabernacle, as well as the animal blood-life sacrifice and the purification significance of the red heifer. Thereafter, the discussion will focus on the following facts: Jesus' entrance to the heavenly sanctuary with His blood-life sacrifice stresses His sacrifice's superiority, secures eternal redemption, is a ransom price, achieves eternal atonement for sins, cleanses the worshippers' consciences, occurs through the Eternal Spirit, and sanctions His sacrifice's absolute superiority, because it was the sacrifice of Himself.

Finally, this chapter will discuss Jesus' blood-life sacrifice in terms of how it communicates power for manifold benefits, namely soteriological benefits,

psychological benefits and sociological benefits, and conclusions will then be drawn. Therefore, the nature of the sacrifice of Jesus will first be examined.

## 10.2 THE NATURE OF JESUS' SACRIFICE

### 10.2.1 The sacrifice of Jesus was representative

The writer of Hebrews considers Jesus to be the representative or mediator of men before God. He was designated as a High Priest (Heb 5:5), and every high priest is assigned responsibilities on behalf of men, that is, as Hebrews 5:1 states, to offer sacrifices to God (Morris, 1986:305). Old Testament high priests could be sincere and dedicated representatives. However, they were also sinful human beings like those they were representing – therefore, they were also to offer sacrifices for their own sins, as indicated in Hebrews 5:3 (Marshall, 2004:608).

Given the sanctity attached to sacrifice-making, only those called by God were acknowledged as priests (Marshall, 2004:608; see Heb 5:4-5). Therefore, the functional truth about Leviticus high priests can also be applied to Jesus. His being truly human, which is very significant, as the writer of Hebrews emphasises, qualifies Him to be a High Priest. Since He belongs to mankind's family, He is indeed capable of sympathising with the weaknesses of human beings (Morris, 1986:305-306). See also Young (1981:338-342) for a discussion of the functions of the high priest. In this regard, Hebrews 4:15 reads: "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are –yet was without sin" (NIV) (Morris, 1986:304).

Throughout the Epistle (Heb 2:17; 3:1-2; 4:14-16; 5:5-6; 5:9-10; 6:20; 8:1-2; 9:11; 10:21), Jesus is acknowledged as a High Priest and is described in expressions and words that indicate that He is a representative of men before God (Marshall, 2004:608; see also Taylor, 1961-62:173-174). Especially important are those texts in which the preposition *·ΒΕΛ* ("on behalf of") is utilised to denote actions which men are incapable of accomplishing themselves (Heb 6:20; 7:25; 9:24; 5:1), and which Christ performs on their behalf (MacLeod, 1989:423; Taylor, 1961-62:172). One of the characteristics of a high priest is that he is a mere man recruited by the Perfect Manager into His enterprise, according to His divine, absolute, and accurate criteria. His job description is to mediate gifts and sacrifices for sins between his fellow men and God, and between God and himself (Archer, 1957: 34-35). Gordon says that the writer of the Epistle has the Day of Atonement in mind here. He specifies that the high priest is a mortal ( $2<09 \bar{H}$ ), and that he acts on behalf of mortals (Gordon, 1991:66).

One has here a picture of a sinful man trying to reach out to God through a human intermediary, who acts as a facilitator or stand-in by means of animal

sacrifices and their blood. This shadowy and typological exercise in the Leviticus sacrificial system impacted on the real needs of the worshippers, which were primarily the covering of sins, restoration to proper vertical and horizontal relationships, as well as, to some extent, physical and spiritual well-being. The numerous animal victims were substitutes for sinful human beings' lives, and therefore worked as a means of expiation, propitiation and redemption, whose concrete realisation and application are found in Christ (Young, 1979:87-88).

Archer (1957) points out that sacrifices only became effective for those who had committed sins of "ignorance", that is, of thoughtlessness or carelessness or *bishegagah* (Nm 15:27-31), an "inadvertent-going-astray". Except for the sin of blasphemy, no sacrifice is provided (Archer, 1957:35). Gifts here probably stand for inanimate "offerings and oblations", and sacrifice would seem to refer to animated things, pointing to the Leviticus sacrificial holocaust. However, this differentiation is not always consistent with the Aaronic sacrificial system (Hewitt, 1973:95)

The weak consciousness on behalf of the priest serves as a strong safeguard. Consequently, he offers sacrifices for his own sins. Verse four emphatically states that a God-appointed priest must stay within the criteria and ordination regulations. With the above five insights, the writer of Hebrews draws a picture which applies to Jesus. The high priest must be endowed with infirmity, just as other men are. Verse four refers to priesthood through corruption, force or fraud. Westcott says that: "the notoriousness of the high priestly corruption at that time could not fail to give point to the language of the Epistle" (Westcott, 1984:120).

Although the contrast here is clear, there are several problems with this verse. The first stems from the remark that the high priests made their double offering "daily" ( $\epsilon\delta\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$ ). However, the double offering involved is clearly that of the Day of Atonement, which, as the writer of Hebrews knows (Heb 9:7), was a once-yearly observance (Brooks, 1970:208). Various attempts have been made to resolve this difficulty. Thus, the phrase "as the high priest" could be elliptical, and Christ would not need to do daily what the high priest did yearly. This reading has a distinctly odd sense, and the construal of  $\epsilon\delta\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$  as unrelated to  $\epsilon\delta\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$ , is artificial (Attridge, 1989:213).

"Daily" might be explained as a translation error, but this is highly unlikely in a work so obviously Greek in language and style. Since such explanations are unsatisfactory, it seems likely that the writer of Hebrews has somehow conflated the daily sacrifices with that of the Day of Atonement, which is for him the paradigm sacrifice. How he has done so is unclear. He may have the twice-daily animal sacrifice, the *Tamid* offering, in mind. Although the high priest was not obliged to make this sacrifice, except during the week preceding the Day of Atonement, he was permitted to make the offering at any time (Attridge, 1989:213).

Significantly, Philo suggests that the high priest offered sacrifices daily. There is no indication, however, that one of these sacrifices was understood to be for the high priest's own sins, and the sin offering specifically prescribed for priests is not a daily sacrifice. Another, more likely, explanation is that the writer of Hebrews had in mind, as the daily sacrifice for the priest's own sins, the meal offering that accompanied each *Tamid* sacrifice. The meal offering for the priests was also considered to be a sacrifice (21Φ.: ▽), although it did not involve any bloodshed and was not specifically designated as a sin offering (Attridge, 1989:214). Philo deals with the daily meal offering, assumes it to be for the priests, and mentions it before animal sacrifices, although, according to Pentateuch regulations, it was not offered first. A similar description of this function and sequence of the meal offering may well be presumed by this verse of Hebrews. The lack of precision of this verse suggests that the writer, like Philo, was not intimately acquainted with temple rituals, but instead based his understanding of it on his interpretation of the sacred texts filtered through an exegetical tradition. An analogous situation can be seen in the description of the temple and its furnishings (Heb 9:1-5), which is not the focus of this study (Attridge, 1989:214).

The second major difficulty with this verse is in terms of the description of Christ's sacrifice, where Hebrews says that He "did this" (9≡→9≡ (□Δ fB≡.: 0Φ, <). The antecedent of the demonstrative could be taken to be "offered as a sacrifice for His own sins", implying that Jesus does not have to do this daily, because He did it once. It is, however, clear that Christ is understood to be sinless, therefore the demonstrative must be construed as a reference to the sacrifice "for the sins of the people" (Attridge, 1989:214).

This study is not interested in Hebrews 8:1-2 because the focal point is the theme of sacrifice. Hebrews 8:3 is a disclosure of the symbolism announced in Hebrews 5:1, 3. The writer of Hebrews enters the temple again, and once again sees an extraordinary priest, altar, and a sacrifice upon the altar. The elements described in this section do not show a sacrificial animal. The writer's view is that the priest is seemingly, at this time, the practical sacrifice to be laid upon the altar. Then, the altar is the cross standing on Mount Golgotha, on which God's eternal sacrifice was immolated. Hebrews presents a tremendous shift in the New Testament from animal sacrifice to human sacrifice, the latter of which was abhorred by God and considered to be an abomination in His eyes in terms of the Old Testament sacrificial dispensation (Ex 13:15-16; Dt 18:9-13). Hebrews 10:5-7 shows this paradigm shift by means of a quotation from Psalm 39:7-9, which predicted the self-sacrifice of the God-man, Jesus Christ, as part of His eternal redemptive plan (Desilva, 2000:320-322).

Attridge (1989) says that the exposition of the theme of Christ as the heavenly minister proceeds through the application of a general principle. The principle that a priest is installed to offer gifts and sacrifices has already been described in Hebrews 5:1. From this it is deduced, with the logical language of necessity (□<▽(6▽ ρ≡<), that Christ too must have something to "offer" (BΔ≡Φ, <E(6→). The

writer of Hebrews provides the following insightful remarks: Jesus is appointed as a High Priest, it is not His doing, and God tells Him to bring a sacrifice. With regard to Hebrews 8:3, Ellingworth (1993:403-404) supports these remarks.

Loader (1981:148-150) offers another interpretation of this verse. He believes that it is not concerned with the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, but “very probably” with His continuing ministry of intercession, and possibly a sacrifice of praise within the Christian community, as in Hebrews 13:15-16 (\*4ζ ∇↔∂≡¬). This involves understanding  $B\Delta\equiv\Phi, <E(t\rightarrow$  as “gnomic”, with  $f\Phi\partial. <$  being understood, and  $\partial\Delta\dots \nabla B\Delta\equiv\Phi, <E(t\rightarrow$  as generally meaning “he must be active as a high priest”. However, Loader admits that the  $\partial\Delta$  raises the “greatest difficulty” for interpretation.  $\alpha B\partial\Delta \square: \nabla\Delta\partial\Delta^{TM} <$  is thus deliberately avoided, in contrast to Hebrews 5:1. The problem arises, as Loader himself suggests, because “the details of the heavenly activity are not in foreground in chapter 8”.

The consequent ambivalence thus makes it very difficult to exclude Loader’s interpretation - the immediate context in verses one to six speaks of a single act ( $\heartsuit\partial\Delta 2.: \Phi, < \nu 1$ ) that has lasting effects ( $\partial\partial\partial\Delta\Delta\Delta, <, \nu 6$ ). Nevertheless, in view of the strong reference to Christ’s sacrifice in Hebrews 7:27, described at length in chapter nine, it is preferable to take  $B\Delta\equiv\Phi\Delta\Delta\Delta\Delta B\Delta\equiv\Phi, E(t\rightarrow$  as referring, at least primarily, to Christ’s sacrifice.  $B\Delta\equiv\Phi\Delta\Delta\Delta\Delta$  usually refers to sacrifice in Hebrews (Swetnam, 1981:121-122). Loader is, however, right to insist that there is no question, here or elsewhere in Hebrews, of the sacrifice of Christ itself continuously taking place in heaven (Ellingworth, 1993:404).

This study is of the view that, if one assumes the continuity of Jesus’ sacrifice in heaven, one is then saying that the Calvary sacrifice is not sufficient, and therefore needs to be supplemented by other sacrificial activities in heaven, which the writer of Hebrews does not seem to support. Christ performed a single sacrifice for sins for all times, and then “He sat down”, meaning that His work was accomplished and perfectly completed forever (Smith, 1984:124). “A seated priest is the guarantee of a finished work and accepted sacrifice” (Gossai, 2001:234). Unlike Ellingworth, this study can assert that the work accomplished at Calvary by the Great High Priest was done, and was not to be continued in heaven. With regard to this, Hebrews 10:18 says:” And where these have been forgiven there is no longer any sacrifice for sin”. The researcher will come back to this later in the dissertation, but for the time being, a look at the substitutionary aspect of the sacrifice of Jesus would be useful.

## 10.2.2 The sacrifice of Jesus was substitutionary

Worshippers whose sins were until death (Morris, 1951:466; Marchant, 1948:205) were redeemed by an animal victim, which was sacrificed in their place on the annual Day of Atonement (MacLeod, 1989:424). Leviticus 16:21 reveals that the high priest placed his hands upon the head of the goat, in order to signify people's identification with the animal and the transference of sins of the people to it (Lindars, 1991:77).

In this manner, the writer of Hebrews perceives the death of Jesus as a substitutionary sacrifice for sinners. In Hebrews 2:9, the writer specifies that Jesus' incarnation was realised so that "He might taste death for every one" ( $B\infty\Delta \Downarrow B\infty\Delta B\forall<g\in H$ ). Chrysostom (1978), like Luther (1968), indicates that the verb "taste" ( $(\beta\cong\forall A)$ ) in the phrase ( $(\beta\cong 0g\forall A g\forall<g\cong A$ ) ("that He might taste death" Heb 2:9) had the implication of the short duration of Christ's death. They say that, as a physician tastes a drug to encourage the patient to drink it, in the same manner, Jesus tasted death in order to persuade Christian believers to face it (MacLeod, 1989:424).

However, according to Behm (1964:677), Macleod's interpretation fails to understand both the formula and the context. The phrase ( $(\beta\cong 2\forall A 2\forall<g\cong A$ ) is equivalent to the rabbinical confrontation with the Jews in John 8:51-52, whereby the phrase "to see death" ( $(\beta\cong 2\forall A 2g<\forall g\cong\langle)$ ) and ( $(2,\forall A, \top < 2\forall<g\cong\langle)$ ), used by Jesus, and "to taste death" ( $(\beta\cong 2\forall A 2\forall<g\cong\langle)$ ), used by Jews, are equal. It is evident from the context that Jesus talked of a second or eternal death, although the Jews misunderstood this, and thought that He talked of physical death (Bernard, 1928:318; Morris, 1986:469).

In the present context (Heb 2:9), the reference has to do with death in all its fullness, including its physical and spiritual aspects (Delitzsch, 1978:116; Westcott, 1984:47; Moffat, 1917-18:26). "The phrase is a graphic expression of the hard and painful reality of dying" (Behm, 1964:677). This study agrees with the fact that the above phrase refers to physical death for all mortals, and spiritual death for disobedient people who die in sin. However, for Jesus, only the taste of physical death applies, because He is sinless and obedient to His Father, and therefore spiritual death can never be applied to Him, consideration being taken of His essential nature. Besides, it can be understood that the question of death has to do with the theology of God as the God of life. Therefore, some explanations regarding the matter of life and death in the New Testament would be appropriate here. The researcher wants to stress, however, that this is just a brief survey on what other New Testament books say about the concepts of life and death with regard to the theology of God. A new topic or heading is not being introduced, or unrelated material being combined. Rather, important information as far as the concepts of life and death are concerned in the New Testament is being provided.

New Testament references to the significant matter of life are found, as one might expect, in all the books of the New Testament. The doctrine of life is more clearly expressed in the theology of both Paul and John. The New Testament teachings concerning life evidently contain elements from the Old Testament, as well as having late Jewish and Greek origins. Remarkably, they are found in the Synoptic Gospels. The New Testament reveals the fact that the Old Testament looks at life as a “priceless possession” (1980: ad loc; see Mk 8:37).

Jesus is often called upon to use His power, in order that sick or dying men might live (Mk 5:23, *zese* - that she may live; cf. Jn 4:47-54), or even to restore to earthly life those who are already dead (Mk 5:35-43; Lk 7:11-17; Jn 11:1-44). As in the Old Testament, temporal categories are used for life (Lk 1:75; cf. Heb 7:3; Rm 7:1-6), which is regarded as something dynamic, but at the same time bounded and transitory (Ac 17:28; Jas 4:14). It is no mere natural occurrence, but an event which can succeed or fail (Lk. 15:13, *τὸ ζῆναι*, to live dissolutely; 2Tm 3:12, *ζῆναι φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν*, to live a god-fearing life). True life depends on the word of God (Mt 4:4, quoting Dt 8:3), while to live away from God is portrayed as being dead (Lk 15:24, 32). The basic necessities of life, such as food and clothing, are by no means looked down upon or neglected – rather, they are gratefully received as gifts from the Creator (Mt 6:25-34; Lk 12:15). God, who can kill and make alive (Mt 10:28; Rm 4:17), is the absolute or sovereign Creator (Ac 17:25), the Lord (Lk 12:20; Ac 10:42; Jas 4:15), and the embodiment of life - He is the living God (Mt 16:16; 26:63) and the God of the living (1980: ad loc; cf. Mt 22:32; Mk 12:27; Lk 20:38).

After the present life, there is another life to come (Mk 10:30; 1Tim 4:8, “Godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (*τὸ ζῆναι ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι*: *88=βΦ0H*). It is portrayed as “eternal life” (*ζῆναι ἐν αἰῶνι*, Matt. 19:16; par. Mk. 10:17; Lk. 18:18; Matt. 25:46; cf. 2 Tim. 1:10, *ζῆναι ἐν αἰῶνι*: *αἰῶνι*, meaning life and immortality). A person reaches this not by reason of the immortality of the soul—this Greek idea is completely alien to the New Testament—but as a gift from God who resurrects the dead (Mt 22:31-33, parallel to Mk 12:26-27; Lk 20:36-40). The fact that the future life is occasionally referred to by the use of *zoe* alone, i.e. without any qualifying phrase, shows that such life is regarded as real and true, the very life of God Himself (Mt 18:18; Mk 9:43, 45). There is no implication here, however, of the deterioration of earthly life, as found in later Hellenism. On the contrary, man’s relationship to God’s will in this present life determines his destiny in the life to come (Mt 19:16, parallel to Mk 10:17; Lk 18:18; Lk 10:25). Matthew 7:13-23 (cf. Lk 13:23-30) takes up the idea of the two ways found in Deuteronomy 30:19; Jeremiah 21:8, Wisdom and Inter-Testamental literature, Qumran and later Christian writings (cf. Pr 8:20; 9:6; 12:15; 16:25; 2 Ezr 7:7-10 etc.). This close relationship between the present and future life is most visibly portrayed in the parable of the last judgment (Mt 25:31-46): the disobedient will suffer eternal punishment, while the righteous will enter into eternal life (1980: ad loc, cf. Mt 25:46).



Paul's view of life is deeply affected by the resurrection of Christ from the dead (1 Cor 15:4), which, being an accomplished fact, has proved the power of divine life over death (Rm 14:9). The apostle looks at Christ as the very embodiment of God's living power, conquering death and raising the dead (2Cor 13:4). Life means Christ's everlasting life, life after death and beyond the grave (1980: ad loc). Through His resurrection, Christ, the Last Adam, has become the author of a new life for mankind (Rm 5:12-21; 1Cor 15:20-34). The life of Christians is not their own life, but the life of Christ: Christ lives in them (Gal 2:20; Phlp 1:21), they live the life of Christ (2Cor 4:10). Their life is justified by Christ (Rm 5:18), and by His life they will be saved (Rm 5:10). The life of Christ is mediated to Christians neither through power (as with the gnostics), nor through mystic union, but by the word of life (Phlp 2:16; cf. 2Tm 1:10; Tt 1:2-4), and by the creative power of the resurrection Spirit (Rm 8:2, 6, 10-17; 1Cor 15:45). The new Spirit-wrought life of believers (Rm 6:4) does not try to run away from everyday life and into Stoic or gnostic indifference and asceticism. Rather, as Paul regards it, the Christian is to serve his fellow man responsibly, in whatever historical situation he finds himself. Since he no longer lives for himself (Rm 14:7; 2Cor 5:15), but for God (Rm 6:10-14) and Christ (Rm 14:8; 2Cor 5:15), his life shows positive, remarkable results (Gl 5:25, 26) as he follows in the footsteps of Christ and takes up Christ's cross (2Cor 4:9-18). Hence, Paul can make the following contradictory statement: "We are treated . . . as dying, and behold we live" (2Cor 6:8-13), since life comes from and through death. Not living for oneself means having an attitude of love for others (Rm 13:8-10; 14:11-23). It is important to note the datives and synonymous constructions which Paul uses with *zao*, in order to teach that "living for . . ." and "living with . . ." belong to the very structure of life (1980: ad loc). In the believer's new life, there is a tension between present and future, indicative and imperative (Gl 5:25).

His new life already exists, but has not yet been fully manifested (Col 3:3, 4). Christ's resurrection is the pledge of our own future resurrection to an eternal life, where death and all the imperfections of the present creation will be things of the past (Rm. 8:18-39). "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" ( $\sum \cong B \cong 402Z \Phi \cong < 9 \nabla 4$ , 1Cor 15:22; Adam). The new life is not confined to historical time, but points forward to eternal life when the last enemy, death, is defeated (1Cor 15:26, 28; Rm 6:22; Gl 6:8). Paul depicts the passing from temporal to eternal life in terms of cosmic drama, miraculous transformation and rapture (1Th 4:13-17; 1Cor 15:20-34, 35-50, 51-58). In so doing, he is following apocalyptic tradition, using apocalyptic imagery and symbolism. He does not engage, however, in the speculations of late Judaism, but confines himself to metaphorical hints concerning the form which the future life will take. It will be a bodily life (1Cor 15:35-44; 2Cor 5:1-10 - note that the Jews could not conceive of life in a disembodied state; Body). It will involve seeing face to face (1Cor 13:12; cf. 2Cor 5:7), entering into the fullness of righteousness, peace and joy (Rm 14:17), glory ( $* \bar{\nabla}$ , 2Cor 3:8-18) or glorification (Rm 8:17), but above all, being with Christ forever (1980: ad loc, cf. 1Th 4:17; 2Cor 5:8; Phlp 1:23).

The evangelist John presents the Word as being eternal life, even before His incarnation. He has lived eternally with God and for the benefit of men (Jn 1:4; 1 Jn 1:1-4) i.e. He is the source of divine life and power, both in the old and new creation. Through His incarnation, He is the revelation of God, but He not only brings eternal life through His word (Jn 6:68; 10:28; 12:50; 17:2) - He Himself is the true life (1Jn 5:20), as His various "I am" sayings indicate: "I am the bread of life" (Jn 6:35, 48), "the light of the world" (Jn 8:12), "the resurrection and the life" (Jn 11:25), "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6). The pre-existing Son of the eternal Father is sent into the world to give life to men, both by His word and in His own person (1980: ad loc, cf. Jn 6:33; 10:10; 1 Jn 4:9).

The life of God is obtained through faith. He who believes in the Son has life (1Jn 5:12), eternal life (Jn 6:40, 47) - he has already passed from death to life (Jn 5:24; 1Jn 3:14). The eternal life which is granted to believers expresses itself through love (Jn 15:9-17) and joy (Jn 16:20-24). According to 1 Jn 3:14, brotherly love is the criterion for true life: "He who does not love remains in death. We know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren." Although at many times John's view of life corresponds with that of the gnostics, he moves in the opposite direction, for whereas the gnostics transferred eternal life to an almost inaccessible world beyond time and space, John brings it right into the present and anchors it firmly to the word, commandment and person of Christ (Jn 17:3). In possessing this eternal life here and now, believers find death and judgment no longer factors to be reckoned with (Jn 5:24; 11:25), for such life has the seeds of eternity within it (Jn 4:14; 6:27; 12:25). All that remains for Christ's disciples is to see the divine glory (2, TΔ™Φ4< 9←< \* >∇<, Jn 17:24), and their salvation will be complete (Bultmann, 1964:870-871).

The book of Revelations brings together the Son of man tradition with the figure of a slain lamb: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades" (Rv 1:17-18; cf. 1:13-16; 4:9-11). Whereas the Gospel of John, with its Hellenistic background, focuses entirely on the present life, Revelations goes back to Jewish traditions and concerns itself exclusively with the life to come. In the vision of the new Jerusalem, the mythical, early oriental pictures of the tree of life and the water of life, familiar from the story of the Garden of Eden (Gn 2:9-17), reoccur as images of the fullness of life in the new city of God (Rv 22:2-14, 19; 21:6; 22:1, 17). The vision of the new heaven and earth is the most wide-ranging in its promises: the last enemy, death, will be defeated (cf. Paul, 1Cor 15:26), and our eternal life with God will be utter perfection: "God Himself will be with them; He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away" (Bultmann, 1964:870-871, cf. Rv 21:3-4).



The New Testament idea of death is in line with the old Jewish view. The Hellenistic influences of Inter-Testamental Judaism have scarcely had any effect. For the most part, a consistent view is maintained. Whenever the term  $\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota\sigma$  (mortal) appears, it shows that the mortality of man is taken as a self-evident fact. Man lives in the shadow of death (Mt 4:16; Is 9:1, Septuagint). God, the source of all life, is the only one to whom immortality belongs (1Tm 6:16), whereas man has to live out his whole life with the fear of death (Heb. 2:15). As in Judaism, death is always seen as the death of an individual, and the possibility of viewing death as relative, by referring to the continuing life of a community, is foreign to New Testament thought. This being the case, significance is naturally attached to the question of what causes death. The answer to this question is briefly provided by Paul in a pregnant statement: "The wages of sin is death" (Rm 6:23). In terms of this view, the devil (Satan) can be seen as the one who has power over death (Heb 2:14), although, of course, it is God Himself who can destroy both body and soul in hell (1980: ad loc, cf. Mt 10:28; Rv 2:23). For the New Testament, the question of the cause of death is not a speculative one. Indeed, it is in connection with death that we are made most clearly aware that the New Testament is not interested in scientific problems. The question must be interpreted in light of its answer. In this way, one can see that Paul does not reflect upon death as a biological phenomenon, but as a theological one, in the sense that, in the universality of death, the universality of man's guilt and need for redemption become evident. When man turns his back upon God, "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Rm 4:17), he cuts himself off from the root of his life and becomes subject to death. The phenomenon of death reveals, in this interpretation, the objective state of man in his lifetime. Living by what is created, by natural things over which he exercises control, he has cut himself off from the source of true life and thus given himself up to worthlessness (1980: ad loc). In his "progress" towards death, man can catch sight of the basic condition of his life. He lives as a sinner in death. Death is thus the power dominating his life, and to that extent, it is a present reality. Spiritual and physical death, inextricably bound together, constitute the reality of a life in sin. This leads the sinner to cry: "Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom 7:24). In the same way, the father of the prodigal son calls his son dead (" $\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota\sigma$ ", Lk 15:24, 32). In the fourth Gospel, death and life are also present realities of existence, depending on how man responds to Jesus as the divine crisis of his existence (Jn 5:24; 8:51; 11:25). He who cuts himself off from the church, in which the life-bringing word is proclaimed, is at the point of death (1980: ad loc, cf. Rv 3:2). It is Paul who reflects most on the link between the guilty state of man and his mortal destiny. After setting out, in Romans 1-4, a number of arguments to provide evidence that all men, without exception, have fallen into sin and thus become subject to death, and that they are called to life in Christ, he goes on in Romans 5:12-21 to further develop these themes, based on the Adam-Christ typology. The life which has been brought about by Christ is made to form an analogy to the fact that "sin came into the world by one man and death through sin" (Rm 5:12; cf. 1Cor 15:21-22). Paul explains that death has spread to all men "because all have sinned", thus guarding against the idea that

death as a result of sin is simply a fate that we have inherited. He emphasises its active character, and the fact that death is punishment for each man's sin. This does not, however, alter the important statement that all men, without exception, are subject to sin and death. Hence, salvation and life, which is victory over death, are not to be expected as a result of man's own efforts, but only through an act of God's grace, coming from outside man and appropriated by him (1980: ad loc).

In his rebellion against God, man is always seeking life through his own works, and as a result, whenever he avails himself of the law as a means of salvation, he only finds death. For Paul, therefore, law, sin and death are all on the same level. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law" (1Cor 15:56). Therefore, for the man who tries to find life on the basis of law, death becomes a present reality: "When the commandment came sin revived and I died" (Rm 7:9-12). If death is viewed as the historical result of human sin, the "natural" connection of human death to that of other living creatures poses the question as to why non-human living creatures are likewise subject to mortality. To this question, Paul, in line with contemporary Judaism (Gn 12:5), replies that "creation" has been subjected, not by its own will, but as a result of human sin, to futility and a transient state. It now waits to be set free from death, together with the "children of God" (Rm 8:19-22). Thus, Paul does not even regard death in the world of nature as a "natural" phenomenon (1980: ad loc).

In accordance with all that has been said, it is clear that, in the New Testament, death is not looked at as a natural phenomenon, but as an historical event, showing clearly the sinful condition of man. In this historical sense, death is seen as a power which enslaves man during the course of his life (Heb 2:15). Hence, it sometimes occurs in a quasi-personal form (Rv 20:14). The possibility of removing the fear of death by means of intellectual insight concerning its inescapability, or through a resolute or heroic act of dying, is therefore kept out of New Testament thought. The effect of the latter means would be to intensify sin. This is because it would mean that a man was trying to earn salvation by his own effort, even at the moment of dying, when death itself spells out a definitive judgment of that entire attitude. Statements about the death of Jesus constitute the focal point of the story of salvation in the New Testament. They are nearly always found in the New Testament in relation to statements about His resurrection and the justification or new life of those who believe (1980: ad loc).

Following the above explanation concerning the question of life and death, there is a need to continue with the discussion on the substitutionary nature of the death of Jesus. The context seems to suggest that the writer used the preposition  $\cdot B\Xi\Delta$ , with the connotation “in place of” or “instead of”. This thought in connection with the substitutionary importance of  $\cdot B\Xi\Delta$  in Hebrews 2:9 is supported by Delitzsch (1978:421); Owen (1968:360-361) and Lenski (1966:77). In becoming the target of divine wrath against human sins, Christ was merely doing vicarious work, not only on “our behalf” or “with a view to our good”, but “in our place” (Macleod, 1989:424-25). Christ stood in the place ( $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \equiv: TM<$ ) of those who were sinners - “He who knew no sin” was made a sinner in place of sinners. If interpreted in this manner, this passage forms an “interchange” (cf. Hooker, 1971), and poses the question as to whether or not this is an instance of “vicarious suffering of Judgment”. It also displays the influence of the LXX Isaiah 53, specifically verse 9: “He did no iniquity” ( $\square<.: \forall< \rightleftharpoons 6 fB\Xi.: 0\Phi\gamma<$ ). As the suffering servant took upon Himself the judgment that was destined for sinners (Is 53:4), Christ was made a sinner in the place of sinners. Even if it is as transparent as in the case of 1Peter 2:21-25 (cf. Breytenbach, 2005a), there are clear similarities between 2Corinthians 5:21 and the Greek text of the book of Isaiah (Breytenbach, 2005:169).

In exactly the same way, Galatians 3:13 formulates the idea of “interchange”. Again, Christ is described here as the one who took the place of Paul and those that he incorporates in his “we”. He and other Jewish Christians were “under the curse of the law” (Gl 3:10). In Galatians 3:13, the crucifixion of Christ is described in the language of the Greek Bible. Paul seems to follow the Jewish interpretation of Deuteronomy 21:23, and uses the phrase “everyone who hangs from a tree” ( $B\Box H \textcircled{R} 6\Delta\gamma:\zeta:\gamma<\rightleftharpoons H fB\mathfrak{R} \Pi\beta\delta\rightleftharpoons\Lambda$ ) to refer to Jesus’ crucifixion. Christ became a curse “for us” ( $0\Lambda\Delta\Phi\vartheta\in H\dots(\gamma< : \bar{\gamma}<\rightleftharpoons H \Downarrow B\infty\Delta \equiv: TM< 6\forall\vartheta\zeta\Delta\forall$ ). He was cursed by God. The consequence of being cursed “for us” is described by Paul through the “redemption” metaphor (cf. Tolmie, 2005).

Christ redeemed those who did not keep all that was written in the book of the law and did not do them (cf. Dt 27:26). The crucifixion of Christ, as a cursed person, is known to be in the place of those under the curse of the law, in order to be set free from the curse placed on those who have not observed the law. The blessing He had, as the seed of Abraham (Gl 3:16), came to be the blessing of nations (Gl 3:14). The  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \equiv: TM<$  phrase cannot be “explained in the light of Deuteronomy 21:23 as inter-text”. It appears rather in pre-Pauline tradition, upon which this study will focus later (see Lakoff & Johnson, 1985). The effect of Christ’s death is, inter alia, described either by the Greek phrases  $\Downarrow B\Xi\Delta$  or  $B\gamma\Delta.:$  with genitive, or  $*4\zeta$  with accusative. This means that the way in which the Apostle Paul understood the effect of Christ’s “dying for” or “being delivered for” must be viewed in such a manner that it can be described by any of the above cases, since Paul uses them interchangeably.

The relation described by the action in the verb, and the result or effect brought about by this action can be expressed by the phrases  $\downarrow BE\Delta$  or  $B\gamma\Delta$ : with genitive, or  $*4\zeta$  with accusative. This is the case in the sense of “for”, “to the benefit of”. This  $*4\zeta$  plus the accusative can have this meaning for Paul, which is clear from 1Corinthians 8:11 and 2Corinthians 8:9. It is clear that he uses  $\downarrow BE\Delta$  in this sense in Romans 5:7. Those who copied his letters had no doubt about replacing his  $\downarrow BE\Delta$  with  $B\gamma\Delta$ ., in the sense of “pro”. This is evident in the *varia lectionis* to Galatians 1:4 and 1Thessalonians 5:10 (Breytenbach, 2005:171).

The explanation of the consequences of Christ’s death  $\downarrow B\infty\Delta \equiv :^{\text{TM}}\langle$  by means of final clauses in 1Thessalonians 5:10 ( $\zeta\langle\forall\dots \square:\forall \Phi\cdot\langle \forall\leftrightarrow\vartheta( .Z\Phi T:\gamma\langle$ ) and 2Corinthians 5:15 ( $\zeta\langle\forall \cong \supset .^{\text{TM}}\langle\vartheta\gamma H :06E94 f\forall\Lambda\vartheta\cong\rho H .^{\text{TM}}\Phi4\langle \square88\square \vartheta( \downarrow B\infty\Delta \forall\cdot\vartheta^{\text{TM}}\langle \square B\cong 2\forall\langle \bar{\zeta}94$ ), clearly shows that Christ died for a specific purpose. 1Corinthians 15:3b cites another pre-Pauline tradition, saying that “Christ died for our sins”. From this expression, one can learn three things:

- It is the “interpretation of the death of Christ, the Messiah, the King of the Jews.
- Albeit that the linguistic pattern  $\square B\cong 2\langle^{\circ}\Phi6\gamma4\langle \downarrow BE\Delta \vartheta4\cong H$  is deeply rooted within Greek tradition, the phrase has its own peculiarities”. In the Greek tradition, “dying for” can be to the benefit of humans or “a better and great ideal”, for instance, the  $B \bar{8}4H$ . It is certain that “our sins” in 1Corinthians 15:3b does not fit into this model or example, and must therefore be explained differently.
- Thirdly, the phrase “for our sins” has the effect of removing the consequences of sins of those who were identified by “us”.

Given the fact that this study has recently dealt with this theme *in extensor* (cf. Breytenbach, 2003), it should be enough to note that the “uncommon combination of the  $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ -phrase with  $\epsilon\zeta\eta\theta$  in 1Corinthians 15:3b assumes that the Greek tradition of “dying for” has been summed up by the Israelite-Jewish concept, namely that death removes the consequences of sins. This is often translated as “atonement” or “expiation” by English-speaking theologians, but, with the exception of Romans 3:25, Paul never uses a Greek equivalent for such a pattern. In 1Corinthians 15:3b, he refrains from providing an explanation of “the formulaic” phrase in such a sense. Two reasons can be mentioned for this: Paul simply quoting the tradition and the  $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ -phrase does not imply a cultic background when describing the effect of the verb  $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ . The “anacoluthon” at the end of  $\epsilon\zeta\eta\theta$  in Romans 8:3 could indicate that Paul draws on a tradition that also appears in Galatians 4:4 and in the Johannine tradition (Breytenbach, 2005:173, cf. Jn 3:16 and 1Jn 4:9). The emphasis in Romans 8:3, however, is on the expression  $\iota\kappa\lambda\lambda\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  . God punished sin in the incarnate Son, the verb that signals the legal symbolism by which the sending of the Son is explained (cf. BDAG, s.v.). The direct purpose of the passing of the sentence is given by the phrase  $\text{καταρτίζουσα}$  , which can be rendered as “concerning sins”, meaning “to take away the consequences of sins” (cf. BDAG, s.v.).



In this case, it is possible to infer that Paul's use of terminology shows a combination of imagery from the realm of the expiation of sins (cf. Breytenbach, 1989a; 1993:73-75) and legal terminology. The  $\text{By}\Delta\mathcal{R} \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}.$ :  $\forall H$  points to the suppression of the consequences of sin. As in the case of  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \mathcal{G}^{\text{TM}} < \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}4^{\text{TM}} <$  in 1Corinthians 15:3b, no definite terminology of expiation is used. Given the text, this study will not introduce it. According to Galatians 1:4a, Jesus delivered Himself "for our sins":  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \Delta^{\text{TM}} < \forall: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}4^{\text{TM}} <$  (Aland et al, 1983). The text of 1Corinthians 15:3b fuses the tradition of the expiation of sins with the Greek tradition of "dying for". In the case of Galatians 1:4, this may also be applicable (Breytenbach, 2005:174). One more possibility with regard to Paul's words can still be considered. Three reasons might lead one to presuppose that he uses traditional language: the affinity between Galatians 1:4a and Romans 4:25a, which is considered to be a traditional parallel, the use of the verb ( $B\forall\Delta\gamma\forall$ -)  $\forall: * \cong: 4$ , which in both cases could render the meaning of LXX Isaiah 53:12, and the verb could also point to early Christian traditions. Jesus was betrayed ( $B\forall\Delta\gamma\forall$ -:  $* \cong: \Delta < \forall 4$ ) by Judas (1Cor 11:23; Mk 14:11, 18, 21, 41) and given to the Romans for punishment (Mk 15:1, 10, 15; Ac 3:13). Nevertheless, one important difference exists between Galatians 1:4 and Romans 4:25a on the one hand, and Isaiah 53 on the other. In accordance with LXX Isaiah 53:12, the  $P\Delta I\mathcal{I}Z$  of the servant was delivered unto death ( $B\forall\Delta\gamma* \bar{2}0 \gamma\mathcal{O}H \mathcal{2}\zeta < \forall\mathcal{G}\cong <$ ). He was delivered because of the iniquities of the people:  $*4 \square \mathcal{G}\square H \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}.$ :  $\forall H \forall \leftrightarrow \mathcal{G}^{\text{TM}} < B\forall\Delta\gamma* \bar{2}0$  (Breytenbach, 2005:174). The sins of the community thus brought about the death of the servant. Could Galatians 1:4a be interpreted in the same manner? Did Jesus Christ give Himself "because of our sins"? If this is so, then this interpretation could also apply to Romans 4:25a, where the parallel with LXX Isaiah 53:12 is clearer:  $^{\text{TM}}H$  (sc.  $[0\Phi\cong -H \textcircled{R} 5\beta\Delta\cong H)$   $*4 \square \mathcal{G}\square H \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}.$ :  $\forall H \forall \leftrightarrow \mathcal{G}^{\text{TM}} < B\forall\Delta\gamma* \bar{2}0$ . In light of 1Corinthians 15:3b; Romans 8:3 and Romans 4:25b ( $6\forall\mathcal{R}$  "( $\Xi\Delta\mathcal{2}0 *4 \square \mathcal{G} \leftarrow < *46\forall: T\Phi4 < \cong: ^{\text{TM}} <$ ), however, it appears as if Paul himself understood the tradition behind Romans 4:25a, and thus Galatians 1:4a, in the sense of "concerning our sins/ trespasses" means that the deliverance removed the consequences of sin. This rendering seems clear when one considers Galatians 1:4ab, "to set us free from the present evil age" (Breytenbach, 2005:175). Therefore, as in the case of  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \mathcal{G}^{\text{TM}} < \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}4^{\text{TM}} < \cong: ^{\text{TM}} <$  in 1Corinthians 15:3b and  $\text{By}\Delta\mathcal{R} \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}.$ :  $\forall H$  in Romans 8:3, no terminology of expiation is used in Galatians 1:4 and Romans 4:25a. The  $\text{By}\Delta\mathcal{R}/\leftrightarrow B\infty\Delta \mathcal{G}^{\text{TM}} < \square: \forall\Delta\mathcal{G}4^{\text{TM}} < \cong: ^{\text{TM}} <$  or  $*4 \square \mathcal{G} \square B\forall\Delta\gamma\forall B\mathcal{G}\phi: \forall\mathcal{G}\forall \cong: ^{\text{TM}} <$  phrases indicate that the consequences of sin have been abolished. Neither they nor the ruling or main verb ( $B\forall\Delta\gamma\forall$ -)  $*: *T: 4$  express a specific cultic background in relation to which the abrogation of the consequences of sin has to be interpreted. The wider context of the interpretation of the death of Christ (1Cor 15:3b), respectively of His self-deliverance (Gl 1:4), or being delivered (Rm 4:25a), or His mission (Rm 8:3), has it that the death on the cross separates the sequence between human sin and death (cf. Rm 3:23). Therefore, it might be said that this position of pre-Pauline tradition understands the death of Christ as being "concerning sins", thus removing the consequences of sins or trespasses. The prepositional phrases

with sins or trespasses do not show a specific background. In the case of those governed by the verb ( $B\forall\Delta\forall$ )  $*\cdot\cdot\cdot*T:4$ , the influence of LXX Isaiah 53:12 cannot be ruled out. Galatians 2:20 and Romans 8:32 take us beyond the analysis of achievable or viable pre-Pauline phrases. The “traditional formulaic language underlying” Galatians 1:4 and Romans 4:25 is used in both Galatians 2:20 and Romans 8:32.

Because Paul is referring to this tradition, he puts words together more freely and brings in  $\Lambda\supseteq\bar{H}$  as a subject or object of  $B\forall\Delta\forall*\cdot\cdot\cdot*T:4$ , probably indicating the further influence of LXX Isaiah 53 (cf. the  $B\forall4*\cdot\cdot\cdot\equiv<$  of verse 2). The Greek text of Isaiah 53 is worded in such a way that there is no reason to introduce the idea of the cultic expiation of sins in its interpretation of the suffering of the servant. Uniformly stated, the phrase  $\delta\forall\mathcal{R}\ \delta\beta\Delta4\equiv H\ B\forall\Delta E*T\delta\gamma<\ \forall\leftrightarrow\theta\epsilon<\ \mathcal{R}\forall\phi H\ \square:\forall\Delta\mathcal{R}:\ \forall H\equiv:TM<$  in verses 6-7 has to be interpreted in light of the  $*4\zeta$ -phrases in the verses that come before, so that it should be rendered: “But he was wounded on account of our sins, and was bruised because of our iniquities... and the Lord gave him up because of our sins”. He felt the pain of punishment for their sake (cf. Janowski, 1993).

Verse 12 supports this rendering (cf. *supra*). As a result, whoever wants to interpret Galatians 1:4; 2:20; Romans 4:25 and 8:32 “in the light of the suffering of the servant of Isaiah 53, has to follow Isaiah and understand the sins or the transgressions of the ‘us’ as the reason why the Son has been delivered or handed himself over”. This is not an expiation of sins, but rather vicarious suffering. In accordance with the  $*4\zeta$  with an accusative in Romans 4:25a, one has to consider the alternative, that Paul was acquainted with the interpretation of the deliverance of the Son with regard to the Greek text of Isaiah 53 - a tradition in terms of which the crucifixion was understood as an act in which Jesus was (passively) handed over because of the transgressions of the community of believers, an idea which occurs in 1Peter 2:21-25 and 3:18 (cf. Breytenbach, 2005a).

In the texts dealt with above, the death of Christ was considered to be intended to benefit those who worded these texts - “this is my body for you” (1Cor 11:24- $\downarrow B\infty\Delta\ \downarrow:TM<$ ), “Christ died for our sins” (1Cor 15:3- $\downarrow B\infty\Delta\ \mathcal{R}TM<\ \square:\forall\Delta\mathcal{R}TM<$ ), the Lord Jesus “gave Himself up for our sins” (Gl 1:4- $\downarrow B\infty\Delta\ \mathcal{R}TM<\ \square:\forall\Delta\mathcal{R}TM<\ \equiv:TM<$ ), the Lord Jesus was delivered because of/for our transgressions (Rm 4:25a- $*4\ \mathcal{R}\square\ B\forall\Delta\forall B\mathcal{R}\phi:\forall\mathcal{R}\forall\ \equiv:TM<$ ), “God made Christ who knew no sin a sinner in our place” ( $\downarrow B\infty\Delta\ \equiv:TM<-2\text{Cor } 5:21$ ), “Christ became a cursed in our place” (Gl- $\downarrow B\infty\Delta\ \equiv:TM<$ ). When looking at the passages in which the  $\square B\cong 2<\downarrow\Phi\delta\gamma4<\ \downarrow B\epsilon\Delta\ \mathcal{R}4<\equiv H$  appears in a Pauline sentence, not clearly identified as pre-Pauline tradition, three observations can be made:

- In the first place, the death of Christ is described as an act of love by Himself (2Cor 5:14) or by God (Rm 5:8).

- Secondly, the  $\Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta \equiv: TM <$  is enlarged into  $\Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta B_{\zeta} < \vartheta T <$  (2Cor 5:14-15) or  $\Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta \square \Phi \gamma \exists TM <$  (Rm 5:6), or the brother for whom Christ died is mentioned (1Cor 8:11 \*4 ζ @ <, Romans 14:15  $\Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta \equiv \Rightarrow$ ).
- Thirdly, the qualification  $B \gamma \Delta \mathcal{R} / \Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta \vartheta TM < \square: \forall \Delta \vartheta 4 TM < \equiv: TM <$  is absent. Paul merely asserts that Christ died (e.g. 1Th 4:14; Gl 2:21) or that Christ “died for us”, without any further qualification (cf. 1Th 5:10- $B \gamma \Delta \mathcal{R} / \Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta \equiv: TM <$ ).

The phrase without the  $\vartheta TM < \square: \forall \Delta \vartheta 4 TM <$  in 1Corinthians 15:3b needs to be viewed as a shorter tradition, although this might be not correct. The versions in 1Corinthians 8:11 and Romans 14:15 seem to point out that Paul used the formula in such a way that he interpreted the crucifixion as Christ dying for persons. This interpretation uses the Greek tradition of someone dying for someone else. Paul knew this motive, as can be seen in Romans 6:7 (for more detail, cf. Breytenbach, 2003).

Earlier on, this study argued that 1Corinthians 15:3b digresses significantly from the “linguistic pattern and the conceptual background of the  $\square B \equiv 2 < \downarrow \Phi \delta \gamma 4 < \Downarrow B \exists \Delta \vartheta 4 < \equiv H$  phrase. “Paul’s reception of the traditional formula and the way in which he understood it, can be illustrated by referring to Romans 5:8”. The “*genitivus absolutus*” characterises in what condition the  $\equiv: \gamma \delta H$  were when Christ died “for” us “as we were still sinners”. Paul therefore departs from the traditional view that “Christ died for our sins” (1Cor 15:3b) to Christ having died “for us sinners”. This suggests why he could begin his deliberations in Romans 5:6 with “as we were still weak, Christ died for the ungodly” ( $O \Delta 4 \Phi \vartheta \in H \dots \Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta \square \Phi \gamma \exists TM < \square B \exists 2 \forall < \gamma <$ ). With this knowledge, one can easily go to 2Corinthians 5:14, where it is stated: “one died for all” ( $\gamma \supset H \Downarrow B_{\infty} \Delta B_{\zeta} < \vartheta T < \square B \exists 2 \forall < \gamma <$ ).

According to Paul, all human beings are sinners (Rm 3:9, 23; 5:12d). In terms of this anthropology, he had to widen the understanding of the result or outcome of Christ's death. Christ did not only die for the sins of His followers, but He died "for them as being sinners and therefore the ungodly, for all, for humankind". The death of Christ should in this way be understood as being profitable to all sinful human beings. This "theological insight" could be viewed as the compelling force behind Paul's mission to the Gentiles. Before considering this remark any further, it is incumbent on this study to look at the (B∇Δ∇) ∗.: ∗T:4∇BEΔ 94<≡H phrases. In these examples, the tradition in Galatians 1:4 and Romans 4:25a was worded in such a way that "Christ was given up because of our transgressions" (Rm 4:25a), or that Jesus Christ gave Himself up for our sins (Gl 1:4). In his receiving of this tradition, Paul excluded the word "sins" and shortened it to: God gave up His own Son "for all of us" (Rm 8:32)-∇B∞Δ ≡:™< Bζ<T<. "Be it that the legal context of the deliverance of Jesus unto the Romans still echoes in the context", the question "in what way was the deliverance 'for all of us'? should be answered in congruence with the whole of Romans 5-8". The Son was delivered for "all of us" as sinners. In order to grasp the effect that the death of Christ had on sinners, one must go back to the "dying for" texts in Paul's letters.

Rereading the "backdrop" of the Greek idea of "dying for", 2Corinthians 5:14 implies an unfamiliar result (□Δ∇) of the death of one for all (γ>H ∇B∞Δ Bζ<T< □BE2∇<γ<). They are all dead (≡∇ Bζ<9γH □BE2∇<≡<). Christ's death for the ungodly or humankind is described as an act of love, but it does result in redemption, although not in the death of humankind. In terms of the deliverance tradition, Paul indicates a similar consequence, as can be deduced from Galatians 2:20. The Son of God delivered Himself for Paul (∇B∞Δ f:≡→) with the result that Paul "died". How can this be understood (Breytenbach, 2005)?



Before pursuing this argument, the researcher will provide a short summary. Paul acquired the tradition that Christ died “for us”, or that He was delivered “concerning our sins”. He promoted the interpretation of the death on the cross in four ways. Firstly, he personalised the tradition. Christ died for persons: the Son of God delivered Himself for Paul. In the second instance, he universalised it. Christ died for us “when we were still sinners”; he therefore died “for the ungodly”, that is, “for all”. In the third place, this death is an expression of love. Lastly, the death of Christ results in salvation (Breytenbach, 2005; Rm 5:8; 2Cor 5:15). At this point, one needs to go back to the passages in Galatians 3:13 and 2Corinthians 5:21, and the notion that the status of Christ and “us” as cursed and sinners were interchangeable. God “cursed Christ, made Him who knew no sin a sinner,  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \equiv: TM<$  “. In terms of these passages, the texts that came before, for instance, Galatians 2:20 and 2Corinthians 5:14 respectively, can only be interpreted as follows: the Son gave Himself up in Paul’s place (Gl 2:20) and if one dies in the place of all, all are dead (2Cor 5:14). Romans 5:8 supports this interpretation even more: Christ died as a sinner in the place of  $\equiv: \gamma \rho H$  “when we were still sinners”. Words such as “substitution” or “representation” are frequently used to describe this process of interchangeability, but one should refrain from bringing “traditional dogmatic” ideas into the interpretation of  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta$  phrasing in 2Corinthians 5:14, Galatians 2:20 and Romans 5:6, 8. It is clear that Christ took over the position in which those who became beneficiaries of His death had been. If one concludes by saying that the death of Christ “for all” has the consequence of the death of ungodly humankind, one still has to investigate one’s original question further (Breytenbach, 2005). How did Paul regard this as being viable? In attempting to answer this question, this study can only try to explain its perception of his logic. The  $(B\forall\Delta\forall-)*.: *T:4 \Downarrow BE\Delta 94<\equiv H$  phrase might be of help. As du Toit (2005) re-emphasises,  $B\forall\Delta\forall*.: *T:4 9.: <\forall 94<4$  is a “forensic” term indicating the delivering of some- one to be punished. The passionate accounts in the Gospels constitute the backdrop to Paul’s interpretation of the deliverance of Christ, the Son of God. He was delivered to be punished. The “forensic overtones” in Galatians 2:20 and Romans 8:3, 32 are clear. Paul views the death of Christ as the consequence of the judgment by God. He cursed Christ  $\Downarrow B\infty\Delta \equiv: TM<$  (Gl 3:13); He judged sin in the incarnated Son of God (Rm 8:3). The crucifixion needs to be understood as a “prolepsis of the eschatological judgment by God”. He handed over and judged Christ, instead of the ungodly, instead of all. According to the “dying for” tradition, Paul introduces “an awkward twist to the Greek motif (cf. Breytenbach, 2003).

Those Christ died for, are not saved by His death, as “Alkestis’ husband was saved by her death”. Paul does not share in the opinion of Caiaphas, who anticipated Jesus’ death to save the  $\clubsuit 2<\equiv H$  (Jn 11:50-51). In 2Corinthians 5:14, Paul clearly expresses his view: all have died. Here, Paul implies that Christ’s death includes the whole of humankind. The same line of argument is seen in Romans 8:3: God sent His only Son  $f< @:\equiv: T:\forall 94 \Phi\forall\Delta 6\in H \square:\forall\Delta 9.: \forall H$ . He represents humankind when he is made a sinner (2Cor 5:21), a curse (Gl 3:13) handed over for punishment on their behalf.

In Hebrews 2:5-9, the writer stresses that man does not yet have sovereignty, and he implies that this is because of sin. As his vicar, Jesus bore the curse of sin upon Himself in His self-sacrifice, and because of that sacrifice “man’s ultimate sovereignty over the earth is assured”. Such representation presumes that a substitutionary significance be contained in the preposition  $\cdot BEA$  (MacLeod, 1989:425). Scholars such as Lührmann (1974:434), Westcott (1984:47) and Riesenfeld (1972:510), to name but a few, prefer a “representative sense” (“for in behalf of”, “for the sake of”) for  $\cdot BEA$  in Hebrews 2:9, but not a substitutionary sense.

Just as the Old Testament priest offered sacrifices “for” the people, Jesus, in the same way, offered Himself in death “for the sake of men”. Davie, Riesenfeld and Robertson mention two main objections:

- The writer of Hebrews would have used  $\zeta < \vartheta$ .: if he had intended a substitutionary meaning. In the time of the New Testament, the use of  $\zeta < \vartheta$ .: was sensibly reduced, even though it must be said that the writer of Hebrews also used it in Hebrews 12:2, 16 (Davie, 1967:90). Furthermore, in the writer’s use of  $\zeta < \vartheta$ .: in Hebrews 12:2, 16, the meaning is that of “in exchange for”, not “instead of” Therefore, he could have used  $\beta BEA$ , because it has two meanings, namely that it conveys the idea that Christ died both “for our sake” and “in our stead” (Davie, 1967:90). As Riesenfeld (1972:512) agrees, the meaning of “on behalf of” is very close to “in the place of” or “instead of...”. Robertson (1934) also agreed with this, and so does this study.
- The writer could not have signified that “Jesus died instead of every one, for all men still die”. The requirements to die are related to Old Testament covenant stipulations which defined the relationship between YWH and His chosen people, the Israelites, in terms of blessings in the case of obedience, and curses (including physical death) in the case of disobedience. The culprit was condemned to die by the divine hand or the hands of the community of Israelites by means of stoning, without pity. This was also considered as a means to purge the community of God’s covenantal people of any defilement, in order to avoid contamination of the community and to stop the spread and intensification of evil (1980: ad loc).

The book of Deuteronomy 7:9-10, speaking to the Israelites, says: “ Know that the Lord God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations with those who keep His commands. But those who hate Him He will repay to their face by destruction; He will not be slow to repay to their face those who hate Him”. Deuteronomy 27:26 indicates that the covenant breaker is a cursed person. Deuteronomy 13, as well as Leviticus 19-20, provides various laws and requirements for the death penalty in the event of their transgression. A prophet or dreamer who deceives God’s people and leads them into idolatry must die. This does not spare a person’s own bother, son, daughter

or wife, if it is found that they are encouraging Israel to worship other gods. They were then entitled to die. When it was reported that evil men or women were dwelling in a certain city, the city, together with its inhabitants, was completely destroyed after a thorough investigation. (Dt 13:15-18).

The covenantal stipulations empowered Israel's community to put to death, by stoning, any person who was considered to be cursed according to these stipulations (Dt 13; Lv 19-20). The Old Testament covenantal requirements to observe, keep and practise the words of the covenant, inevitably resulted in an obligation to die in the event of non-observance, breaking or a failure to practise them. The people, the Israelites, had God's legally prescribed permission to remove evil-doers from the community, by putting them to death. The same procedure and reason seems to apply to the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus was condemned to die as a political rebel because of the charge "King of the Jews". Luke 23:2 clearly indicates that Jews accused Jesus, saying: "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposed payment of tax to Caesar and claimed to be Christ, a King". Before the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin, Jesus was accused of claiming the ability to destroy the Temple of God (Mt 26:61).

During Jesus' trial, the high priest, whose name is not specified, charged Jesus under oath by the living God, asking whether or not He is Christ, the Son of God. At His affirmative response and reference to His position and future glory, He was charged with blasphemy. Requiring the opinion of the people, the community of the Israelites present at that time unanimously agreed that Jesus deserved to die for His blasphemy (Mt 26:64-65; Lk 22:66-71). Without going into much detail in relation to the Old Testament theology of the covenant and its requirements, the few scriptural passages mentioned above indicate that Jesus' claim to be able to destroy the Temple of God, as well as His affirmation of being Christ and the Son of God, in the ears, minds and rigorous beliefs of the Jews present at that time was a grave profanation, blasphemy and deception, and the claimant only deserved to die as a cursed individual, in accordance with the requirements of the Old Testament covenantal theology. Therefore, the community of the Jewish people represented at the Sanhedrin could do nothing else except remove Jesus or put Him to death, in the same way as any other cursed individual, prophet, dreamer, criminal or evil-doer who has misled God's people, according to Deuteronomy 13.

In terms of the objections mentioned by Davie and Riesenfeld, however, the objection by Montefiore (1964:58) seems to miss the point completely, since Jesus' death was more than a physical death, in that He took up the curse of death in both its physical and spiritual dimensions. In other words, He died in order to spare others from experiencing a second death. In Hebrews, therefore, Jesus differentiates Himself from a priest who offers a sacrificial victim "for" the people, as He is Himself the sacrificial victim who dies in the place of sinners (Owen, 1968:360-361). This study is of the opinion that, even though Jesus died instead of sinners, only those sinners that believe in His sacrificial work and

practise it are the ones who will not feel the sting of the second death. In this regard, Revelations 20:6 reads:” Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years”.

The fact that Christ’s death was substitutionary is referred to in other instances (see the “for us” section above). In Hebrews 7: 27, Christ’s sacrificial offering is differentiated from those of the Leviticus high priests, who vicariously offered animal sacrifices as substitutes ( $\cdot B\bar{E}\Delta$ ) for the payment of sins. It is quite clear that the writer of Hebrews considers the death of Jesus to be substitutionary, since he maintains that He did not offer the extraneous blood of animals, but the complete offering of Himself:  $\infty \forall \Delta \bar{g} \bar{\zeta}$  (Schrenk, 1865:280). This also appears in Hebrews 9:12-14 - Christ did not go into the heavenly Holy of Holies through the medium or merit of extraneous animal substitutes, but through the merit of  $*4\zeta$  , “His own blood” (MacLeod, 1989:426).

In contrast to the Old Testament priests “He offered Himself” ( $\infty \forall \Delta \bar{g} \bar{\zeta}$ ). The same idea is found in Hebrews 10:19-20, where readers are ensured that they have access to the Holy of holies through the medium or virtue of the blood of Jesus (Buchanan, 1972:168). This access has been obtained through the substitutionary death of Jesus (MacLeod, 1989:426). Through the medium of His flesh or substitutionary bodily sacrifice, the way to fellowship with God is made available (Meeter, 1916:147 – the reason for this lies in covenantal practices in the Old Testament). At this stage, there is a need to understand how the sacrifice of Jesus was essentially penal.

### 10.2.3 The sacrifice of Jesus was penal

In alluding to Isaiah 53:12, the writer of Hebrews points out that Christ was sacrificed “to bear the sins of many”. In the LXX of Isaiah 53:11,  $\zeta < \forall N\bar{E}\Delta T$  is the translation of the Hebrew word in Isaiah 53:12. The Hebrew verb in Isaiah 53:11 means “to bear a heavy load of guilt”. The Hebrew verb in Isaiah 53:12 means “to bear guilt or punishment”. These afflictions of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah are of “a vicarious atoning” type (Delitzsch, 1978:341). Christ was offered “to bear the sins of many” (Heb 9:28,  $\therefore H \bar{g} \bar{B} \cong 88^{TM} < \Pi, \bar{\rho} < \square: \forall \Delta \bar{g} \bar{\zeta}: \forall H$ ).  $\therefore H$  with the infinitive can stand for purpose or result. Usually, these categories seem to merge in that “a result may be a designed consequence” (Harris, 1975-78:1187).

In the context of Hebrews 9:26-28, the writer is attempting to prove that Christ’s sacrifice cannot be repeated, arguing this on the grounds of Jesus’ humanity. Men have one life to live and then they die, at which time judgment comes into the world to come (Bruce, 1980:520). Thus, it stands with Christ: He can die but only once (Hughes, 1977:386-87), and at His second coming, “when He shall deliver His people from judgment” (MacLeod, 1989:427). Westcott (1984:278) and Davidson (1882:188), to name but a few, believe that men die once and come into judgment, but Christ died once and will return as a judge.

However, Newell (1945:324) has argued differently: men die once and come into judgment. Christ died once and faced judgment, that is, as a sin bearer. “Christ on the cross met the double appointment: not only physical death, but death under divine judgment ....” There is a clear distinction between Christ and other men, however. Generally speaking, death has been intended for men as a penalty for their sins (Büschel, 1965:92-93). Christ, the spotless, sinless sacrificial victim (Heb 4:15; 7:26), on the other hand, has vicariously borne upon Himself the consequences of the sins of human beings, and has purged the punishment for them (MacLeod, 1989:427). The phrase “to bear sins” ( $\zeta < \forall NEAT$ ) has been given four different interpretations:

- Bengel (1971:643), who found that 1Peter 2:24 was being alluded to, gives the following interpretation: “Christ carried our sins up on the cross”.
- The interpretation that “Christ carried our sins up to the altar of the cross and offered them” is provided by Westcott (1984:277), who also cites 1Peter 2:24. However, in this text,  $\zeta < \forall NEAT$  expresses the idea of “taking the blame for sins” (Kelly, 1969:123). Westcott argues that the writer of Hebrews is not concerned here “primarily with...the punishment of sins”. Dods (1970:341) asks: “in what intelligible sense can sins be borne but by bearing their punishment”? Furthermore, Kelly (1969:122) observes that the “idea of sins being placed on the altar and slain there is impossible to reconcile with OT conceptions”.
- This interpretation is supported by Deissmann (1978:88-91) and Lührmann (1974:627), who say that “Christ has taken sins away, that is, removed them” (MacLeod, 1989:428).

The writer of Hebrews, however, uses other sentence constructions such as: “... but now He appeared once for all at the end of the ages to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” and “because by one sacrifice He has made perfect for ever those who are being made holy”, for the “putting away or taking away of sins”. In Hebrews 9:26 and Hebrews 10: 14 respectively, although the corresponding Hebrew words might mean “bear” or “take away”,  $\zeta < \forall NEAT$  does not seem to have these meanings. On the contrary, it has the meaning of “to lay or impose a burden on someone”. In the Old Testament, when a Hebrew word is rendered by  $\zeta < \forall NEAT$ , for example in Numbers 14:33, it has the meaning of “to bear the punishment of”. (4) This interpretation reads thus: “Christ has vicariously taken upon Himself the consequences, that is, the punishment and the responsibilities of our sins (Owen, 1968:412-13; Alford, 1958:184; Morris, 1986:93)

Although this study agrees with the above interpretations, the interpretation offered by Deissmann that “Christ has taken sins away, that is, He removed them” may prompt inquiry to some extent. If so, from where to where? Nearly more than two thousand years have passed since Jesus offered Himself for the sins of many on Calvary Hill. But, since then, sins of all kinds have not ceased to exist. How should people account for the historical applicability of such a removal? Given the abstraction and non-palpability of sin, how can one

objectively localise the sin's primary abode and secondary destiny after removal? In the researcher's view, this removal cannot be generalized, but must be concretely qualified. This is because the taking away of sins has to do with the restoration of the relationship whereby one must die if one does not follow the rules of the covenant. Jesus' death was inclusive, and he died on our behalf, thereby restoring the relationship. It does not matter how much sin there has been -one will still die. Thus, the amount of sin does not count, but rather the fact that one has to die. Death pays the penalty, and in this way the relationship is restored.

According to this study, the taking away of sin is both inclusive and exclusive. It is inclusive as an opportunity for anyone to grab. In this sense, it is a universal offer. On the other hand, it is exclusive in that only those who believe in and seek God for mercy, who accept what Jesus did on the cross and repent of their sins, can have them removed. This removal should not be understood as something physical, material or mechanical, but rather as a metamorphosis in the spiritual arena, felt by and affecting the whole person. It is also very significant to note that the removal is not synonymous with cessation, because sanctification is a process, and the person whose sins have been removed may sin again without being enslaved by sin (see Heb 2:17-18; 4:15-16; 7:24-25; 8:8-12; 10:16-18). With this in mind, this chapter will now examine the motivation behind the sacrifice of Jesus, as it is viewed in Hebrews 2:9 and Hebrews 5:7-10.

### 10.3 THE MOTIVATION BEHIND THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews writes that Jesus tasted death by "the grace of God" or  $\Pi\zeta\Delta\Delta\theta\theta\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota$  (Morris, 1986:275 - see Heb 2:9; 4:15-16; 5:7-10). By grace, the writer understands "the divine goodwill and loving favor" that is at the very centre of the Christian Gospel (Moffat, 1924:349). It "is God's favor towards those who don't deserve His favor" (Guthrie, 1983:105). It is His state of undeserved and free love. In Hebrews 2:9-10, the accent is placed on the divine initiative for universal salvation (MacLeod, 1989:429). The writer of Hebrews employs  $\Pi\tau\alpha\cdot\eta$  13 times, and in each instance with an anarthrous noun, although he uses  $\Pi\zeta\Delta\Delta\eta$  with an articular genitive (e.g. Heb 12:15).

In Hebrews 2:9, the genitive seems to be anarthrous. In this regard, three different interpretations have been given:

- Origen and Bengel say that: "Christ died for everyone except God". Bengel finds a parallel in 1Corinthians 15:27, where all is surrendered to Christ, except God (MacLeod, 1989:429).
- Ambrose and Mopsuestia hold that: "Christ died for every one except His deity", that is, His deity did not die. This perception appears to be irrelevant to the context, even though the teaching about the "impassibility" of Christ's divine nature is doctrinally orthodox (Hughes, 1977:95; Shedd, 1978:404). If this was the writer's intended meaning, he would most likely

have constructed the phrase in the following manner:  $\Pi\Delta\mathcal{R}H \mathcal{G}\uparrow H$   
2,  $\bar{\mathcal{G}}\mathcal{O}\mathcal{G}\cong H$  (Moffat, 1924:27; Spicq, 1953:419).

- “Christ died separated from and forsaken by God”, as Matthew 26:46 suggests. This interpretation is supported by scholars such as O’Neill (1966:82) and Elliott (1972:339-341).

This study is of the view that, if the interpretation supported by scholars such as O’Neill and Elliot were the true meaning that the writer of Hebrews intended to convey, then he would have used a more graceful rendering, such as  $\zeta\mathcal{G},\Delta 2,\cong\rightarrow$  or  $6,\Pi\Delta\mathcal{A}\Phi:\mathcal{E}<\cong H \zeta B\in 2,\cong\rightarrow$  (Moffat, 1924:27; Tasker, 1954-55:184). Nevertheless, many writers have denied this rendering because it lacks any significant support. Its widespread recognition and acceptance might be based upon its homiletic possibilities. It may have originated from a scribal lapse, misreading  $\Pi\zeta\Delta\mathcal{A}\mathcal{G}\mathcal{A}$  as  $\Pi\Delta.:H$  or “as marginal gloss” (as suggested by 1Cor 15:27), in order to suggest that “every one” in Hebrews 2:9 excludes God (Metzger, 1971:664). See also Alford (1958:39-40), Delitzsch (1978:113-15) and Hughes (1977:94-97) in this regard.

As in Paul, “God is the ultimate fountain of grace” in Hebrews (MacLeod, 1989:429 - see Heb 4:15-16; 13:9b, 25b; 12:15a). There is one other instance in Hebrews that seems to support the writer’s suggestion concerning the divine initiative behind Christ’s sacrifice. Normally, of course, he suggests that Jesus is the High Priest who offered the sacrificial offering of Himself (Heb 7:27; 9:25; 10:12). However, in Hebrews 9:28, he employs the passive participle  $B\Delta\cong\Phi,<,\Pi 2,.:H$  (“having been offered”). The context of Hebrews 9:26-28 would indicate that God is the one who offered Him (MacLeod, 1989:430). In Hebrews 9:27, he emphasises that “it has been appointed (implying God) for man to die once”. The idea expressed in verse 28 appears to be parallel, namely that “Christ died once by divine appointment” (Bruce, 1964:222).

Five different agents have been suggested here with regard to the use of the participle:

- Davidson (1882:188) says that “the agent is material; the chief point being Christ’s being offered to put away sin”.
- “The agent is mankind”, thus  $\cdot B\in \mathcal{G}^{\mathcal{T}M}< \square<2\Delta\phi BT<$ . Delitzsch (1978:135) approached this view, but denied it on the basis of the argument that the men who killed Christ had no intention of atoning. See also Alford (1958:183) in this regard.
- Delitzsch (1978:135-136), Westcott (1984:277) and Guthrie (1983:200) say that: “The agent is human and demonic violence subservient to divine sovereignty”, since the idea is parallel to Acts 2:23.
- Owen (1968:411) and Alford (1958:183) suggest that “the agent is Christ Himself, that is, His Human nature/victim/ was offered by His divine nature/High Priest”,  $*4\square B<,\leftrightarrow:\forall\mathcal{G}\cong H \forall\mathcal{O}T<\cong\cong\Lambda$ , in Hebrews 9:14.
- Bruce (1964:222), Montefiore (1964:162) and Moffat (1924:134) say that: “the agent is God”. This view is preferable in that “the passive parallels

man's passive experience of death by divine appointment". This study also agrees with this view because, unlike Owen and Alford, the dual nature of Christ while on earth could not be separated and start working on or against each other. It is unthinkable that the Holy God would collaborate with demons, or that human beings and demonic violence could serve a divine, sovereign purpose.

This study does not support the view held by Delitzsch and Westcott, which seems to attribute the death of Jesus to human beings and demonic violence, because it is the researcher's belief that the cross fitted in well with God's eternal, redemptive plan. All the same, as mentioned above, this study agrees with Bruce, Montefiore and Moffat, who appear to sound biblical. One can deduce from their view that it was God Himself who carried out the event of the cross as part of His eternal, redemptive plan, in accordance with His sovereign purpose.

Building upon the previous discussion, this study finds that, in Hebrews 2:9, the writer says that Jesus tasted death "for every one" ( $\cdot B\infty\Delta B\forall<9 \bar{H}$ ). This has challenged scholars in terms of its importance to historic debate over the extent of atonement. Davidson (1882) concluded that the passage has no bearing upon the question. Calvin (1963:24), Owen (1968:361) and Brown (1961:349-350) have taken note of the fact that, in this context, Christ's death is associated with "many sons" (Heb 2:10), "those who are sanctified" (Heb 2:11) and "the seed of Abraham" (Heb 2:16), and concluded that "Christ died for all of the redeemed, that is the elect". Finally, to mention but a few, Delitzsch (1978:115), Alford (1958:41), Lünemann (1979:434), Montefiore (1964:58) and Kent (1972:54) maintain that the writer's pertinent point is that Christ died for all without exception, that is, for every single individual among men (Lünemann, 1979:434). This study supports Delitzsch and his followers' view, because it is not separated from the all-encompassing, divine redemptive purpose for mankind (for detailed information on this, see Breytenbach (2005) above).

In this, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews agrees with other New Testament writers who claim that there was a universal provision in the death of Christ (Jn 3:16; 1Tm 2:6; 1Jn 2:2). The question of the extent of atonement has also been raised in connection with the writer's affirmation in Hebrews 9:28 that Christ carried the sins "of many" ( $B\cong 88^{TM}<$ ). In an attempt to contrast the "men" of Hebrews 9:27, Owen (1968:412) and Brown (1961:430) maintain that the latter group (of "men") refers to all mankind, but the former group ("many") refers to only the elite. Commentators such as Bengel (1971:644), Alford (1958:184) and Westcott (1984:278) have, however, come to the conclusion that the "many" does not exclude mankind in general, the term  $B\cong 88^{TM}<$  making a pleasing contact with  $\square B\forall>$  ("once"). This study perfectly agrees with Delitzsch, who supports the fact that Jesus died for all mankind. If one is selective here, one would be faced with the big challenge of determining who the elite are and who

they are not, thus accusing God of favouritism and partiality (Breytenbach, 2005 above).

Calvin (1963:131) added that “He says ‘many’ meaning ‘all’”, as in Romans 5:15. With regard to Romans 5:15, Bruce (1980) says that the “many” refers to the “great mass of mankind”, like the twofold ‘all’ in 1Corinthians 15:22. Here, Paul’s reasoning was as follows: “if Adam’s fall had the effect of producing the ruin of many, the grace of God is much more efficacious in benefiting many, since admittedly Christ is much more powerful to save than Adam was to ruin” (1980:131-132). Harrisville (1980) confirms this by arguing that the transgression of Adam resulted in the death of many, but that the free gift of God has abounded for many by the unfathomable grace of God (1980:85, cf. Breytenbach, 2005 above).

It is certain that not all enjoy the fruits of Christ’s death, but this happens because their unbelief hinders them. This “universalism is qualified, of course, by man’s willingness to believe (Heb 4:2), which willingness is ultimately the product of God’s calling” (Heb 3:1). Andrew Fuller’s popular “aphorism” (“sufficient for all, efficient for some”), cited in WPNT 5:346, is true if one means “universal atonement qualified not by the design of the atonement but the doctrine of election”. Darby (*New Translation*) considered  $B\forall<9 \bar{H}$  to be neuter, and came up with the translation “everything”. Kelly (1969:34) supported this view. Their interpretation maintained that this referred to the “ultimate reconciling or pacifying influence of Christ’s work in creation”. See Romans 8:19-22 and Revelations 21:1-8 in this regard.

In terms of Romans 8:19-22, Emerton & Cranfield (1985) indicate that these verses suggest the content of Christian believers’ anticipated hope, in contrast to its current “painful context”. Christian believers’ confident expectation can only be viewed by faith now (Emerton & Cranfield, 1985:410-417). Hodge (1975) emphasises that incomparable glory is in the future. Creation also waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, since creation must also share in the glorious redemption (Hodge, 1975:269-275). With regard to Revelations 21:1-8, Krodel (1989) describes the new heaven and earth, as well as the new Jerusalem, as the cleanest and most conducive environment ever, where God and his people shall dwell together for all eternity (Krodel, 1989:342-352).

Greek fathers such as Origen, Theodoret, and Chrysostom also came to the realisation that  $B\forall<9 \bar{H}$  was neuter, but they went far beyond that in their interpretation, in order to take into consideration “the idea of Christ dying for all rational creatures, including angels”. See Westcott (1984:46-47) and Moffat (1924:25-26) in this regard. In the researcher’s view, this interpretation cannot hold water for two reasons:

- Elsewhere in Hebrews, the neuter is indicated by a plural form.
- The immediate context is all about the destiny of human beings and, in verse 16, does not specifically include angels in the salvific benefit arising

from Christ's death. In Hebrews 2:5-9, the writer is not interested in the physical nature and change of "the world to come" (v 5) and its rulers (MacLeod, 1989:431). This chapter will now look at the purpose of the sacrifice of Jesus.

## 10.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS

In this section, the researcher will attempt to show that the purpose of Jesus' death was at least four-fold: to taste death for mankind, to bring sons to glory, to render the devil powerless, and to atone for sins.

### 10.4.1 To taste death for mankind

In a series of purposeful statements in Hebrews 2:9-17, the writer gives a summary of the reasons for the sacrifice of Jesus. In fact, in Hebrews 2:5-18, the writer is describing in detail the purpose of the incarnation, which he understood to be Christ's death (MacLeod, 1989:432). The particle  $\textcircled{BTH}$  with the subjunctive  $(\beta\Phi\theta\gamma\forall\lambda)$  ("that He might taste" - see motivation behind the sacrifice of Jesus above) introduces the first purpose of His suffering. Jesus died in the place of sinful men. In other words, He took the curse of death in order to prevent others from experiencing the sting of the second death. In summary, He died as the sinner's substitute (MacLeod, 1989:432), so that He might bring sons to glory.

### 10.4.2 To bring sons to glory

The next purpose of Jesus' suffering and death is introduced by the aorist participle  $\zeta\lambda\theta\bar{\nu}$  ("in order to bring") in Hebrews 2:10, preceded by verse 9 which indicates Jesus' incarnation and humiliation, including His suffering as well as His testing of death for everyone by God's grace, which resulted in Him being crowned in glory. The aorist participle  $\zeta\lambda\theta\bar{\nu}$  in Hebrews 2:10 has been perceived in at least five ways:

- As an ingressive aorist, that is, "the heavenly Man in His earthly humiliation has begun to lead many sons to the heavenly *doxa*" (Käsemann, 1984:143-144). This view seems impossible, however, because the ingressive aorist is usually used with verbs whose present "denotes a state or a condition" (MacLeod, 1989:432). It also errs in that the subject of  $\zeta\lambda\theta\bar{\nu}$  is God the Father, not Jesus. Circumstantially, Bengel (1971:590) also argued that the subject of  $\zeta\lambda\theta\bar{\nu}$  is Jesus, that is, Jesus brings many sons to glory.

Although this view sounds congruent, scholars such as Delitzsch (1978:116), Héring (1970:18), Hughes (1977:102) etc have argued that the accusative participle agrees with the "unexpressed" subject  $\zeta\lambda\theta\bar{\nu}$  of  $\theta, \delta, 4^{\text{TM}}\Phi\forall\lambda$ , and have pointed out that nowhere else in the New Testament are Christian believers called "sons" of Christ.

- As a circumstantial participle of time, that is, “when brought” in accordance with the Vulgate: *qui adduxecerat*. The idea would then be associated with the Old Testament saints who have already been brought to glory. Furthermore, Hebrews 11:39-40 asserts that Old Testament believers cannot reach a state of perfection before the New Testament saints (Montefiore, 1964:60; Hughes, 1977:107).
- As a circumstantial participle of cause, that is, because He brought human sons to glory, not angels, it is incumbent on Jesus to become a man and to suffer (Lührmann, 1974:437).

This study thinks that this view is awkward and seems to make verse 11 tautological.

- As a circumstantial participle of attendant circumstance or coincidental action, that is, in bringing many sons to glory, He was perfected (Westcott, 1984:49). However, this meaning would have been more naturally expressed by the present infinitive  $\Xi < \vartheta \zeta \langle \Delta <$  or the present participle  $\square (\Xi < \vartheta \forall$  (MacLeod, 1989:433). Furthermore, it does not mean that many sons were brought to glory when Jesus was perfected. This is because the glory implied in Hebrews 2:10 waits for Christ’s return (Lührmann, 1974:337).
- As a circumstantial participle of purpose, that is, “in order to bring”. It would then indicate the divine intention whereby “the end glory precedes the means of Christ’s suffering” (MacLeod, 1989:433). Bruce (1980:96) interprets the participle in a similar fashion, but “calls it a proleptic aorist”.

This view appears to be the best and this study supports it for two reasons:

- It acknowledges the eschatological scope of  $* \bar{\zeta} \forall$ .
- This way of referring to God’s eternal purpose is “in keeping with the phrases employed to describe His relation to history”, that is, “for whom...through whom are all things” (Bruce, 1980:96). It was an objective purpose or end “to bring many sons to glory” (MacLeod, 1989:433).

The meaning of the concepts “sons” ( $\Delta \mathcal{M} \Xi \cdot$ ) and “glory” ( $* \bar{\zeta} \forall$ ) is provided by the immediate context of Hebrews 2:5-10. The writer uses the term “glory” to convey the meaning of dominion over the created order, that is, man’s destiny in the forthcoming world (Heb 2:5-8). By “sons”, he understands Christian believers who as “brothers” (Heb 2:12) and “companions” (Heb 1:9) of Christ are beneficiaries of His future glory and inheritance (Hodges, 1983:784). The writer says that it was appropriate for God to accomplish this purpose by having Christ suffer (Heb 2:10).  $+B, B, < (\square \Delta \forall \beta \vartheta \langle$  (“For it was fitting for Him”: Heb 2:10).

The  $\zeta \Delta$  is “illative”, that is, it initiates the ‘why’, which justifies the writer’s comment that Jesus tasted death by God’s grace: his objective here is apologetic. It is possible here that the sufferings of Jesus were a stumbling block to Jewish-Christian readers (Dods, 1970:264). The verb  $B \Delta \Xi \vartheta T$  stands for “befitting, be seemly or suitable”. That which is suitable rests “on the person, the

circumstances and the object” (Moffat, 1924:29). In the current context, the object (“bringing many sons to glory”) would not call for any justification, since it is appropriate to the readers’ thoughts concerning the glory and triumph of the Messiah (Bruce, 1980:90-91).

However, what required justification was the instrument used to achieve this objective. The writer therefore most likely has in mind the “fitness” of Christ with regard to two things:

- God’s character as the God of grace (Heb 2:9), and in the death of His Son, an act worthy of that grace is witnessed. Therefore, the following sentence “for whom are all things, and through whom are all things” may indicate that it is “God’s attribute of sovereignty and not His attribute of grace that the writer has in mind”. In other words, the cross “was in harmony with His eternal nature as moral Governor of the world; it vindicated the right of divine government violated by man’s sin” (Hewitt, 1973:69).
- As Hebrews 2:15 indicates, man’s condition constitutes the second reason, that is, it was necessary that Christ suffered because man suffers as a result of sin (Montefiore, 1964:59). In this section, it has been shown how the sacrifice of Jesus was intended to bring sons to glory. In the following section, this study will attempt to show how it was meant to make the devil powerless.

#### 10.4.3 To render the devil powerless

The conjunctive connecting word  $\text{καὶ}$ , followed by two aorist subjunctives  $\text{ἵνα ἰσχυρὸν ἔσται}$  (“that He might render powerless”) and  $\text{ἵνα ἴσθῃς}$  (“that He might deliver”) in Hebrews 2:14-15, initiates the third purpose of Jesus’ sacrificial death (MacLeod, 1989:434). By means of His death, He made the lord of death, the devil, powerless. The devil’s dominion is death, because he initiated sin in the world, which brought about death (Owen, 1968:468-70 - for detailed information about life and death, see 1980: ad loc above). He places men in bondage, and makes them live in fear of death and experience “penal anxiety”, that is, they have a sense of “future misery” (Owen, 1968:442), a fear of “what comes after death” (Moffat, 1924:35). When God’s children understand that Jesus died in their stead, and took up the penalty of their sins, they are set free from the fear of death. By dispossessing the devil of his weapon, that is, man’s fear of death, Christ is triumphant and has doomed the devil to become absolutely void of power (Vine, 1952:28). As discussed in this section, the sacrifice of Jesus was meant to render the devil powerless. In the next section, this study will attempt to show how the sacrifice of Jesus was intended to atone for sins.

#### 10.4.4 To atone for sins

Two objective clauses in Hebrews 2:17 initiate the fourth aim of Christ’s sacrificial offering, that is, “to make atonement for sins”. Here, the word ‘atonement’

includes both expiation and propitiation (NIV,  $\bar{\epsilon}H \vartheta \bar{\epsilon}8\zeta\Phi\iota, 2\forall 4 \vartheta \square H \square: \forall \Delta \vartheta. : \forall H$ ).  $\exists < \forall (\bar{\epsilon} < 0 \vartheta \forall 4$  (“that He might become”) introduces the purpose of the incarnation. It “intimates what He should become through assuming our likeness”, that is, a High Priest.  $\therefore: H \vartheta \bar{\epsilon} 0 \delta \bar{\Phi} \iota, \Phi 2 \forall 4$ , (“to make propitiation”, NASB) tells what, as a High Priest, He was ordained to do (Delitzsch, 1978:143). In this, it is God who is propitiated. Later in the Epistle it seems evident that the writer considers the sacrifice of Christ to be the anti-typical accomplishment of the sacrificial ritual of the Day of Atonement (Heb 9:1-14).

On this day, the high priest made atonement (Lv 16:10; LXX,  $f > 4 \delta \forall \Phi \iota \bar{\epsilon}: \forall 4$ ) for the sins of the people. The two goats of the sin offering typified the twofold effect of the work of Christ: the immolated goat signified propitiation, that is, to divert divine wrath from the sinner to the substitute (MacLeod, 1989:436-437) and the scapegoat was a symbol of expiation, that is, the removal of guilt. The term ‘expiation’ should not be regarded as diluting the doctrine of atonement. It is a concept with “hard edges” that involves at least the following three ideas:

- “Doing or suffering something commensurate with the damage done,
- Paying not just a debt, but a penalty, acknowledging both guilt and desert, and
- Payment by the culprit himself in the person of a substitute” (Kidner, 1982:119-200).

The writer’s use of  $\bar{\epsilon} 8 \zeta \Phi \iota \bar{\epsilon}: \forall 4$ , like the LXX  $f > 4 \delta \zeta \Phi \iota \bar{\epsilon}: \forall 4$ , has to do with a single word and one act of atonement (Hill, 1967:38), the two ideas of expiation and propitiation (MacLeod, 1989:437). John Owen (1968:476) reached the conclusion that, by using the term  $\bar{\epsilon} 8 \zeta \Phi \iota: \forall 4$ , four things are referred to:

- “An offense, crime, guilt, or debt to be taken away,
- A person offending to be pacified, atoned and reconciled,
- A person offending to be pardoned, accepted, and
- A sacrifice or other means for making atonement”. It should be noted that the writer uses the present infinitive  $\bar{\epsilon} 8 \zeta \Phi \iota, \Phi 2 \forall 4$  (MacLeod, 1989:437). Swetnam (1981:174) pointed out that the present infinitive indicates that “the activity of expiating is continuing”. This appears to conflict, however, with the rest of the Epistle, where the one sacrifice of Christ has put away sin (Heb 7:27; 9:28; 10:12). It is quite possible that the writer of the Epistle to Hebrews did it for the interest of his readers, who seemed to be confused about the benefits of the death of Christ (MacLeod, 1989:437-438).

The present tense indicates the continuous application of the sacrifice of Christ, as in Hebrews 10:12 (Delitzsch, 1978:150). Because of Jesus’ presence with God as the Christian believers’ High Priest, the forgiveness of His people’s sins is enjoyed “from day to day and from hour to hour” (Vaughan, 1891:55). The purposeful aspect of the atonement is also emphasised by the writer in other passages such as Hebrews 1:3 and Hebrews 9:12-15 (MacLeod, 1989:438). At the very beginning of the Epistle, that is, Hebrews 1:3, the writer enjoins that

when the Son of God sat down at God's right hand "He had made purification of sins" ( $\iota\upsilon\chi\alpha\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ ). The aorist tense of the participle  $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  indicates that purification was achieved by a single act in the past. The Latin Vulgate replaces a present participle (faciens, "making atonement"), which supports the Roman Catholic doctrine of substantiation (Bruce, 1964:6-7). The Greek text indicates that purification was achieved "once for all" in the past (Spisc, 1953:10). The middle voice stipulates that it was Christ Himself, through His own person, who accomplished the purification (Westcott, 1984:15).

The writer's thinking is grounded in the presupposition that man is rendered filthy by his sins and cannot, therefore, approach a Holy God. Under the old dispensation, typological provision was made for this kind of defilement on the Day of the Atonement. Therefore because of the sacrifice offered, the Israelites were declared ritually clean (Lv 16:30). At the cross of Christ, necessary supplies were made available for the cancelling of sin and the removal of guilt, that is, a genuine and perfect moral purity (Behm, 1965:426). "The purification in Hebrews 1:3 is objective, that is, the writer is narrating about the objective work of the atonement at the cross. Only in Hebrews 9:14 he does speak of subjective purification, that is, the actual application of the benefit of the cross to the sinner" (Meeter, 1916:157).

Man was eligible for punishment because of his filthiness or impurity. Christ was inflicted with punishment in man's stead, His sacrifice met divine demands, and His blood effaced the filthiness that hindered access to God (Heb 9:22; 10:22 - for detailed information, see 1980: ad loc above on life and death in the New Testament). The verb  $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  in classical Greek stands for "to make gracious", "to placate", that is, to propitiate (Büchsel, 1965:314-316). Unlike in the heathens' context, "God is not thought of as being capriciously angry, but, because He is a moral being, His anger is directed toward wrong doing in any shape or form" (Morris, 1986:131). In Hebrews 2:17, the writer says that one aspect of Christ's work was to make "propitiation", that is, to remove divine wrath. It is significant that he does not say "the Father was propitiated concerning our sins through the death of His Son" or "Christ propitiated God through His blood" (Turner, 1982:27).

Such statements are dismissed in order to escape from heathen notions of propitiation. Christ's sacrifice "was not an event that preceded God's grace and extorted it from Him. There is no dichotomy in Hebrews between a merciful Son and a capriciously angry Father who must be bribed into graciousness. As the author later says in Hebrews 10:7-10, "the incarnation and saving work of Christ have their origin in the will of God" (Turner, 1982:27). The objective genitive  $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  in Hebrews 1:3 has been understood in two ways:

- "The cleansing of a person from sins" (Héring, 1970:6). This would be more likely if the text read  $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  (Alford, 1958:10).

- The cleansing of sins, that is, sins are viewed as an impurity to be removed (Delitzsch, 1978:54; Westcott, 1984:15).

In Hebrews 9:12, the writer insinuates that Christ achieved redemption ( $\delta\beta\theta\Delta T\Phi\Delta$ ) through the medium of His death (“blood”). In the papyri of New Testament times,  $\delta\beta\theta\Delta T\Phi\Delta H$  was both a legal and commercial concept for freeing someone from bondage or slavery through the payment of a ransom (Deissmann, 1978:327). The view in Hebrews is that man is enslaved in sin - sin is a debt that he owes (Buchanan, 1972:148). The blood of Christ is the ransom paid to God (Davidson, 1882:175) that clears the debt of sin and sets man free from his bondage. It has been argued that no view of a ransom price is referred to in Hebrews 9:12 - only the thought of deliverance seems predominant (Hill, 1967:68-69). The atonement is not simply “a subjective forgiveness in Hebrews; rather, it is an objective transaction” in which Christ paid the price in order to secure man’s deliverance. The benefits of this transaction are subjectively applicable to Christian believers, but the objective side of atonement is not overlooked by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (MacLeod, 1989:440).

In Hebrews 9:15, the writer goes on to say that Christ’s death was also “for the redemption ( $\zeta B \cong \delta\beta\theta\Delta T\Phi\Delta H$ ) of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant” (MacLeod, 1989:440). Tolmie (2005:247-268) provides us with an explanation of the use of “redemption” in Pauline literature. According to him, the metaphors that can be broadly classified as “redemption” metaphors include, among others, the most important examples  $\square(\cong \Delta \zeta. \gamma \Delta <$  (1Cor 6:20; 7:23),  $f > \forall (\cong \Delta \zeta. \gamma \Delta <$  (Gl 3:13; 4:5);  $\square B \cong \delta\beta\theta\Delta T\Phi\Delta H$  (Rm 3:24; 8:23; 1Cor 1:30). He also makes use of  $f 8 \gamma \Lambda 2 \gamma \Delta . : \forall f 8 \gamma \Lambda 2 \gamma \Delta \cong \rightarrow \Delta f 8 \gamma \beta 2 \gamma \Delta \cong H$  in several instances in his Epistles.  $Y(\cong \Delta \zeta. \gamma \Delta <$  is used by Paul in 1Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 . In the first place, he warns his readers not to associate with prostitutes (1Cor 6:12-20). In verses 12-14, he goes on to discuss the limits of Christian liberty. Then, in verses 15-18, he makes them aware of the fact that their bodies are part of Christ and cannot therefore become one with that of a prostitute. In verses 19-20, he beseeches them to glorify God through their bodies, which are portrayed as temples of the Holy Spirit. Verse 20 explicitly states: “Because you were bought at a price. Therefore you should praise God in your body!” Here, Paul uses  $\square(\cong \Delta \zeta. \gamma \Delta <$ , meaning “to buy”. However, here it is used in a metaphorical sense. This basically refers to the buying and selling of people as slaves (Tolmie, 2005:256-257).

Thus, the “focus is not on the change in status but on what the obligations being bought have for Christians”. Again, Paul uses  $\square(\cong \Delta \zeta. \gamma \Delta <$  in 1Corinthians 7:23-in a section aptly summed up by Klauck (1984:54) as “Gottes Ruf-befreiend und verpflichtend”. Paul counsels his readers to remain in the state in which they were called to be Christians: “those who were uncircumcised when called should stay uncircumcised, those who were slaves should no let it bother them, because they are freedmen in the Lord, and those who were free should keep in mind that they are slaves to Christ”. Martin (1990:65-66) rightly suggests that Paul’s advice

to the slaves is grounded in the idea of status improvement: although they stand physically as slaves, they are liberated people of Christ. People who are set free possess a higher status and consequently an improvement of condition. Moreover, slaves, as liberated people, are associated with a different family, the household of Christ, which represents a further status improvement. Martin (1990:65) points out that Paul's advice to those who are freed truly represents a lowering of status: they must regard themselves as slaves of Christ.

As Martin correctly states, "the slaves are regarded as free people in Christ's household, whereas the free people are regarded as slaves in Christ's household". Paul shows the use of the  $\square(\cong\Delta\zeta.\gamma\mathcal{A}<$  metaphor by saying:  $\mathcal{G}\mathcal{A}:\uparrow H \cong(\cong\Delta\zeta\Phi\mathcal{2}\mathcal{O}\mathcal{G}\gamma : \leftarrow (.: <\gamma\Phi\mathcal{2}\gamma * \cong \rightarrow \delta \cong 4 \square < 2\Delta\phi BT <$ . Thus, the metaphor is used in more or less the same way as in 1Corinthians 6:23. In this regard, it means that they are the property of Christ and living under the obligations stemming from being bought. In pursuing an explanation of the use of redemption metaphors by Paul, one should look at  $f > \forall(\cong\Delta\zeta.\gamma\mathcal{A}<$  as a metaphor in Galatians. Here, Paul cautions his readers not to follow the advice of his rivals, emphasising that "his" Gospel is approved by God, and therefore should be followed by the Galatians. He uses the above metaphor for the first time in Galatians 3:13, and then in Galatians 4:5. In Galatians 3:6-14, Paul's rhetorical strategy consists of using the example of Abraham, as well as arguments based on the authority of the scripture to impede his opponents. For the purpose of explaining metaphors, the scriptural argument that Paul uses in Galatians 3:10 is very significant. With regard to Deuteronomy 27:26, he infers that those who consider the keeping of the law as the basis of their relationship with God are cursed.

In Galatians 3:13, he goes back to the idea of a curse, and introduces the redemption metaphor:  $\mathcal{O}\Delta\mathcal{4}\Phi\mathcal{G}\in H \cong:\square H f > 0(\cong\Delta\forall\Phi\gamma < f_6 \mathcal{G}\uparrow H \mathcal{G}\forall\mathcal{G}\zeta\Delta\forall H \mathcal{G}\cong \rightarrow < : \cong \Lambda (\gamma < : \gamma < \cong H \downarrow B \infty \Delta \cong : \mathcal{T}M < \mathcal{G}\forall\mathcal{G}\zeta\Delta\forall \dots$ . Therefore, in terms of how Paul uses redemption metaphors, the following is significant: perhaps he is using the traditional Christian confession that Christ died in order to redeem "us" (Becker, 1981:381; Betz, 1979:149; Longenecker, 1990:122). However, proving this with certainty and reconstructing the wording of the traditional confession is quite difficult. Without capitalising on the origin of this notion, one can only presume that Paul used it because he agreed with it and considered it to be relevant to his argument at that time. Christ is identified as the subject of the redemption process connected to His death. This is obvious from the fact that the occurrence of redemption is associated with Christ becoming a "curse", which is substantiated by Deuteronomy 21:23, a text which did not normally concern crucifixion, but which, in early Judaism, was interpreted as a sign that a crucified person was cursed by God (Sänger, 1994:283-284).

The object of redemption is "us" – which here needs to be understood as "all of us who believe in Christ" (Smit, 1984:218). The circumstances prompting redemption are portrayed as  $f_6 \mathcal{G}\uparrow H \mathcal{G}\forall\mathcal{G}\zeta\Delta\forall H \mathcal{G}\cong \rightarrow < : \cong \Lambda$ , a statement which refers to the one in verse 10, which asserts that those who are "from" the law are

under a curse because they do not do the things that the law prescribes. Therefore, Paul's use of the metaphor here is against the background of slavery, with the particular understanding that a slave's freedom could be "bought" by someone. Nevertheless, although the metaphor itself might have had an overtone of the manumission from slavery to freedom, it is important to understand that Paul does not focus upon either the aspect of slavery or liberty in this context. On the contrary, he emphasises the effect achieved through the process of redemption, which is portrayed as a shift from being cursed to being blessed. Otherwise, he integrates the metaphor into a wider context, in which the contrast between curses and blessings plays an important role (see vv 8-10 and 14).

Therefore, the underlying idea in Paul's use of  $f > \forall (\cong \Delta \zeta . \gamma \mathcal{A} <$  is to show that salvation can be identified as a radical (positive) status reversal. In Galatians 4:1-7, Paul's rhetorical strategy is to use an analogy to establish the difference between spiritual slavery and sonship of God, in order to remind the Galatians that they are sons of God and not spiritual slaves. In verses 1-2, he paints the following picture: the father dies and leaves everything to his son, the heir. Being a minor, the son's inheritance is entrusted to managers and administrators until he reaches maturity. In verse 3, Paul starts applying the analogy. As with the immature heir's situation, "we" were once slaves  $\Downarrow B \in \mathcal{G} \square \Phi \mathcal{G} \cong 4 \Pi \gamma \rho \forall$ . Usually, this Greek expression had to do with basic elements which were supposed to be the building blocks of the cosmos, namely fire, water, earth and air (see for example Blinzler, 1961:429-443; Rusam, 1992:119-125).

However, Paul uses it in a symbolic sense to denote all religious practices that are basic and restrictive. In short, the inferiority of  $\mathcal{G} \square \Phi \mathcal{G} \cong 4 \Pi \gamma \rho \forall$  as similar to faith is the main idea that he wishes to express. He also deliberately chooses a concept which is broad enough to accommodate both Judaism and other forms of religion (Hartman, 1993:146). In verses 4-5, Paul describes the changes brought about by God's initiative. He decided to set "us" free, which He accomplished through His Son, who set free those under the law, "for us" to be adopted as sons. He conveys this idea in the following manner: ...  $\mathcal{Z} < \forall \mathcal{G} \cong H \Downarrow B \in < : \cong \mathcal{F} > \forall (\cong \Delta \zeta \Phi \rightarrow, \mathcal{Z} < \forall \mathcal{G} \leftarrow < \Lambda \supset \cong 2 \gamma \Phi . : \forall < \square B \cong 8 \zeta \exists T : \gamma <$ . Therefore, it is necessary to highlight the way Paul uses  $f > \forall (\cong \Delta \zeta . \gamma \mathcal{A} <$  : as in the case of Galatians 3:13, scholars (see for example Hahn, 1963:315; Fuller, 1978:40-42 and Schenke, 1990:39-340) have indicated that a pre-Pauline Christological tradition, or possibly a formula, with regard to verses 4-5, might be detected.

However, given the fact that he places it in his own argument, it is not easy to reconstruct it with absolute certainty. Christ, now known as the "Son", is once again the subject of redemption, perhaps because Paul wants to associate Christ's sonship with the  $\Lambda \supset \cong 2 \gamma \Phi . : \forall$  of believers (this may also be the reason why he describes the Spirit as the "Spirit of His Son"). The work of redemption is not specifically connected to the death of Christ, but rather, in a more general sense, to the "sending of the Son". The redemption object singled out as "those

under the law”, which, if read together with  $\forall B \in \mathcal{P} \exists \Phi \exists \Delta \Pi \gamma \rho \forall \mathcal{R} \Rightarrow \neg \in \bar{\Phi} : \exists \Delta \geq : \gamma 2 \forall * \gamma * \exists \Delta 8 T : \bar{\mathcal{E}} \leq 4$  in verse 3, describes the hopeless situation from which people were redeemed, as that of spiritual slavery. Here, Paul specifically uses the metaphor within the context of slavery. However, the change achieved by the redemption is not portrayed in “terms of a contrast between spiritual slavery and spiritual freedom”, but rather as a shift from spiritual slavery to spiritual sonship, an excellent model of what Martin describes as “slavery as upward mobility”.

The basic idea behind the Pauline use of the metaphor to show salvation can once again be seen as radical (positive) status reversal, now not indicated in terms of the move “from being cursed to being blessed, but from spiritual slavery to spiritual sonship. Paul uses  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  in Romans 3:23, 8:23 and 1Corinthians 1:30, including the deutero-Pauline, Colossians 1:14 and Ephesians 1:7, 14; 4:30. In Romans 3:23 and 1Corinthians 1:30, it is used to express a present reality, and an eschatological reality in Romans 8:23. Given the fact that Romans 3:23 has more material for interpreting the metaphor than 1Corinthians 1:30, the discussion will focus on its utilisation in Romans. The word  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  appears for the first time in Romans 3:21-26, a central passage in terms of the development of Paul’s argument. In Romans 1:18-3:20, Paul first describes the desolate situation into which humankind has been thrown. Romans 3:21 (<math>\langle A \langle \mathcal{R} \dots </math>) signifies the turning point - the Gospel of what God has done on behalf of humankind, by drawing those who believe in Christ into a relationship with Himself. It seems more likely that Paul employs pre-Pauline information in verses 24-26a (see the discussions by Michel, 1978:150; Stuhlmacher, 1992:290 and Fitzmyer, 1993:342).

Besides  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$ , Paul uses many other metaphors in verses 24-25: “God justifies humankind through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus whom God set forth as an expiation through faith in His blood “. The fact that various metaphors are used alongside each other to describe the salvation brought about by Christ’s death (“blood”) shows that, in spite of possible overlaps between these metaphors, each of them describes salvation from a certain point of view. Now, which perspective is described by  $\forall B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  ? Originally, the word suggested the “buying back of a slave or captive, thereby making him/her free through payment of a ransom (see Bauer, 1988:193 for more examples). Bauer suggests that the word is used in a more general and figurative sense in the New Testament as a release or redemption. This is argued by Haubeck (1985:363), who points out that no ransom figures in the present context of  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  , but refers to 1Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23, in which a price is mentioned, and from which he infers that, in Romans 3,  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  should also be understood as an expression of ransom. Fitzmyer (1993:348) also interprets it as conveying the meaning of “emancipated or ransomed humanity from its bondage to sin”.

However, this study is of the view that the arguments presented by Büchsel (1957b:357) to prove the contrary are convincing. He contends that none of the  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  instances in the New Testament contain any explicit reference to

ransom. Moreover, he argues that it would be unrealistic to propose the idea of ransom in the case of eschatological passages (Lk 21:28; Rm:8-23; Eph 1:14; 4:30). Therefore, it seems to be best to assume that the original sense has been watered down through the use of the Bible, leaving only a general sense of “freedom” or “redemption” (see also Käsemann, 1980:90 & Schmithals, 1988:125).

Given the fact that the ideas of slavery and ransom are not fulfilling any role in the metaphor anymore, a person should classify  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  as a quiescent metaphor used by Paul to show “spiritual freedom in a general sense”. Nevertheless, even as a quiescent metaphor, it is used to express the radical status reversal effected by Christ. In this instance, he stresses the situation from which Christ freed those who believed. In verse 23, it is expressed as a situation of sin and a lack of God’s glory. In Romans 8: 23, Paul uses  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$ , conveying a meaning of freedom, but in an eschatological context. He starts by saying that present sufferings are incomparable to future glory (Rm 3:18). Afterwards, Paul describes the situation of creation: subjection to futility, awaiting with eager anticipation the revelation of the children of God, in order for them to be set free from slavery and decay.

In verse 24, he again emphasises the perspective of believers, now described as “we who have the first fruits of the Spirit”, who also “groan” and look forward,  $\Lambda \supseteq 2\gamma \Phi .: \forall \square B \gamma 6 * \gamma \Pi : \gamma \leftarrow \cong 4, \vartheta \leftarrow < \square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4 < \vartheta \cong \neg \Phi \phi .: \forall \vartheta \cong H \cong : ^{TM} < .$  Both  $\Lambda \supseteq 2\gamma \Phi .: \forall <$  and  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  have been used earlier in Romans to describe the present aspect of salvation (see Rm 8:15 and 3:23), but are now used to describe eschatological salvation. In the case of  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$ , the freedom that Paul looks forward to is described as  $\square B \cong 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H \vartheta \cong \neg \Phi \phi .: \forall \vartheta \cong H \cong : ^{TM} < .$  This has to do with the “freedom of our bodies”, not “freedom from our bodies”, as Lietzmann (1979:85) suggests. This needs to be understood in the light of the description of the situation of creation in verse 21 ( $\cong * \cong \Lambda 8 \gamma .: \forall \vartheta \uparrow H N 2 \cong \Delta \square H$ ), as a reference to “freedom from an existence of decay and temptation). Schlier (1979:266) provides a description of the believers’ current situation: “... *dieser Leib als versuchlicher und sterblicher, der immer von seiner Vergangenheit her bedroht ist, gegen den Geist und damit gegen die Gabe des von Gott gerechtfertigten Leben sich zu erheben*”. This study will now look at  $f 8 \gamma \Lambda 2 \gamma \Delta \cong \neg <$  and cognates, before concluding the explanation regarding Pauline uses of redemption metaphors. Paul employs  $f 8 \gamma \Lambda 2 \gamma \Delta \gamma \wp < / f 8 \gamma \Lambda 2 \gamma \Delta .: \forall / f 8 \gamma \Lambda 2 \gamma \Delta \cong H$  to express the idea of salvation, as well as other contexts. For instance, in Galatians 3:28, the word is used to express social status, and in 1 Corinthians 9:1, 19a to express the idea of financial independence (Vollenweider, 1997:503).

In its use for salvation, it mostly overlaps with what has been discussed above. Therefore, this study will focus on the way in which it is used to express the idea of salvation in Galatians and Romans. In the letter to the Galatians, the idea of freedom is contrasted to that of spiritual slavery. As mentioned above in the discussion of  $f > \forall (\cong \Delta \zeta . \gamma 4 <$  in Galatians 4:1-7, Paul looks at the situation of

humankind as spiritual slavery, in particular, as slavery to  $\theta \square \Phi \theta \cong 4 \Pi \gamma \rho \forall \theta \cong \neg$   
 $\delta \bar{\Phi} : \cong 1$  and the law. From this condition, they have been redeemed by Christ (Gl 4:5). The assertions with regard to freedom in the rest of the letter need to be understood against the same background. For instance, in Galatians 2:4, Paul says: “false brethren” slipped in to “spy our freedom we have in Christ” and wanted to “enslave us”. What he has in mind is freedom from slavery to the law. The same is true of Galatians 5:1, where he reminds his readers that Christ has set them free from slavery. Therefore, whenever Paul uses the idea of freedom in Galatians in connection to salvation, what he has in mind is primarily freedom of slavery to the law (thus, Dunn 1998:435 is correct, in contrast to Jones, 1987:70-109).

It should also be understood that Paul does not view the kind of freedom brought by Christ as freedom in the sense of being one’s own master or doing exactly as one pleases. This is obvious from the way in which he links Christian freedom (from the law) to the leadership of the Holy Spirit: in Galatians 5:13, he starts by reminding his readers that they are free (“you were called to freedom”), almost simultaneously giving them a warning not to abuse their freedom. Instead, he reminds them that, paradoxically, their freedom seems to suggest a new form of slavery: through love, they should become slaves to one another. In the following verses, this is further revealed in the sense of a life under the direction of the Holy Spirit. In the letter to the Romans, Paul employs the contrast “freedom-slavery” frequently as a metaphor. The idea of slavery to/ freedom from the law is also seen here (see Rm 7:3, 6, 14, 25) and, as mentioned above, the idea of freedom from decay/death occurs in Romans 8. Moreover, the significant role that the idea of slavery to/ freedom from sin plays in Romans 6 needs to be pointed out. This is particularly evident in Romans 6:12-23, where sin is described as “trying to rule” (Rm 6:14) and exercising lordship over (Rm 6:14) believers. In Romans 6:16, the possibilities for the believer are summed up as being slaves either of sin (which will lead to death) or of obedience (which will lead to righteousness). In Romans 6:17-18, Paul give thanks to God for the fact that they, who once had been slaves of sin, have been freed from sin and become slaves to righteousness (Tolmie, 2005:265).

In Romans 6:19, he counsels believers to present their members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification, just as they had formerly given their members to impurity. In Romans 6:20, the idea of slavery to sin is repeated, and in Romans 6:22, the fact that they were liberated from sin and enslaved to God is indicated again. Thus, in this section, the metaphor of slavery to/freedom from sin is repeatedly used. What has been said in the case of Galatians is also applicable here: freedom from sin, as such, is not regarded as the ultimate goal in itself, since slavery to sin is replaced by slavery to God. Therefore, the overriding theme is not so much the move from slavery to sin to freedom from sin, but rather from slavery to sin to slavery to God (Rm 6:22)/righteousness (Rm 6:18; see verse 16 as well). Thus, Paul uses the metaphor of freedom here to convey the sense of a new kind of enslavement (Tolmie, 2005:266). After this lengthy

explanation of the Pauline use of the metaphor of redemption, this study needs to continue with the sub-topic of the purpose of the death of Christ, especially with regard to atoning for sin as it relates to Old Testament saints.

In other words, a person could say that the death of Christ had a “retrospective” effect (Davidson, 1882:181-182), that is, the ransom price that constitutes the grounds for release from the “guilt and penalty of the transgressions committed by OT saints” during the legal dispensation (MacLeod, 1989:441). On the basis of Daniel 4:34 (LXX), Büchsel (1967:351) argues that  $\zeta B \approx 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$  could stand for “release”, without referring to a ransom. He goes on to suggest that scholars such as Deissmann (1978) and others were “reading the secular usage of “ransom in the NT without adequate reason”: in this regard, two observations are worth mentioning:

- Daniel 4:34 refers to Daniel 4:27, where Nebuchadnezzar was told to redeem ( $8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi \nabla 4$ ) “his iniquity with almsgiving” (MacLeod, 1989:440).
- Deissmann (1978) and others sensed that the words of Christ contained in Matthew 20:28, which are equivalent to those in Mark 10:45, are sufficient to indicate the notion of a ransom price  $\zeta B \approx 8\beta 9\Delta T\Phi 4H$ .

The phrase  $fB\emptyset 9\pm B\Delta\phi 9 \rightarrow *4\forall 2Zi0$  (“under the first covenant”) can be interpreted in two ways:

- The  $\varepsilon B$  is causal, that is, the transgressions were committed “in connection with” or “on the basis of” the first covenant (Westcott, 1984:264; Moffat, 1924:126).
- Unlike Moffat (1924) and Westcott (1984), Delitzsch (1978:104-105), Hughes (1977:367) and others say that  $fB$  is temporal, that is, the transgressions were committed “in the time of” or “during the period of” the first covenant. This study can easily sympathise with the second interpretation because it is grounded in the very notion of the time during which the Leviticus dispensation was still functioning in full force.

The above statement by the writer of Hebrews provides an answer to a pertinent question with regard to Old Testament soteriology: if the sacrifices of animals were incapable of taking away sin (Heb 10:4), on what grounds were the Old Testament saints forgiven? The writer’s answer can be found in Hebrews 9:15: on the grounds of the sacrifice of Christ. Alford (1958) was erring when he dared to apply the transgressions of Hebrews 9:15 to “all mankind”. The writer’s argument here is that the transgressions of those under the Mosaic covenantal code, that is, trespasses of the Israelites, were provided for by the death of Christ. The writer of Hebrews seems to assert that salvation and forgiveness were implicit in Old Testament times through faith (Heb 4:2; 11:4). In the above section, this study has attempted to discuss the purpose of the sacrifice of Jesus in Hebrews: to taste death for mankind, to bring sons to glory, to render the devil powerless, and finally to atone for sins. The following section will discuss the superiority of the sacrifice of Jesus (see Attridge, 1989 below).

## 10.5 SUPERIORITY OF THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS

## 10.5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, the superiority of the sacrifice of Jesus will be discussed, by pointing out that the sacrifice of the body of Christ accomplished God's will with regard to sacrifices. Jesus' seated posture implies that His sacrificial work had been accomplished once and forever. The ratification of the new covenant and how the bodily sacrifice of Jesus dealt with sin will also be discussed. Therefore, the researcher will begin by showing how the sacrifice of the body of Jesus accomplished God's will with regard to sacrifices.

### 10.5.1.1 The sacrifice of the body of Jesus accomplished God's will with regard to sacrifices

In a series of three arguments (Davidson, 1882:189-195) in Hebrews 10:5-18, the writer illustrates the superiority of the sacrifice of Christ over Old Testament animal sacrifices. The first argument developed in Hebrews 10:5-10 is a deduction made from the "ineffectiveness" of Leviticus sacrifices (Heb 10:4), initiated by *\*4* ( "therefore", Heb 10:5, NASB): Christ, not the Leviticus priests, offered a sacrifice that was satisfactory to God (MacLeod, 1989:441). In this argument, Hebrews 10:5, 6 are treated together because of their theological and contextual similarity. Psalm 110 and Jeremiah 31 are respectively used to indicate the superiority of Christ's priesthood over the Leviticus priesthood, and the inferiority of the Sinaitic covenant with regard to the new covenant, the better covenant in Jesus' blood. Psalm 40 is now used to prove that the sacrifice of a rational and spiritual being is better than the sacrifices of dumb creatures (Nelson, 2003:254-256). The writer typically applies this to Jesus. In this study's treatment of Hebrews 5-7 and 8-10, material from other sources will be condensed, although the main focus will be on the material of Attridge (1989).

MacDonald (1971) states that in Hebrews 10:5-7, where the writer quotes Psalm 40, he realised that God was not satisfied with the sacrifices and offerings of the old covenant. He had initiated these sacrifices, but they did not constitute His ultimate goal. They were intended to "point forward to the Lamb of God who would bear away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). God was also displeased by those sacrifices, because people misunderstood and misinterpreted the whole system. They thought that going through ceremonial rituals was what pleased God, while their own lives were enslaved to sin and corruption, without repentance, contrition or brokenness of hearts (MacDonald, 1971:144).

Holding onto the quotation from Psalm 40, the Lord Jesus reiterated that God was not happy with burnt and sin offerings, because animals were unwilling victims whose blood lacked the virtue of cleansing (Heb 10:6). It was Christ's willingness to obediently do God's will that thrilled God's soul (MacDonald, 1971:145). He demonstrated His obedience by laying Himself upon the altar of

sacrifice. This was recorded from the “beginning to the end of the OT Scriptures” in a scroll or roll of a book (Heb 10:7).

However, there are debates concerning whether or not Psalm 40 would be considered as directly Messianic or typical. Scholars such as Perowne (1966:338) and Delitzsch (1978:35, 41) argue that the Psalm could not directly assume the Messianic etiquette for the simple reason that the psalmist confesses his sin in Ps 40:12. In referring to Psalm 40:12, Krummacher (1947:109) pointed out that “the Redeemer as Mediator would have been able to suffer the punishment due our sins only by having a consciousness of them. The personal guilt, that worm in the marrow of life, certainly renders punishment what it is, and forms its peculiar essence and focus”.

Murphy (1977:261), Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1967:189), Darby (1971:76-78), Spurgeon (1966:250) and Lewis (1958:127) have applied Psalm 40 to Christ. However, Johnson (1980:63) and Perowne (1966:45-46) have objected to this interpretation by pointing out that neither Jesus nor any New Testament writer “ever applied an OT text to Christ in which the OT writer confesses or deploras his sin”. Waltke has recently said that the Psalms “are ultimately the prayers of Jesus Christ but that elements presenting the king as anything less than ideal, such as the confession of Psalm 40:12, ‘are the historical eggshells from the pre-exilic period when the Psalms were used for Israel’s less than ideal kings” (MacLeod, 1989:442).

In Psalm 40, David inquires how he can show his gratitude to God for saving him from death. Johnson (1980:63) says that it is difficult to determine what the *Sitz im Leben* of Psalm 40 was. Westcott (1978:308) and Montefiore (1964:167) place the Psalm during the time of Saul’s persecution, but Clarke (1949:109) and Kaiser (1978:23) argue that David concluded his Psalm upon the note that God desired obedience, not sacrifice (1Samuel 15:22). However, the argument of the writer here is not concerned with comparing animal sacrifices and moral obedience (Bruce, 1980:379-380). Rather, he attempts to contrast animal sacrifices and the rational sacrifice of “One who in His voluntary self-oblation does God’s will” (Weiss, 1974:67). The writer speaks of his delight in God’s will, but David could not consistently and only do God’s will, that is, he could only do God’s will “falteringly” (Hughes, 1977:395). In order to accomplish it perfectly, his words had to wait for his greater son, “on whose lips the words are preeminently appropriate” (Johnson, 1980:63).

The teaching that the writer of Hebrews draws from the Psalm is as follows: God does not delight in animal sacrifices (Heb 10:6), that is, in the offering of dumb, irrational, coerced, unwilling, unknowing creatures (MacLeod, 1989:443). What He wanted was the sacrifice of a rational being who is not “passive in death, but in dying makes the will of God” His own (Denney, 1982:168). The writer could not say, as did the psalmist (Ps 40:6; LXX, 39:7), that God did not demand sacrifices, for he has said (Heb 9:19-20) that He ordered them. Therefore, there is no

contradiction in arguing that “God finds no pleasure” in them (Thomas, 1964-65:314). It is true that, in Psalm 40, animal sacrifices are compared to obedience to God’s will (Johnson, 1980:193).

The writer of Hebrews endeavours to emphasise the fact that animal sacrifices were not the sacrifices that God willed (Moffat, 1924:138; Calvin, 1963:134-135). It appears that the writer of Hebrews undertook an important change in the diction of Psalm 40. In the LXX (Ps 39:9), the words  $\vartheta \bar{\omega}\epsilon\delta\omicron:\zeta \Phi\Xi\Lambda$  (“your will”) come at the beginning of the verse. The writer then goes to the end of the verse (Heb 10:7). This “alteration” strongly emphasises the passage with regard to the doing of God’s will (Nairne, 1917:98-99 - for detailed information, see Wilson, 1970; Nelson, 2003; Spencer, 1997 and Ladd, 1979).

There are many instances in Hebrews that clearly show that the writer viewed the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as man’s only hope. For example, Jesus became the guarantee of a better covenant and permanent priesthood, as well as His ability to completely save “those who come to God through Him. Unlike the mortal priests of the old covenant, He always lives to intercede for them”. Jesus Christ is the only priest who can adequately meet the needs of His people because “He is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens” (Heb 7:22-26). Hebrews 8:8-13, as well as 10:16-18, where the stipulations of the new covenant are reiterated, also stand as the ultimate hope for God’s people. Therefore, when he says: “sacrifice and offering thou would not”, suggesting that God had no pleasure in burnt and sin offerings, there is no suggestion that sacrifice was abolished in favour of obedience. The writer objects to the replacement of these sacrifices with personal obedience and service (Hewitt, 1973:156). This study is of the view that sacrifices without obedience are useless because obedience is better than sacrifices, and this is what God wanted the Israelites to understand – there should not only be an outward expression while inwardly, hearts are denying and rejecting Him.

1Samuel 15:22 reads:” Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifices, and to heed than the fat of rams” (KJV -see also Is 1:11-14; Am 5:21-22). This goes against what Hewitt says, because sacrifices without obedience to God are useless and unacceptable to Him. The context also seems to suggest that obedience alone can suffice, without the shedding of blood of animals. Given the fact that this is better than sacrifices and the fat of rams, one can infer from this that obedience to God, which implies repentance, contrition, humbleness and brokenness of hearts, can stand as the best substitute for animal sacrifices.

This study agrees with Nelson, who presents God’s sacrificial purpose and the right teaching concerning sacrifices - He wanted His people to know that He had no pleasure in the sacrifices of dumb animals if they were not accompanied by the repentance, faith and dedication of those offering them. In this regard, Morris says: “God takes no delight in the routine performance of the ritual of sacrifice”

(Morris, 1983:91). Vincent (1961-62) says: “The writer’s purpose is not to assert that obedience is better than sacrifice but to claim that, in that it fulfilled the will of God”, “Christ’s sacrifice of Himself surpassed the Leviticus sacrifices” (Nelson, 2003:256). In line with his usual tendencies, the writer prefers to use the LXX rendering: “a body hast thou prepared me” to the Hebrew “ears hast thou dug for me”. Exodus 21:6 and Deuteronomy 15:17 refer to the boring of a slave’s ear after seven years, if he decided to stay with his master permanently (Spencer, 1997:190). The bored ear was a symbol of obedience.

Smith (1984) says that when Jesus was put below an angelic status by partaking of human nature and by sharing in the flesh and the blood (Heb 2:5-18), the writer’s placing of Psalm 40 into the mouth of Jesus as a piece of self-description is very appropriate. The Hebrew manuscript of Psalm 40 is comprised of the phrase “ears thou hast dug for me”, but the Greek version of the Old Testament, with which the writer of Hebrews and his community seem to have been acquainted, reads: “a body hast thou prepared for me” (Ps 40:6). The meaning is essentially the same: God neither wants nor has a delight in animal sacrifices and offerings. He only wants ears that are attentive and obedient, and bodies that do His will. However, it is prodigiously useful and suggestive that the writer retrieves the word “body” from the abovementioned Psalm. He jumps on it and portrays Jesus Himself as singing: “Oh God, a body hast thou prepared for me”. And He committed Himself to surrendering that body to accomplish what all burnt and sin offerings were not able to fulfill (Smith, 1984:122-123, cf. Allen, 1972; Lenski, 1966; Edgcumbe, 1977 and Delitzsch, 1978).

Hebrews 10:5b-7 presents some alterations to Ps 40(39):7-9. These quite clearly show that the LXX is relied on, because the second clause of verse five differs remarkably from the MT. The Hebrews phrase reads: “ears hast thou dug for me”. The LXX rendering is “you fashioned a body for me”, which is probably an interpretative phrase for the obscure Hebrew one. Hebrews differs from the LXX in v 6, where, instead of “you did not seek”, Hebrews reads: “you were not pleased” ( $\exists \Leftrightarrow \sigma, \Leftrightarrow * \bar{\sigma} \theta \Phi \forall \lambda$ ), perhaps being influenced by the other text from the Psalms. This alteration might have been made for the sake of consistency, since through the law, God did require sacrifices (9:19-22), if only a shadow of what was truly pleasing (Attridge, 1989:274).

The conclusion is shortened and rearranged from the LXX: “I wish to do your will, my God” ( $\vartheta \cong \neg B \cong 4 \uparrow \Phi \forall 4 \vartheta \in 2 \exists 80 : \zeta \Phi \cong \Lambda, \textcircled{2}, \bar{\lambda} : \cong \langle, f \exists \cong \Lambda 8 Z \langle$ ). In the above verses, the psalmist compares conventional sacrifices of the temple cult to his own willing service. The list of conventional sacrifices alluded to the whole cultic system. “Sacrifice” ( $\Phi \Lambda \Phi : \forall \langle$ ), like the Hebrew term it translates, is a general name for any animal sacrifice. “Offering” ( $B \Lambda \cong \Phi N \cong \Delta \zeta$ ) only appears in this chapter. “Holocaust” ( $\textcircled{8} \cong 6 \forall \beta \vartheta T : \forall$ ) is the standard technical name for burnt offerings. The phrase “sacrifice for sin” ( $B, \vartheta \forall \square : \forall \Delta \vartheta : \forall \lambda$ ) is the normal technical translation (Attridge, 1989:274).



The verb  $\square\langle\forall\Delta\Delta\epsilon T$  in Hebrews 10:9 may be translated as “do away with”, or “abolish”. The sacrificial offering of Christ abrogated the first covenant and brought into force the second (Grundmann, 1971:649). By the first ( $\varrho \bar{B}\Delta^{TM}\varrho\equiv\langle$ , Heb 10:9) the writer is referring to the Mosaic covenant that the sacrifice of Jesus has made “old, antiquated, and outdated” (Michaelis, 1968:866). Hebrews 10:7 stipulates that, when a deeper understanding of the will of God had been attained through divine revelation, and the complete ripeness of time had come, then Christ said “Lo, I come” or “Lo, I have come” (RSV). Christ’s submission to His Father’s will was not only an act of time, but also a process of eternity. Kephalis’ volume refers to the knob at the end of a roller, around which the manuscript roll was wound - in the volume of the book it is therefore better translated as “in the roll of the book”. In Psalm 40, the reference was to divine law, but for Christ the meaning encompasses all the Old Testament Scriptures (Hewitt, 1973:158; cf. Smith, 1984).

As Attridge points out, Hebrews 10:8 shows that an exegetical comment follows the citation. The interpretive method has been compared to the *pesharim* of Qumran, but it is more complex. The exegesis does not aim at finding a prophetic correspondence between an ancient institution or scriptural symbolism and a contemporary event. Rather, the text, construed as a grammatical remark on Christ Himself, is seen to display an opposition between two principles (Attridge, 1989:275).

The first stage of the exegesis gathers and highlights references to the various sacrifices of the old cultic system, which the speaker in the psalm referred to as “first” ( $\square\langle\phi\varrho,\Delta\equiv\langle$ ). The paraphrase makes all references to sacrifices plural, probably in order to emphasise the generality of the condemnation. It then combines the two verbs that express the psalmist’s judgment that God did not approve of these rituals. Although the psalmist was probably familiar with the prophetic criticisms of cult, it did not in fact repudiate cultic activity in general. The writer of Hebrews, by focusing on the opposition between external cultic acts and internal obedience, sets the stage for such repudiation (Attridge, 1989:275).

All of the sacrifices mentioned in the psalm were offered “according to a law” or “legally” ( $\phi\forall\varrho\square\langle : \equiv\langle$ ). Although the phrase is anarthrous, it certainly refers to the torah that foreshadowed the good things of the eschaton (v 1), but in its capacity or character as an external and superficial injunction. This characterisation is familiar from the earlier discussion of the Leviticus priesthood (Attridge, 1989:275). The contrasting principle is found in what the speaker in the Psalms says after the reference to sacrifices, in expressing his readiness to obey God’s will. In commenting on the two opposing principles, the writer of Hebrews again reverts to technical, legal terminology for laws and testaments (Attridge, 1989:276).

The text indicates that the speaker, with his critical remarks, “annuls” ( $\square\langle\forall\Delta\Delta,4$ ) the “first” or former set of cultic principles summarised in verse 8. He does so in

order to “establish” ( $\Phi\theta Z\Phi\rightarrow$ ) the second principle of obedience to God’s will. The removal of the first priesthood and the law built upon it was heralded in the oracle of Psalm 110. The promise of a new covenant in Jeremiah indicated that the old one was antiquated and close to disappearance (Attridge, 1989:276). The actual abrogation of the old, ineffective way of atonement and of incomplete access to God is now seen to have occurred through Christ’s act of obedience. In this remark, both the prophetic exaltation of obedience over external cult and the general, Hellenistic reinterpretation of the cult, will finally lead to important paraenetic implications, as found in Hebrews 13:15 (Attridge, 1989:276).

In Hebrews 10:10, Attridge says that the pericope and whole reflection on the heavenly sacrifice and the new covenant comes to a climax, which resumes and integrates the thematic development of the central expository section. While much of the language is traditional, the verse is not simply, if at all, an inherited formula, but rather the focal point of the writer’s argument. What has taken place in Christ is the accomplishment of the divine “will” ( $2,8Z:\forall 94$ ). The importance of the divine will or plan in determining the course of Christ’s life, death and salvific action is commonplace. However, this divine will is not something extrinsic to Christ’s sacrificial act. Through His ready obedience, He has made that will His own (Attridge, 1989:276).

The connection between the will of God and Christian “sanctification” ( $\equiv(4\forall\Phi:\Xi\leq 4)$ ) is traditional. However, this connection takes on a special and more direct significance in the context of Christ’s self-sacrifice. The sanctification that occurs through the sacrifice of Christ will not only become a regular way of describing the results of His act (Ladd, 1993:628). This motif is another way of referring to the perfection and cleansing of conscience that the sacrifice achieved. Cleansing, in the imagery of the Yom Kippur and purification rituals, had been described in terms of Christ’s “blood”, and “sanctification” will later (10:29) be associated with that same “blood”. The fact that now, the “sanctification” takes place through the divine will that Christ embodied, finally clarifies part of the symbolic significance of the “blood”. It is because of this internal dimension to Christ’s act that is “heavenly” - better than the blood of animals offered according to the law, effective in the spiritual realm of the conscience, and adequate for establishing the new covenant promised by Jeremiah (Lindars, 1991:98).

Equally emphasised is the fact that Christ’s offering is not purely an internal affair. His obedience to the divine will is embodied, and His sacrifice involves His “body” ( $\Phi^{TM}:\forall$ ). References to the salvific effects of Christ’s “body”, that is, His bodily sacrifice, are common in early Christian sources, but this traditional imagery takes on a special significance in this pericope (Lindars, 1991:99-101).

In the “offering” ( $BA\cong\Phi N\cong\Delta\zeta$ ) on Calvary, the heavenly and earthly realms became intersected and inextricably intertwined. This union is reflected in the compound name “Jesus Christ”. Here, the name of Jesus, which can be used

with particular reference to the redeemer in His humanity, and Christ, associated with His exalted heavenly status, are solemnly associated for the first time. The pericope closes with an emphatic affirmation of the uniqueness of Christ's sacrifice. The adverb "once for all" ( $\text{ἅπασι}$ ), which has characterised the exposition on Christ's death, appears for the last time. The basis for this is clear, now that the heavenly and earthly have been so closely linked (Attridge, 1989:277, cf. Smith, 1984; Hewitt, 1973). This section has dealt with the sacrifice of the body of Christ, in an attempt to show how the once-and-for-all single sacrifice of the body of Jesus accomplished God's will with regard to sacrificial rituals. The following section will discuss the implications of Jesus' posture after the performance of His priestly sacrifice.

### 10.5.1.2 Christ's seated posture implies that His sacrificial work has been accomplished once and forever

The writer's second argument in demonstrating the superiority of the sacrifice of Christ is that after He had offered Himself, He "sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb 10:11-14). In Hebrews 10:11-14, the writer reiterates the points mentioned in Hebrews 10:1-4, that is, that the Old Testament sacrifices were repeated again and again, and were ineffective (Dods, 1970:4:344; Westcott, 1978:313; Delitzsch, 1978:160). The Old Testament priests stood daily in the tabernacle, offering the same sacrifices. The very posture of the priest, that is, standing (Kent, 1972:192), as well as the repetitive nature of their sacrifices, indicates their inappropriateness and uselessness, because they "can never take away sin" (Heb 10:11).

The emphatic tone in verses 11-14 is different, however. In verses 1-4, the emphasis is on the inferior nature of animal sacrifices; in verses 11-14, the emphasis is placed on the work of the priests (Dods, 1970:344). The expression "to stand before the Lord" sounds like a technical rendering in the Old Testament of Leviticus service (Nm 16:9; Dt 10:8; 18:7). This was the appropriate position for priests during their ministerial duties (Delitzsch, 1978:2:159; Montefiore, 1964:169). Only the Davidic king was allowed to sit in the court (2Sm 7:18; Delitzsch, 1978:159-160). In Hebrews 10:11, the perfect tense  $\text{ἵκετο}$  is used. It transmits "a vivid picture". The Old Testament priesthood stood and kept on standing - they are a priesthood that stands (Wuest, 1962:176).

In Hebrews 10:1, the Day of Atonement ("annual, year by year",  $\text{שָׁנָה אֶחָדָּה אֶחָדָּה}$ ) is the focus. In Hebrews 10:11, the argument progressively increases in intensity - the entire package of Jewish sacrifices is included in the argument (see also Heb 7:27). By way of implication, the writer makes it clear that annual sacrifices did not make people holy, even for one year. Daily ( $\text{כֹּהֵן יוֹמִיּוֹת}$ ) sacrifices were to be performed for sins and were ineffective (Lenski, 1966:334; Montefiore, 1964:169). However, in Hebrews 10:12, Jesus performed one sacrifice and then sat down. The writer's argument is clear: Christ's sacrifice is instrumental and ultimate - it has fulfilled its purpose of taking away sin and drawing men to God.

Christ has taken His seat because His work has been accomplished. Caution should be taken with regard to three devices used by the writer “to drive home” the infinite consummation of Christ’s sacrifice. The first device is all about the utilisation of the aorist participle  $BA\equiv\Phi,<\Xi(i\forall H$  of the verb  $BA\equiv\Phi NE\Delta T$  (“to offer”). This shows a sharp contrast to his use of the present participle  $BA\equiv\Phi NE\Delta T<$  in Hebrews 10:11 for the Old Testament priests. This meticulous use of tenses occurs throughout the Epistle (MacLeod, 1989:446). When he speaks about the Aaronic high priest, he uniformly uses the present tense to emphasise the continuous nature of their sacrifices (Heb 5:1, 3; 8:3a, 4; 9:7; 10:1, 2, 8). On the other hand, when he speaks of Christ’s offering, he uses the aorist participle to emphasise its being unique and having a non-repetitive character - never to be repeated again, as portrayed in Hebrews 8:3b; 9:14, 28; 10:12 (Stott, 1962-63:65).

“That this is the force of the aorist is suggested by the second device”, that is, the use of the adjective  $∴∇$  (“one”) in Hebrews 10:12. This, combined with the writer’s use of  $\Xi N\zeta B\forall>$  (“once for all”) in Hebrews 7:27; 9:12 and 10:10 and  $\square B\forall>$  (“once”) in Hebrews 9:26, 28, stresses even more the once-and-for-all nature of Christ’s high priestly sacrifice (Cullmann, 1959:98-99). The third device is the phrase “for all time” ( $∴H\vartheta *40T,1\infty H$ ) in Hebrews 10:12, which indicates that Christ’s sacrifice remains eternally effective (MacLeod, 1989:446, cf. Smith, 1984).

The phrase  $∴H\vartheta\in *40<,1\infty H$  in Hebrews 10:12 has been “punctuated” in two ways: (1) Darby (1971), Delitzsch (1978:160-161), Dods (1970:345), Moffat (1924:140) and Buchanan (1972:169) have joined it to the verb  $\Xi i\zeta 24\Phi,<$  (“He sat down in perpetuity”). (2) Other scholars such as Bengel (1971:648), Westcott (1984:314), Bruce (1964:237), Montefiore (1964:169) and Hughes (1977:400) join the phrase to the previous one (“one sacrifice for sins for all time”). This interpretation appears to be the best for this study, because it follows the writer’s usage in Hebrews 7:3; 10:1, 14, where he joins  $∴H\vartheta\in *40T,1\infty H$  to what comes before it. The first view obliterates the truth that Christ’s one sacrifice is eternally valid. It also adds a foreign thought to the writer’s use of  $i\forall 2∴T$ , which stresses the presupposition of the throne, and not the permanent sitting on it (MacLeod, 1989:446, cf. Hewitt, 1973). There are suggestions that “for ever” must be linked to one sacrifice for sins, while “others” connect the one sacrifice to “sat down”. Westcott remarks that “the connection with “sat down” obscures the perpetual efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice; it weakens the contrast with  $\spadesuit\Phi 906,<$ , standeth; it is a foreign idea of the assumption ( $f6\zeta 24\Phi,<$ ) of the royal Christ” (Westcott, 1984:313-314).

Attridge maintains that the contrast between Christ and the priests of the old covenant is outdated, framed not in terms of the action of the high priests, but more generally in terms of what “every priest” ( $B\square\Phi\supseteq,\Delta,\beta\lambda$ ) does. This is not because of the reference to a “daily” ( $6\forall 2\zeta \equiv:\Xi\Delta\forall<$ ) sacrifice, since the writer of Hebrews understands the priests to be involved there as well. The choice of

“priest”, as much as the plural term of sacrifices in 10:8, indicates the universal nature of all functionaries of the old covenant, high priests included. In “ministering” (8,4911Δ(™<)), the typical priest of old “has stood” (♠Φ906,<), in contrast to Christ, who is seated in glory (Attridge, 1989:279).

As they stand in attendance at the earthly altar, these priests offer the same sacrifices, which are characteristic of what is inferior. The alliterative collocation (B≅88ς64λ BΔΦNΞΔT<) recalls not only the most recent critique of the multiplicity of sacrifices, but also the negative appraisal of multiplicity (B≅8λ.;Δ™λ,B≅8λ9Δ B̄Tλ) suggested in the exordium. That such sacrifices can never have the desired effect of “removing” (B,Δ4,8,ϕ<) sin is a familiar refrain (Attridge, 1989:277). Attridge goes on to claim that in Hebrews 10:12, the contrasting reference to Christ’s sacrifice signifies an even richer mosaic of phrases and themes in Hebrews. The comparison of the many sacrifices of old to the “one” (: : ∇<) offering of Christ once again places the emphasis on the unique “heavenly” sacrifice of the preceding paragraphs. The sequence of the atonement, followed by the heavenly session, recalls the hymn-like language of the exordium (Heb1:3). Similarly, the allusion to Psalm 110 uses the same formula for “at the right hand” (f< \*,>4□), found in the exordium and the initial discussion of Christ’s heavenly “liturgy” (Westcott, 1984:315).

The adverbial phrase “in perpetuity” (,9λ 9∈ \*40<,6Ξλ) is another typical expression in Hebrews (Heb 10:12). Its position here is ambiguous, and could modify the preceding reference to Christ’s sacrifice, the perpetuity of which would now be in view. The balance of the clause in this verse supports a “construal” of what follows, where the perpetuity of Christ’s exaltation is emphasised (Attridge, 1989:280). The contrast between the priests’ standing and Christ’s session does not serve to suggest anything with regard to Christ’s heavenly ministry, nor does it suggest anything concerning His royal status that contrasts with the non-royal status of the priests of the old covenant. The imagery of the session should be interpreted within the framework of Hebrews. The basic point would then be that once His sacrifice on Calvary was completed, Christ’s atoning work was done, and He entered His glorious rest. The Psalm thus serves here to affirm the decisive finality of Christ’s expiatory act (Gossai, 2001:234; cf. Stedman, 1992).

In terms of Hebrews 10:13, Allen (1972:71) states that the phrase “to wait” suggests that it is as if the author is pointing out that Christ sits, telling Himself with complete confidence: “Now let it work”! The author of Hebrews favourably quotes from Psalm 110:1, where God promised defeat of all the foes and to submit them to Christ. Christ had now fully accomplished all that was necessary for His ultimate victory. He could therefore relax and wait for the time when this shall take place. In approaching Hebrews 10:13, Westcott (1984:314-315) points out that Christ Himself, in His royal, divine nature, “waits” as “the husbandman for the processes of nature (Ja 5:7) and the patriarchs for the divine promise” (Heb 11:10). There is a situation in which the triumphant return of Christ is only known to the Father (Mt 24:36; Mk 13:32; Ac 1:7), and to some extent, external to the

actions of men (Ac 3:19; 2Pt 3:12). The return of Christ seems to occur after the defeat of His foes (1Cor 15:22-28).

Hebrews 10:13 shows that the allusion to Psalm 110 continues as the writer reverts to that text's promise of the eschatological subjection that Christ "henceforth" ( $\theta \in \delta \cong 4B \bar{\leftarrow}$ ) waits for. The reference to Christ's "enemies" ( $\int \Pi 2 \Delta \cong . :$ ) remains vague, as in its first appearance. The paraphrase of the verse, with its expected consummation of Christ's Lordship, identifies the eschatological hint that appeared in Hebrews 9:28, and prepares for the development of an eschatological perspective in what follows (Attridge, 1989:280).

However, Gossai (2001:235) says that Hebrews 10:13 does not refer to the passivity of the Priest. If so, then how does it add to the argument of the writer? Truly speaking, it is more than just an ornamental statement. The context suggests that verse thirteen provides the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* of a hiatus on sacrifices in God's program -the contribution of the reference to Psalm 110:1 in Hebrews 10:12-13 is threefold:

- It promotes the superiority of Christ's priesthood in that "no Leviticus priest ever sat in the Holy of holies",
- most significantly, Psalm 110:1 "underscores the finality of Christ's sacrifice". His sitting signalled cessation, not from activity, but from further sacrifices to be made on His part as a High Priest - perhaps no passage of Scripture expresses the completed nature of Christ's sacrificial work better than this (Gossai, 2001:235-236), and
- The sitting of the Priest not only indicated something very significant about His sacrifice (verse 12), but also indicated something very significant concerning the impact of His sacrifice upon His saints. They have been made perfect forever, and sacrifices for sins will be completely discontinued (Gossai, 2001:236).

Hebrews 10:14 suggests that Christ needs only to wait for the final subjection of His foes, because of the decisive finality of His sacrificial act, the effects of which are now summarised. Once again, it is a "single offering" ( $: 4 \square B \Delta \cong \Phi N \cong \Delta \square$ ) that is involved. Christ brought the perfection that the law and its cult could not, and His own act has "perpetual" ( $, \mathcal{N} \lambda \theta \in * 40 < , 6 \mathcal{E} \lambda$ ) effects (Attridge, 1989:280). The description of the recipients of this perfection as those "who are being sanctified" ( $\theta \cong \beta \lambda \square (4 \forall . \cong : \mathcal{E} < \cong \lambda \lambda)$ ), reinforces the connection between perfection and sanctity that was established in the previous pericope. However, the present tense used here nuances the relationship, suggesting that the appropriation of the enduring effects of Christ's act is an ongoing present reality. This note too, like the eschatological allusions of the previous verse, hints at the paraenesis of the following chapters, where the addressees are called upon to live in the faith perfected by Jesus (Heb 12:2), which in turn leads to their own perfection (Heb 11:40). The creative tension between what Christ is understood to have done,

and what remains for His followers to do, begins to emerge with particular clarity (Attridge, 1989:281).

According to Peterson (1982), the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews starts comparing the respective priests in Hebrews 10:11-14. Some ideas already expressed in Hebrews 10:1-4 are reiterated here: the Leviticus priests were preoccupied with daily, repetitive sacrificial performances which were incapable of removing sin (Peterson, 1982:148).

However, Christ performed one sacrifice for sin which possessed everlasting efficacy (*ὅτι ἅμαρτιας ἕνεκεν*). The salient emphasis in these verses is the comparison between many priests of Judaism “standing” during their daily sacrificial ministry (*ἵστασθαι ἕνεκεν*), and Christ “sitting” at the right hand of God. Psalm 110:1 is once more connected to Christ’s priestly ministry (Heb 1:3; 8:1), in order to demonstrate afresh that His sacrifice was ultimate and thoroughly instrumental: “the rest is a sign of perfection”, “the sitting a sign of dominion” (Peterson, 1982:148-149).

The *καὶ* of Hebrews 10:14 brings together the denouement of that verse with the argument that precedes it, and the perfect tense of *ἵστασθαι*, *ἵστασθαι*, *ἵστασθαι* again stresses that the sacrifice of Christ has an everlasting benefit for Christian believers. The *ὅτι ἅμαρτιας ἕνεκεν* provides a further emphasis with regard to the thought of continuing instrumentality: “the virtue of Christ’s work remains ever available as long as the need of man exists” (Peterson, 1982:149). The medium through which Christ has rendered His people perfect is His sacrificial death (*ἡ ἀποθνήσκουσα ἑαυτῆς ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἁγιασθῆναι* - see verse 12). The perfection that was impossible in the Leviticus priesthood (Heb 7:11), the law and its sacrifices (Heb 7:19; 9:9; 10:1), is here promulgated as an act of Christ, already fulfilled by His single sacrifice for sin (Peterson, 1982:149).

The text of Jeremiah 31:31-34 indicates a once-and-for-all offering for forgiveness, that never requires a further sacrifice for sin (Heb 10:18). Nevertheless, the perfection mentioned here by the writer cannot be merely equated with the forgiveness of sins or the cleansing of the conscience. The promise of forgiveness in Jeremiah 31:31-34 constitutes the grounds for a new “relationship of heart-obedience” to God on the part of His people. The ultimate consecration of men to God which is mentioned in the prophecy of Jeremiah is brought to fruition through the sacrifice of the body of Christ once-and-for-all (Heb 10:10), granting the necessary assurance that God will forgive their sins and misdeeds forever (Peterson, 1982:149). In the above section, this study has discussed the fact that Christ, seated at the right hand of God, spreads the good news that His work is completely done. The following section will attempt to show how the new covenant, ratified through the bodily sacrifice of Jesus, confirms that sin has been removed.

### 10.5.1.3 The ratification of the new covenant confirms that sin has been removed

The writer finds more support for the supremacy of Christ's sacrificial offering in the testimony of the Holy Spirit in Jeremiah's prophetic new covenant in Hebrews 10:15-18 - see Jeremiah 31:33-34 (Davidson, 1882:195). According to this Old Testament prophetic communication, the Holy Spirit bears witness to the writer's argument that the sacrifice of Christ is ultimate and instrumental. The divine promise that the Lord will completely forgive the sins of His people seems to imply that sin has finally been removed for good, and that there is no longer a need to perform sacrifices for sin (MacLeod, 1989:447). Jeremiah 31 is quoted in Hebrews 8 in order to indicate the cancellation of the old covenant - it is quoted in Hebrews 10:16-17 in order to firmly establish the immutability of the new covenant (Bruce, 1964:242).

The verb  $\forall\Delta\theta\Lambda\Delta\epsilon\tau$  was used in the legal procedures of a witness ( $:\zeta\Delta\theta\Lambda\theta$ ) to facts, that is, one "who can speak about them from his own direct knowledge". In Hebrews 10:15, the Holy Spirit is brought in to bear divine witness to the truth of the writer's argument. The idea is that this witnessing gives validity to the writer's words (Strathmann, 1967:475-76, 489-497). There are two interpretations of the dative pronoun  $\heartsuit:\rho<$  ("to us") in Hebrews 10:15:

- $\heartsuit:\rho<$  comprises both the writer and the readers, that is, the Holy Spirit testifies the truth to us all (Delitzsch, 1978:2:164; Westcott, 1984:316; Moffat, 1924:141).
- However, Dods (1970:101) and Bruce (1964:241) suggest that  $\heartsuit:\rho<$  appears as a literary plural associated with the writer. The Holy Spirit "bears witness to Him", that is, in His favour, in order to substantiate what he has been saying. Consequently,  $\heartsuit:\rho<$  may be classified as a dative of advantage.

With regard to Hebrews 10:15-17, Attridge says: "that Christ's sacrifice provides perpetual perfection and sanctification is confirmed by the scriptures", whose author the "Holy Spirit", speaking through Jeremiah, "bears witness" ( $:\forall\Delta\theta\Lambda\Delta, \rho$ ). This reprise of the prophecy cited in chapter eight focuses on two verses. The citation formula "after saying" ( $;\theta\sqsupset \theta\in, \theta\Delta\theta\epsilon<\forall\Delta$ ) would seem to introduce the first of these, but there is no resumption before the second. While it might be possible to understand an implicit "he says" before verse seventeen, it is more natural to take the phrase "the Lord says", which is part of the quotation, as introducing its second segment (Attridge, 1989:281).

This indicates that the writer of Hebrews is not simply content to cite his scriptural sources, but, as he often does, manipulates the text to tease from it a meaning particularly suited to his argument. Such manipulation is also evident in the slight differences within the citation to the form of the text used earlier. Instead of a covenant "with the household of Israel" ( $\theta(\epsilon\cap\theta\sigma\zeta\Phi\Delta\lambda\theta)$ ), this citation simply reads "with them" ( $B\Delta\epsilon\epsilon\lambda \forall\leftrightarrow\theta\epsilon\beta\lambda$ ), perhaps because the new covenant is of

more universal scope. The order of “hearts” and “minds” in verse sixteen is the reverse of what it had previously been. This order may give prominence to the “heart” that will figure prominently in what follows (10:22), but otherwise is of little significance. The addition of “and their iniquities” (6 $\forall$  $\mathcal{R}$  9 $^{TM}$ <  $\square$ <:4 $^{TM}$ <  $\forall$  $\leftrightarrow$ 9 $^{TM}$ <) and the future :<0 $\Phi$ 2 $Z\Phi$  $\Xi$ : $\forall$ 4 for the subjunctive :<0 $\Phi$ 2 $^{TM}$  make this promise more vivid and emphatic (Attridge, 1989:281).

The major alteration of the quotation is caused by the close association of the promise to “write the law” in the heart and to permanently forgive sins. Both are essential and mutually implicit features of the new covenant promised in Jeremiah, as this is understood in Hebrews. It is clear that the law written on the heart is not the old fleshy law that has been superseded, but the “law” of willing obedience that Christ embodied, and that serves as a model for Christians. It is by virtue of Christ’s internal or spiritual act of conformity to God’s will that the covenant is initially introduced and sin effectively forgiven (Attridge, 1989:281). At the same time, it is by virtue of the effective forgiveness of sin that an intimate covenantal relationship with God is made possible. The quotation from Jeremiah, now illuminated by the exposition of chapters nine and ten, thus not only confirms the permanence of the “perfection” that Christ has wrought for His followers. It also helps to define that perfection and “the sanctification” that it involves (Attridge, 1989:281).

In Hebrews 10:18, Attridge points out that the quotation from Jeremiah is rounded off with a brief comment that highlights the decisive significance of Christ’s sacrifice. The promise in Jeremiah not to “remember” sins and iniquities is rephrased in terms of their “remission” ( $\square$  $N$ , $\Phi$ 4 $\lambda$ ). Where such remission has taken place, there is no longer any need for a sin offering. The phrase, in effect, reiterates the insight derived from the exegesis of Psalm 40:8-9, that the old cultic system has been abrogated. What this system aimed at has been replaced by the unique and everlasting sacrifice of Christ, and the ratification of the new covenant resulting from it (Attridge, 1989:281-282; Westcott, 1984). See also Zimmermann (1977:176-188); Laub (1980:113-143) and Vanhoye (1980:136-141) in this regard.

First of all, something unusual about the terminology must be mentioned. The usual Greek word for “covenant” is \*4 $\forall$ 2 $Z$ 10<, which does not appear in the New Testament. The word \*4 $\forall$ 2 $Z$ 10 constitutes the ordinary term for a last will and testament (Morris, 1986:307). It is uniformly used in this manner, both in the Bible and outside. The thought in connection with the covenant that God made with Israel, of course, \*4 $\forall$ 2 $Z$ 10< constitutes the main concepts of the Old Testament. It is quite plausible that translators thought that with its connotation of two parties engaged in establishing the terms of an agreement and adhering to it, it did not represent a proper term that would accurately describe what transpired when God made a covenant, since there was no merchandise involved (Morris, 1986:307). God worked out the terms that He presented to Israel, and all that Israel had to do was to agree to those terms. Whether this might be the reason or

not, the fact seems clear: translators preferred *\*4V2Zi0*, the usual word for ‘will’, as their term for the Hebrew “covenant”, which they used not occasionally but 277 times (Morris, 1986:307).

The New Testament therefore inherited a major problem. Do New Testament writers and the writer of Hebrews in particular use the word *\*4V2Zi0* in keeping with its original usage in Greek writings in general, that is, as a “testament” or “will”, or in the manner it is used in their Holy Scripture as a “covenant”? In a traditional sense, it has been perceived as a “testament” and results in our Bible’s title page bearing the inscriptions “The Old Testament” and “The New Testament” (Morris, 1986:307). This study thinks that the term “covenant” best expresses what God has entrusted His people with in terms of the legal system. However, in a case such as Hebrews 9:17, the Hebrew word “covenant” may be perceived as “testament”. The first two times that the writer of Hebrews uses it, he portrays Jesus as the mediator of a “better covenant” (Heb 7:22; 8:6), specifying the second time that it is grounded in “better promises” (Heb 8:6).

The writer quotes the prophecy in Jeremiah 31:31-34 in Hebrews 10:16-17. He goes directly to statements regarding forgiveness which constitute his favourite area. Jesus introduced a new way to God which was no longer dependent on obedience to an external code. God’s law is inscribed upon the hearts of His people. The end results stipulate that salvation is not a product of their merits, but of the forgiveness graciously wrought about through Jesus’ shedding of His blood. Sacrifices performed under the old covenant were incapable of removing sin - they would only constitute a reminder of it (Heb 10:3). However, Christ has completely dealt with sin (Heb 9:26), declaring the old covenant, which the readers of Hebrews were seemingly still clinging to, as obsolete (Heb 8:13). The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus’ death empowers the called ones to receive “the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Heb 9:15).

He goes on to specify that it is actually this death that grants redemption for sins committed during the old covenant dispensation, since the Leviticus sacrifices were inept at removing sin. Old Testament believers were therefore genuinely saved, because Jesus’ sacrifice took away their sins as well as those of the people who would come to Him later. At the denouement of the Epistle, the writer speaks of “the blood of the eternal covenant”(Heb 13:20). It is clearly understood that Jesus’ priesthood is perpetual, and that it will never be superseded, like the Leviticus priesthood was. This is also applicable to the old covenant. After fulfilling its goal, it has been discontinued by the new covenant that was established through the blood of Christ: the new covenant is everlasting - it cannot be done away with (Morris, 1986:309).

#### **10.5.1.4 How the bodily sacrifice of Jesus dealt with Sin**

An amazing feature of Hebrews is the diverse manner in which the writer portrays the meaning of Jesus’ redemptive work. In his introductory sentence, he

claims that Jesus “made a cleansing of sins” (Heb 1:3). Sin renders one filthy. However, Jesus has removed this filthiness. He is exceedingly merciful and faithful regarding matters related to God “so that He may make propitiation for the sins of His people” (Heb 2:17). Many translations use “expiation” here, which usually deals with the appeasing of wrath. The death of Christ has appeased the wrath of God. Sometimes, sin is spoken of as being borne. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Christ was offered in order to “bear the sins of many” (Heb 9:28). The idea of “bearing” sins signifies the Old Testament notion, which meant bearing the consequences or penalties of sins (Nm 14:33-34; Ezk 18:20). Therefore, Jesus carried upon Himself what sinners ought to have carried (Morris, 1986:308).

The writer uses sacrificial terminology and indicates that Christ offered “a sacrifice for (  $\downarrow B\infty\Delta \square: \forall \Delta 94^{TM} <$  ) sins for ever” (Heb 10:12) - he uses “sacrifice” again in Hebrews 9:26 and Hebrews 10:26. In the last passage, “for” is  $B, \Delta 9$ , not  $\downarrow B\infty\Delta$ as, as in verse 12 - another small change is the manner of viewing sacrifice. The writer may also speak of Jesus’ “offering” ( $B\Delta \equiv \Phi N \equiv \Delta \forall$ ) of Himself (Heb 10:10, 14, 18). At other times, he chooses to use the terminology of forgiveness (Heb 10:18; 9:22). Sin is rendered “null and void” by Christ’s sacrifice - it is cancelled (Heb 9:26), and Jesus accomplishes redemption (Heb 9:15). The quotation of the new covenant in Hebrews 8:12 and 10:17 emphasises the fact that God no longer remembers the sins of those protected by the new covenant (Peterson, 1982:137).

Further reflection shows one that Hebrews often describes what the old way failed to achieve, implying that Christ improved the deficiencies of the past. This refers to the sacrifice for sin (Heb 5:3), the meeting of the need of the worshippers’ consciences (Heb 10:2) with offerings of gifts and sacrifices (Heb 5:1), with removing of sins ( $\square N \forall \Delta \Delta, \rho <$  Heb 10:4,  $B, \Delta \Delta, 8, \rho <$  Heb 10:11, and with burnt and sin offerings (Heb 10:6). The Leviticus sacrificial system failed to resolve the problem of sin, but Christ has cancelled it completely and forever (Morris, 1986:308). The different ways of describing Christ’s work indicate the writer’s profound conviction that this work was multi-faceted and that it was “the thoroughly effective, divine way of meeting our deepest need” (Gossai, 2001:236).

In the above section, this study has attempted to clarify how the bodily sacrifice of Jesus dealt with sin. Before drawing any conclusions with regard to the superiority of the bodily sacrifice of Jesus, the researcher would like to show, based on the fact that the full sacrifice of Jesus was composed of both body and blood, that the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus sanctions the superiority of His bodily sacrifice, that is, His sacrifice as a whole.

## 10.6 JESUS’ BLOOD-LIFE SACRIFICE SANCTIONS THE SUPERIORITY OF HIS SACRIFICE

### 10.6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous sections have mainly discussed the sacrifice of Jesus and its absolute superiority over Leviticus animal sacrifices. In the following paragraphs, this study will endeavour to show the absolute superiority of Jesus' blood-life sacrifice over the animal blood-life of the old order, by emphasising how the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus endorses the superiority of His bodily sacrifice. Blood-life will be used in this section to mean blood, and blood-life sacrifice to mean sacrificial blood, blood for sacrifice or sacrificed blood. Therefore, this study will discuss the Leviticus high priests' entrance into the earthly sanctuary through animal blood-life sacrifice, the significance of animal blood-life sacrifices in the old order, the benefits of animal blood-life sacrifices in the symbolic, earthly sanctuary, and animal blood-life sacrifices and the red heifer's ashes purification significance.

The researcher will go on to discuss the fact that Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary through His blood-life sacrifice emphasises His sacrifice's superiority by indicating the following: Jesus' blood-life sacrifice secured eternal redemption; Jesus' blood-life sacrifice was a ransom price for redemption; Jesus' blood-life sacrifice made eternal atonement for sins; Jesus' blood-life sacrifice cleansed the worshippers' consciences; Jesus' blood-life sacrifice was performed through the Eternal Spirit; and Jesus' blood-life sacrifice sanctioned the superiority of His bodily sacrifice because it was the sacrifice of Himself.

#### 10.6.1.1 The Leviticus high priests' entrance into the earthly sanctuary through animal blood-life sacrifice

In this regard, Hebrews 9:7 indicates that once a year, the high priest had to enter the inner sanctuary (Lv 16:32-33). He was not to do so arbitrarily, only once a year (Lv 2), and then only under strictly prescribed conditions (Lv 16:3-17). The one condition that the writer specifies is  $\Leftrightarrow \text{PTA}^{\text{H}} \forall \text{Z}:\forall \text{g}\exists \text{H}$ , "never without blood", which the high priest offered for his own sins and for those committed in ignorance by the people (Lane, 1991:222). This entrance into the Holy of holies once a year through the blood of animals signifies its inadequacy and inability to effect perfection (Owen, 1968:163).

It was prescribed that the blood of a slaughtered bull had to be sprinkled onto the cover of the ark of the covenant and in front of it, for the high priest's own sins, and that this action had to be repeated with the blood of a slaughtered goat, as the sin-offering of the people (Lv 16:14-17). In this way, atonement was made "for the most Holy Place because of the uncleanness and the rebellion of the Israelites" (Lv 16:16). The formulation of Leviticus 16:16 is significant, because it describes sin as defilement, and specifies that blood may act as the purging agent. In fact, blood was used to cleanse both compartments of the sanctuary and all its furnishings (Lane, 1991:222).

Wilson (1987:151) and Delitsch (1978:77) support this idea, although Delitsch adds that, in Hebrews 9:19; 10:4; Leviticus 16:3; Hebrews 9:19, the plurals for the names of animal victims are generically used (Delitsch, 1978:77). The use of plurals can be accounted for in many ways: it might have been caused by generalisation or inclusion of all the sacrifices immolated in the Temple, or it might have been occasioned by the annual repetition of sacrificial rituals (Wilson, 1987:152).

Over the course of many centuries, a multitude of goats and bulls have been slaughtered as sacrifices - this multiplicity stands in drastic contrast to the single sacrifice made by the Great High Priest of the new covenant (Wilson, 1987:152). The recurrence of blood has to do with the widespread belief regarding blood in the ancient world, and particularly in the Old Testament and Israel's worship (Wilson, 1987:152). In this section, this study has attempted to indicate that the Leviticus high priest gained entrance into the Holy of Holies of the earthly sanctuary through animal blood-life sacrifices. This blood served as atonement, as well as a purging agent of the most Holy Place and its furnishings. The following paragraphs will discuss the significance of animal blood-life sacrifices in the old order.

#### **10.6.1.2 Significance of the animal blood-life sacrifice in the old order**

According to Leviticus 17:14, “the life of every creature is its blood” – thus, the rulings concerning the killing of animals early in the chapter, and the interdiction of eating the blood, become very significant, both among Old Testament and New Testament (Ac 15:29) worshippers (Wilson, 1987:152). The blood was understood to contain a mysterious power that made it an adequate means for the following: “sacrifices of expiation, rites of purification or for acts of consecration” (Wilson, 1987:152).

The writer of Hebrews points out that “under the law almost everything is purified with the blood, and without the shedding of the blood there is no forgiveness of sin” (Heb 9:22). Nevertheless, one must remember that the Old Testament has been compiled over more than a thousand years of history, during which a change of ideas and their development occurred, even where ceremonial rituals continued to be performed (Wilson, 1987:152). Hosea 6:6 criticises the Old Testament sacrificial system in the following way: “I desire steadfast love and not sacrifices, the knowledge of God than burnt offerings”; “Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand of rivers of oil” (Mi 6:7)? There was an increasing awareness that what God was interested in was “to do justice, to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God” (Wilson, 1987:152)

This understanding of defilement and purging is crucial to the argument in Hebrews 9: 9-10. The reference to blood (  $\forall\subseteq$ :  $\forall$  ), which occurs for the first time in a cultic sense in verse seven, is in preparation for the repeated introduction of this term in a cultic context in the ensuing sections (Heb 9:12, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21,

22; 10:4, 19, 29; cf. 11:28; 12:24; 13:11, 12, 20). Moreover, the writer drives home his point by repeating, with only slight variation, the significant phrase *ΠΤΑΡΗ*  $\forall\zeta:\forall\theta\cong H$  “without blood”, in Heb 9:18 and 9:22. His point is that blood is the medium of approach to God, and this fact emphasises the importance of the reference to Christ’s blood in the ensuing argument (Lane, 1991:222-223).

...”The high priest of the earthly tabernacle and of the still veiled sanctuary” was impaired in order to secure, for either individual worshippers or the entire congregation, the satisfactory possession of those good things of the future through material and animal sacrifices, including animal blood - but Christ now appeared as a High Priest to obtain and bestow them (Delitzsch, 1978:77).

The writer’s departure from the language of the LXX to describe the action of the high priest is striking. The singular use of the verb *ΒΑΞΦΝΕΔ,4<* “to offer”, in reference to the application of the blood in the most Holy place, is without parallel in biblical cultic material. The translation of the LXX used the verbs *Π∇.:<,4<* “to strike” and *ΕΒ4942Ε<∇4* “to apply”, in order to signify the act of aspersion. The subsequent use of *ΒΑΞΦΝΕΔ,4<* in reference to Christ’s death (9:14, 25, 28; 10:12) suggests that the writer has described the annual sprinkling of blood in the inner sanctuary in this way, in order to prepare his readers for recognising the typological parallel between the high point of the atonement ritual in the old covenant, and the self-sacrifice of Christ on the cross (Lane, 1991:223).

This inference finds support when the writer applies the Day of Atonement ritual to Christ in Hebrews 9:25-28. The annual entrance of the high priest for blood aspersion in the most Holy Place finds its eschatological fulfillment in Christ’s death (*ΒΑΞΦΝΞΔζ*, “offering”; Heb 10:10, 14). The creative use of unusual terminology to describe the atonement ritual in Hebrews 9:7 is indicative of the fact that the writer’s interpretation of the Leviticus rite is controlled by Christ’s event (Lane, 1991:223). Delitzsch and Lane both agree on this, as does this study.

In the above section, this study has attempted to briefly discuss the significance of the blood-life sacrifice in the old order, by focusing on the defilement, purification and forgiveness aspects of it. In the following paragraphs, the benefits of animal blood-life sacrifices in the symbolic earthly sanctuary will be discussed.

### **10.6.1.3 The benefits of animal blood-life sacrifices in the symbolic earthly sanctuary**

With regard to Hebrews 9:9, Hewitt (1973:144) claims that the tabernacle, subsequently the temple, was a symbol (until the new covenant was established). The suggestion is that *σ∇4Δε<*, time, meaning “crisis” in this instance, is preferred to the generic terms *chronos*, “time” and *∇0φ<*, “age”. Therefore, the earthly tabernacle would be a figure, until the crisis at the time of

the writing reached its climax in AD 70. The sacrifices offered within the precincts of the tabernacle provided worshippers with ceremonial purity, but they were unable to grant internal cleansing, from which the peace of conscience is derived. The limitation of this sacrificial provision is that external observances served as a covering for sin, but could not remove the guilt of sin. They were imperfect through their connection to the flesh, and were imposed until the “more excellent” covenant in Christ’s blood, based upon “better promises”, was introduced.

Attridge (1989) agrees with Hewitt with regard to the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of all the sacrifices performed in the symbolic tabernacle. However, Attridge suggests that the line of thought in this verse is complex, due to the various interpretations of the first “tabernacle” and the ambiguity of the present time, which has led to a variety of interpretations (Attridge, 1989:241). The first outer portion of the Mosaic tabernacle is symbolic of the present time of the salvific order instituted by Christ. It is, however, symbolic as a negative or inverse image of the present. The first or outer tabernacle as an image or “symbol” (*BVAΔVΔE≅8Z*) in itself presents a problem. A difficulty occurs when identifying the reference of the symbol and the relationship between the symbol and the referent. These problems arise due to the ambiguity of the “present time” (*∅ε< 6V4Δε< ∅ε< f<,Φ∅06 ∅V*), which must be “now” and the “time once present”. The present time is identical to the “time of correction”, when salvation and effective sacrifice exist (Attridge, 1989:241).

In addition to *∅ε V<:V ∅TM< :≅ΦIII<*, “the blood of bulls”, the writer refers to other traditional purgatives such as water, crimson, wool and the sprigs of a hyssop, possibly because of the influence of Leviticus 14:4-7 and 15-52 or Numbers 19:6. He may be inferring that the procedure described in Exodus 24 implies the use of a sprinkling instrument consisting of a stick to which sprigs of the hyssop were tied with crimson wool, which was dipped in blood diluted with water (Ex 12:22; LV 4:4; Nm 19:18). This method of sprinkling was common. The story of Moses sprinkling the book from which he read the law of the Lord, as well as sprinkling all the people, is not attested to elsewhere (Lane, 1991:244).

The writer’s formulation emphasized, in a symbolic manner, that the sacrificial blood linked the people, who pledged themselves to be faithful, to the Lord, who was represented by His written word. The further statement that Moses also sprinkled the tabernacle and all the cultic vessels with the blood (Heb 9:21), may draw upon an independent Jewish tradition to which Josephus also had access. According to Exodus 40:9, 16 and Leviticus 8:11, Moses anointed the tabernacle and its implements with oil during its dedication. However, Josephus speaks of the use of both oil and blood (Lane, 1991:244).

Therefore, one can see that the importance of blood is repeatedly emphasised in these verses. The writer’s intention is to show that the former covenant had been ratified by sacrificial blood, just as the new covenant was. The comparison

between the blood by which the old covenant of Sinai was ratified to that of Christ clearly assumes that the blood sprinkled by Moses had an expiatory value. This point of view is reflected in later Jewish teachings on sacrifice, according to which all sacrifices, including the blood of the peace offering, were expiatory in nature (Lane, 1991:245).

The blood of all immolated animals in the symbolic sanctuary is now relevant, and this is perceived as both offered to God and having a positive impact on individuals, taking away their defilement and making them holy. Animal sacrifices, as well as animal blood, which were offered according to God's ceremonial ordinances, provided outward cleansing, leaving the worshippers' consciences in a terrible condition. The expiatory cleansing by the blood of Christ, however, liberated the conscience from "dead works" and lethal guilt of all evil works or sins, something which is more severe, dangerous and heinous than outward ceremonial filth (Brown, 1982:156-157).

This section has shown that sacrificial animal blood grants worshippers ceremonial purity, although the conscience is left in a deplorable condition. This indicates that outward rituals only served as sin covering. Sacrificial blood in the symbolic sanctuary united people who professed faithfulness to the Lord, and it also ratified the old covenant. In the next section, this study will examine animal blood-life sacrifices and the purification significance of the red heifer's ashes. The heifer was a sacrifice that was completely burnt outside the camp, and the significance of the remains after burning, that is, the ashes, had the power of purification.

#### **10.6.1.4 Animal blood-life sacrifices and the purification significance of the red heifer's ashes**

Edgcumbe (1977) stipulates that, in Hebrews 9:13, the author hints at two typical rites of the old sacrificial system: "the sprinkling ...with the blood of goats and bulls" on the Day of Atonement, a sacrifice for the priest's own sins and those of the congregation (Edgcumbe, 1977:354-355). Secondly, the "sprinkling with ... the ashes of a heifer", which was a provision of the ceremonial cleansing of people defiled by touching a dead body (Edgcumbe, 1977:355).

The rite consisted of choosing an unblemished red heifer which had never served under the yoke, and which was then immolated outside the camp (Edgcumbe, 1977: 355). The priest would plunge his finger into the heifer's blood and sprinkle it seven times in the direction of the tabernacle – afterwards, the carcass was completely burnt in the presence of the priest, who, while it was burning, threw "cedar wood, hyssop or marjoram, and scarlet wool into the flame" (Edgcumbe, 1977:355). The ashes of the heifer were assembled outside the camp, where they were used for the preparation of the "water for impurity", used for the sprinkling of people and objects that had been defiled through contact with a dead body (Edgcumbe, 1977:355).

However, MacDonald (1971) says that the writer turns to the ritual of the red heifer in order to show the difference between the sacrifice of Christ and the ceremonial rituals of the law. He goes on to point out that during the Leviticus dispensation, bodily contact with a dead man resulted in a seven-day ceremonial uncleanness. The cure for this was secured by mixing the ashes of a red heifer with limpid spring water, and by sprinkling it onto the contaminated person on the third and seventh day, so that he might be clean (MacDonald, 1971:130).

...."The ashes were regarded as a concentration of the essential properties of the sin offering, and could be resorted to at all times with comparatively little trouble and no loss of time. One red heifer availed for centuries. Only six are said to have been required during the whole Jewish history; for the smallest quantity of ashes availed to impart the cleansing virtue of the pure spring water" (MacDonald, 1971:130).

Morris (1983:84) and Smith (1984:111) agree with Edgcumbe (1977) and MacDonald, although Morris goes on to assert that although it is somewhat true that water is a purifier, in this case, however, it serves as a carrier of a true purifying agent, or the red heifer's ashes intensifies the water's cleansing power. After the sanctuary was established in Jerusalem, the red heifer was burnt on a special altar constructed on the Mount of Olive, linked to the temple by a temporary bridge built across the Kidron for that purpose. Therefore, given the durability of the heifer's ashes, the first was burnt during the time of Moses, and the next during the time of Ezra. Since that time, up to A.D.70, the time of the demolition of the temple, only about five or seven heifers were slaughtered and burnt. A number of dispositions under the old covenant have already been portrayed as obsolete, weak and unable to make worshippers perfect (Heb 7:18-19; 8:13). In addition to this, Wilson (1970) says that "the spiritual Israelite derived, in these legal rites, spiritual blessings not flowing from them, but from the antitype. Ceremonial sacrifices released from temporal penalties and ceremonial disqualifications: Christ's sacrifice releases from everlasting penalties (V 12) and moral impurities of conscience disqualifying access to God" (Wilson, 1970:109).

The sprinkling initiated by the old covenant simply sanctified the outward cleansing. It had both "cathartic and restorative power. It cleanses away ritual filthiness and ceremonial impurities and renders a person once more fit for the community". However, all these water cleansings were only operational on the level of the flesh. "They have validity on earth, in this transient age, in a human community which is bound by ancient but provisional traditions and rules" (Smith, 1984:111).

In this section, it has been shown that both the blood of goats and bulls, as well as the blood of the unblemished red heifer, were sprinkled respectively upon the furnishings of the Holy of holies and in the direction of the sanctuary for cleansing

or purification purposes. The ashes of the red heifer were used to prepare the cleansing water used to cleanse those defiled by touching a corpse. In the following section, this study will discuss how Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary with His blood-life sacrifice emphasises His sacrifice's superiority.

#### **10.6.1.5 Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary with His blood-life sacrifice emphasises His sacrifice's superiority**

The phrase "but when Christ appeared" in Hebrews 9:11 suggests the idea of the Great High Priest's flamboyant arrival onto the scene. In order to enter into the presence of God, He had to go through the upper heavens, and not through a sanctuary made by human hands. The "good things that have come" refers to Christ's current priesthood. He is our true sanctuary, the very presence of God. Fundamentally speaking, all that is significant in life is God, oneself and a person's neighbour in an intimate relationship (Allen, 1972:65).

Contrary to the priest of the old covenant, our High Priest went into the Holy Place "once only", a complete confirmation that His single sacrifice propitiated the sins of the Church (Owen, 1968:163). This study disagrees with Owen here, because the biblical teaching with regard to the extent of atonement achieved through the sacrifice of Jesus includes all people. The rendering of John 3:16 is universal - it only becomes exclusive through individual appropriation, but the phrase "whoever believes" appears to be critical.

Lindars (1991:93) distances himself from Owen's opinion concerning the extent of the propitiation of sin through Jesus' sacrifice, and emphasises the fact that Jesus is portrayed as bearing the sins of all people. It can therefore be inferred from this that sin propitiation was not just a matter applicable to the church, but rather an opportunity provided to whoever believed and went to Jesus for mercy and forgiveness. Unlike the Old Testament high priests, Christ did not enter through the blood of goats and calves, that is, by merit of the sacrifice of their blood that he had offered upon the altar. There is therefore a connection between all things, both the type and the antitype (Owen, 1968:164).

With regard to Hebrews 9:11, Smith (1984:108) says that the first word *but* is related to the *now* of Hebrews 9:1. They are associated in the following way: "Now ...the first covenant had a sanctuary and worship (Heb 9:1)...*but* on the other hand a better liturgy". The phrase "Christ appeared" in Hebrews keeps complete silence about Mary, Joseph, Bethlehem and Nazareth, although it insists on Jesus' "humanity and vulnerability"(Heb 2:5-18). The writer of Hebrews seems to overlook the fact that Jesus was born, and only emphasises His "revelation or manifestation in the world".

Christ arrived on the scene as "suddenly and mysteriously" as Melchizedek did, as "a High Priest of the good things that have come". In the previous section, the writer spoke of "the world to come" (Heb 2:5), and he will envision "the city which

is to come” (Heb 13:14) and a better country, that is, a heavenly country (Hebrews 11:16). The “good things God has intended for His people are in majority yet to come from both “chronological and spatial perspectives”, and not yet fully given in this time and space” (Smith, 1984:108).

However, some of those good things to come that belong to the world and city to come, to the country of heaven, “are already mediated to His people by Christ the High Priest”. His people’s eyes are already opened in this world to the heavenly light, and have already tasted of the heavenly gift. They have been given the Holy Spirit and have even tasted the powers of the coming age (Heb 6:5).

Thompson (1979:569) alleges that the \*E in Hebrews 9:11 corresponds with the :E< in Hebrews 9:1, showing that the material coming after it displays certain differences between the sacrifice and sanctuary of Christ and the old system. This affirmation comprises two long sentences, in which the first (Heb 9:11-12) portrays an event (,ØΦ↑82,< Heb 9:12), and the second portrays the importance of the event to salvation: □(4ς.,4, Hebrews 9:13; and 6∇2∇Δ4, ϕ, Hebrews 9:14 (Thompson, 1979:569).

The text of Hebrews 9:11-14, in contrast to Hebrews 9:1-10, is thus intended to distinguish the new event from those which occurred during the Leviticus sacrificial dispensation. The event, as the main proposition in Hebrews 9:11-12, shows that (ΠΔ4Φ9∈H \*∞ B∇Δ∇(< ;;<≅H ...□ΔΠ4,Δ,βH...,ØΦ↑82,<...,ØH 9□ □(4∇) is the exaltation of Christ (Thompson, 1979:569). A∇Δ∇(< ;;<≅H is “reminiscent” of (< ;;<≅H in other instances in Hebrews: for instance, Hebrews 1:4; 2:7; 5:5, 9 for the event of Christ’s “exaltation and installation” as High Priest (Thompson, 1979:569). Christ, as a High Priest, gained entrance into the eternal sanctuary by sacrificing Himself and offering His own blood, surpassing by far the cost, scope, value and validity of that of the Leviticus high priest, just as the genuine “place” of the divine presence surpasses in holiness the earthly Holy of holies; for the blood was His own, as Hebrews 13:12 and Acts 22:28 reveal (Delitzsch, 1978:81-82).

According to Hebrews 6:19-20; 9:24-25, the exaltation is usually portrayed as the entrance into the heavenly sanctuary - the event is further portrayed by the “chiastic balancing of the positive and negative statements in Hebrews 9:11-12” (Thompson, 1979:569). With regard to Hebrews 9:12, Smith (1984) goes on to say that Jesus became High Priest when He entered into the Heavenly sanctuary, that is, when He “passed through the greater and more perfect tent , one not made with hands”, not designed by any “human architects and planners”, not constructed by “human craftsmen and builders”, not of “this creation, not earthly, not material, not provisional, but true and eternal” (Heb 8:2; Mk 14:58). He went through “all the heavenly spheres that exist (2Cor 12:2), and He got into the Holy place, into the perfect sanctuary of heaven itself (Heb 9:24). He has entered the heavenly sanctuary once and for all –“not twice daily, not annually,

like Leviticus priests” -and removed sins once and for all, that is, “fully, finally and forever” (Smith, 1984:109).

Hebrews 9:12 states that “Christ entered once into the Holy place” - that is, heaven itself, as the writer shows in Hebrews 9:24. Christ entered “the glorious place, the residence of the presence or majesty of God. At His ascension He entered into heaven in worshipful glory and victory after conquering Satan, the world, death and Hell and all power entrusted to Him, He entered heaven victoriously and “sacerdotally” after making peace and reconciliation through His blood on the cross, confirming the covenant and eternal redemption promulgated” (Owen, 1968:163). As our High Priest, He went into the Holy Place, the heavenly sanctuary or the Temple of God, to render His sacrifice operational unto the church and to make its benefits applicable thereunto - this He did “once”, solely, once and for all (Owen, 1968:163).

Unlike Owen, this study assumes that, after His victory, Jesus’ sacrifice was operational and the entire created order could enjoy the benefits of Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice. This may be deduced from Ladd (1993:621-629), who says: ...”Christ’s entrance into the Holy place sprinkling of His blood to effect cleansing and eternal salvation occurred when “He appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb 9:26). Christ offered Himself on the cross to purify His people (Heb 9:14). By dying, He offered for all time a single sacrifice for sin (Heb 10:12). By way of implication, the researcher thinks that the benefit of God’s eternal salvation may be available for all to enjoy - not just for the church, because it comes from the world, but because Jesus died for all people.

Christ went into the heavenly sanctuary with “His own blood”, that is, by merit of His own blood when it was shed, at which time He surrendered Himself to God. This granted Him the right to administer His priestly office in heaven. This constitutes the heart of all Gospel mysteries, the end of the bewilderment of angels and men for all eternity (Owen, 1968:164). “What heart can conceive, what tongue can tell, the wisdom, grace, and love that are contained therein”? This alone is the foundation of faith in our access to God (Owen, 1968:164).

Two things are worth noting here:

- The unutterable love of Christ, who gave Himself and His own blood for us. Since there was no other way in which our sins could be atoned for, He, out of His incommensurable love and grace, deigned unto this way so that God might be exalted and His church made holy and redeemed (Owen, 1968:164).
- The supremacy and instrumentality of the sacrifice of Christ here indicated that, through Him, our faith and hope should be in God (Stedman, 1992:98). He who gave this sacrifice was “the only begotten of the Father” – the everlasting Son of God who offered His own blood to purchase the church - “how unquestionable how perfect must the atonement be that

was thus made! How glorious the redemption thus procured” (Owen, 1968:164). This study is of the opinion that the perpetual nature of the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ dictates the indisputable fact that all people will enjoy the benefits of His redemptive work.

This includes those who were living during the Calvary crisis, as well as before and after it, up to the time that the divine, eternal, redemptive plan will be consummated. This is in agreement with Morris (1983:84-86), especially in terms of the fact that he explains that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews “makes a most important point when he says that it is the death of Jesus that avails for “the sins committed under the first covenant”. The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin (Heb 10:3). However, the faithful people in the Old Testament were saved. Why? Because the death of Jesus works backwards and forwards - His death puts away all the sins of those who are redeemed, whenever and wherever their lives have ran their course (Morris, 1983:86). This, according to this study, renders the sacrifice of Jesus extremely contemplative and the blood of Jesus as a ransom price that secures eternal redemption.

In this context, the writer of Hebrews is constructing his argument based upon the description in the Pentateuch, and by drawing this parallel: the blood that the high priest offered granted him the right to access the inner room of the sanctuary; likewise, Jesus was granted access to the heavenly sanctuary, “not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood”. Therefore, given the fact that “the life of every creature is its blood”, the whole idea clearly refers to His death. This argument is entirely built on its Old Testament text, since “there is no thought of metaphors of cleansing and purification developed in other New Testament writings like 1John 1:7 and Revelations 7:14 (Wilson, 1987:152).

According to this study, the assertion that “Christ gained access to the heavenly sanctuary through His blood” may result in some practical and doctrinal difficulties: according to Hebrews 3:1-5:10, the Son is the High Priest (Marshall, 2004:606). Gossai (2001:230-231) portrays Christ as the Davidic King-Priest, and Lindars (1991:77-79) describes the eternal priesthood of Jesus in the essence and likeness of Melchizedek, the High Priest of the Most High God and King of Salem (Heb 7:11-28). In presenting the Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Ladd (1979:577-583) specifies that Jesus Christ is the Creator of the universe (Heb 1:2), He upholds the universe by the word of His power, reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature (Heb 1:3).

He is the “Son of God” (Heb 1:2, 5; 4:14; 5:5; 6:6; 7:3 etc)...”Jesus abides as a High Priest forever” (Ladd, 1979:582). He is our sanctuary and the very presence of God (Deltzsch, 1978), His body is the tent (Peterson, 1982:141). This study is of the view that one should picture the entire activity of the everlasting High Priest as not just an interception of eternity in human history, but rather as a historical event that fits well into God’s eternal redemptive plan. Therefore, as the Son of God and a High Priest with an eternal priesthood, Christ always had, and still has, access to the heavenly sanctuary. The difference occurs with His

incarnation, during the climax of which He had to go behind the veil that was His own body, both the incarnated body of Christ and the glorified body of Christ (Heb 10:20).

However, although the discussion of the above two views is not part of the purpose of this dissertation, there is a need to clarify the following: this study notes that the body of Christ is called a Temple (Jn 2:19-22); His incarnation is also portrayed as the “pitching of a tent” (Jn 1:14). Bengel (1971:638-639) and Owen (1968:18-23) claim that the great tabernacle in Hebrews 9:11 stands for the Human body of Christ, because through the same body, Christ fulfilled His priestly sacrifice, and men have access to God who dwells in it ( Swetnam, 1981:93; Heb 10:5).

Hughes (1977:284-286) and Swetnam (1981:93) state that this raises three problems:

- It is not easy to reconcile it with the writer’s phrase “not of this creation” in Hebrews 9:11, given the fact that it would seem to bring into question the true humanity of Christ (Calvin, 1963:120).
- Even though other New Testament books mention that Jesus’ body is a tabernacle or a Temple, the Epistle to the Hebrews does not.
- The view is incongruent with the immediate context for the discussion involving Christ’s localised ministry (Heb 8:1; 9:11), and not the means of His sacrifice, that is, His body (MacLeod, 1989:450).

The second view that considers the tabernacle to be the glorified body of Christ appears as a variant of the first view, and renders null and void the objection based upon Hebrews 9:11: “not of this creation”. Milligran (1977) argues, on the grounds of Hebrews 10:19-20, that the instruments of access to God are the blood of Jesus and His risen, bodily life (“a new and living way”). It seems as though the second and third views stand as objections to the first, which would appear to undermine this theory. Furthermore, it might be asked in what context it can be said that Christ went through His glorified body (Bruce, 1980:330). Therefore, coming back to Wilson’s metaphor of cleansing and purification, this study can state with certainty that everything appears to support Jesus Christ’s achievement as the greatest High Priest ever, through His sacrifice and His blood.

Kent and Homer stipulate that the heavenly sanctuary in which Christ conducted His priestly activity is a more ideal environment than that of the Old Testament priests (Kent & Horner, 1974:171). This is also true of His offering. Christ went into the heavenly sanctuary once and for all (*ephapax*). Jesus’ sacrifice and shed blood resulted in eternal redemption for its guarantees, unlike the yearly, repetitive and temporary atonement that was required by the old covenantal system (Kent & Homer, 1974:171).

Hebrews 9:24 seems to be very close to Hebrews 9:23 and Hebrews 9:25-26, and it would therefore be very difficult to leave it out without causing harm to this exegesis. The writer returns to the imagery of the Yom Kippur ritual in order to explain how the heavenly cleansing took place. He makes an elaborate comparison between the image and the reality. What Christ entered into as High Priest was not the earthly sanctuary ( $\square(4\forall)$ ), pejoratively characterised by the epithet “manufactured” ( $\Pi,4\Delta B \cong :.0\theta\forall$ ), familiar from its use in Hebrews 9:11 (Attridge, 1989:262).

The earthly sanctuary is just a “copy” ( $\square<g.:g1g\forall$ ) of the heavenly sanctuary, which is “real” or “true” ( $\square8024<TM<$ ). This language explicitly recalls the initial, platonising contrast between heavenly and earthly tabernacles (Heb 8:2-6), where the former, the “true” tabernacle, is  $g\beta B \cong H$  for the earthly tabernacle. The designation of the sanctuary as “heaven itself” ( $\forall \leftrightarrow g \in < g \in < \cong \Delta \forall < \bar{<}$ ) continues the platonising motif.

The phrase may, on the level of the image of the heavenly tabernacle, also suggest a distinction between the innermost and uppermost heavens where God is enthroned - the heavenly inner sanctuary and the outer or lower heavens that correspond to the portion of the tabernacle outside the veil (Attridge, 1989:262-263). Christ “entered” ( $,\emptyset\Phi\uparrow 82,<$ ) this realm with a specific purpose, to “appear” ( $f:N\forall<4\Phi 2\uparrow<\forall 4$ ) before God. The verb in the active can simply mean to “clear or indicate”. It may also be used intransitively in a technical, legal sense, in this case meaning to appear before a magistrate with a complaint, but this idea is just the opposite of what is involved here.

The verb can also be used in a pregnant sense, in the active and the passive, for the appearance of a divine or spiritual being. However, here Jesus is not appearing to the world. The language of appearing before the “face of God” ( $g(B\Delta \cong \Phi\phi B \Sigma g \cong \neg 2, \cong \neg)$ ) is cultic, and what Christ achieves by the “appearance” that consummates His sacrifice is true access to the presence of God (Attridge, 1989:263). Christ’s appearance is not for His own sake, but “for us” ( $\Downarrow B \infty \Delta \cong :.TM<$ ). This perspective is reinforced by the adverb “now” ( $<\neg<$ ), suggesting the contemporary relevance of Christ’s singular act of entry into the realm of eternity. What He does before God is not precisely specified anymore (Attridge, 1989:263).

The following verse indicates quite clearly that He does not conduct an ongoing heavenly liturgy, since His sacrifice is a unique event. Nor does the writer of Hebrews continue with the imagery of the Yom Kippur ritual, and suggests that Christ, in the heavenly realm, sprinkles His blood, even in a metaphorical sense, as an act independent of His death on the cross. At this point, the analogy between Yom Kippur and Calvary begins to break down, and attempts to force too literal a relationship between image and reality are misguided. What Christ does is to “appear for us”, and this appearance is to be associated with the

intercessory function that has been regularly seen as part of His heavenly priesthood (Attridge, 1989:263).

Christ's entry into the heavenly sanctuary thus unites, in a complex way, the two aspects of His priestly ministry. This entry indicates that His sacrifice has its results in the ideal or spiritual realm, where it effects the cleansing of the spiritual reality (conscience) for which the cult of the old covenant could only provide a physical or worldly image. At the same time, His entry into God's presence makes Christ's intercessory function possible. The reference to the latter activity, in this context, suggests that while the two functions are distinct, they are also intimately connected (Johnson, 1978b: 169-187).

There also seems to be a further difficulty in the rendering "greater and more perfect tabernacle". There is a perception with regard to Jesus' humanity, namely that Jesus' incarnation in human form brought about "good things". It appears to be more likely that the words should be perceived as referring to Christ's ministration in the heavenly sanctuary in the very presence of God (Heb 9:24). The redemption provided by our Great High Priest takes effect in heaven. It has not been produced or secured by any such sacrifices as those performed by the Leviticus priests. The writer emphatically states that Christ's work was accomplished in the tabernacle "that was not man-made" and "not part of this creation" (Morris, 1983:83). "It was not simply an earthly bound activity as the Leviticus sacrifices were. There was no earthly sanctuary in which Christ offered Himself".

This study disagrees with Morris to some extent, since the meaning of a temple is broader than a building structure. For instance, 1Corinthians 6:19 says: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own". During the wilderness journey and before worship was centralised at Jerusalem, one sees that the tabernacle was a temporary and movable structure. It served as a tent of meeting between God and His chosen people (Ex 26). After their settlement in the land, they had high places on top of hills where they would build altars and offer sacrifice on them (Freedman, 1997). The researcher deduces from the above considerations that the Calvary hill was a shrine for sacrifice, and that the cross upon which Jesus was hanged was an altar. All this added to the awful and most disgraceful death that Jesus suffered outside the camp. MacLeod says that "the great tabernacle is the incarnate body of Christ...as well as the glorified body of Christ" (MacLeod, 1989:449-450; Jn 2:19-22). Therefore, both interpretations can hold water, and they are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Morris says that the translation: "taking with Him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but His own blood" in Hebrews 9:12 is not accurate, since the Greek simply renders it as "through the blood" (the verb "taking" is not present). There is also a theological error that leaps into the face of the writer's basic thoughts - that Christ's death on the cross is the ultimate sacrifice that takes away sin (Morris,

1983:84). To initiate the idea that He took His blood into heaven and therefore continued His redemptive work there appears to be at odds with the writer's emphasis on the "once for all" characteristic of Christ's redemptive work on the cross. He "entered heaven through His blood". According to Morris, "He did not take His blood there to do something that His sacrifice on the cross could not have done" (Morris, 1983:84).

This study is of the view that to say that "Jesus entered heaven through His blood" might be very misleading - it might give the impression that Jesus Christ is denied deity and His essential quality of being sinless. In other words, that only His blood gave Him access and that without His blood, He had no access. Morris fails to understand the sacrificial symbolism being used here. Leviticus priests were sinful, just like their fellow human beings. They had to sacrifice for their own sins, and then for the sins of their fellow men. Therefore, the blood of animals gave them access to the Holy of holies of the earthly sanctuary. With Jesus, it was completely different. He was at the same time the sacrifice and the priest sacrificing Himself. He shed His own blood to secure redemption.

The researcher can truly see no error in turning the typological practices of the priests of the Old Testament into Christ's reality of taking His own blood, because there was no other blood that could accomplish His grandiose work, apart from His own blood. The Leviticus priests' practical and pictorial activities in both words and deeds found their fulfillment in the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the equivalence in symbolism between this and the Leviticus priests' taking of blood into the presence of God in the Holy of holies of the earthly sanctuary presents no difficulty at all, given the dynamism of words.

It seems to be clear that Delitzsch (1978), Smith (1984), Thompson (1977), Hewitt (1973), Linski (1966) and Owen (1968) agree in principle on the importance of Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary and its unique and immeasurable outcomes. In the above section, this study has attempted to indicate how Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary through His blood-life sacrifice emphasises His sacrifice's superiority. In the next paragraphs, the way in which Jesus' blood-life sacrifice secures eternal redemption will be discussed.

#### **10.6.1.6 Jesus' blood-Life sacrifice secures eternal redemption**

The writer of Hebrews describes Jesus' death in two ways:

- As the consummation of suffering and trials or temptations at the close of the days of His humanity (Heb 5:7-8); and
- As His entering into the heavenly tent as a High Priest. His death is synchronous contemptuousness, as well as the highest magnification. His death differs from just one extra action of molestation (Heb 11:35-38).

The eye of faith contemplates it as more - as His ministerial activity in the heavenly sanctuary (Smith, 1984:110). The offering of His blood-life granted

eternal redemption as well as entrance into the “true eternal Holy of holies. He did achieve eternal redemption”. Because He is the eternal Son of God (Heb 1:2, 5; 4:14), the self-sacrifice of His blood-life possesses everlasting validity and value, as well as a once-and-for-all effectiveness for all eternity (Smith, 1984:110).

Redemption therefore stands for an expensive liberation (Lk 1:68; 2:38). It can be described as the liberation of captives or slaves at a high price, and the subsequent happy entrance into a glorious freedom, dearly purchased (Mk 10:45; 1Pt 1:18; Tt 2:14). Sin renders people filthy and separates them from the community of God’s people and communion with God Himself. The old covenant contained many provisions that dealt with sin, not to forget the offerings on the Day of Atonement, which excluded the sprinkling of the blood of goats and bulls onto people. Sacrificial blood was smeared on the mercy seat and horns of the altar of incense (Lv 16). Normally, sin offerings comported the sprinkling of the blood before the veil of the inner sanctuary, and upon the horns of the altar of burnt offerings, and onto the base of the latter (Lv 4).

This blood, though not sprinkled on the people, was seemingly still sprinkled for them. It is important, in order to understand the passage, to know that the writer views sin as a potential defilement and its removal as a cleansing (Marshall, 2004:608-609). Through this, Christ achieved eternal redemption. Redemption is a pictorial word which refers to the liberating of a war prisoner by means of the payment of a ransom. It was also used to liberate a slave in the same way, and sometimes the freeing of someone facing a death sentence (Morris, 1983:84; Ex 21:29-30). This redemption is eternal (Morris, 1983:84).

The benefit of Christ’s blood-life sacrifice was that He “obtained eternal redemption”: He instrumentally secured redemption by the price of His blood-life. Usually, a state of bondage and captivity requires a redemption that necessitates a price to pay and a power to deliver (Owen, 1968:164). The redemption price is verbalised in two ways:

- By what gives it its value and worth, so that it might be a satisfactory ransom for all;
- By its peculiar nature (Owen, 1968:164). With regard to the first, it refers to the person of Christ Himself. He surrendered Himself, He offered Himself to God - “He gave Himself a ransom for all”.

His essence naturally granted the ransom with an immeasurable value, fit to redeem the whole church (Nelson, 2003:260). As mentioned in the above section, redemption in God’s mind is of universal concern, not just for the church or a preferential group of people.

With regard to the second, it refers to the peculiar nature of redemption, which was accomplished through His blood and was a ransom, a price for redemption, partly due to the profitability of the obedience that He displayed towards His

Father in the shedding of His blood, and partly because His blood, as a ransom, was also an atonement, since it was given to God as a sacrifice - for it is only with blood that atonement can be made (Owen, 1968:164). Why all this? Sin or original apostasy constitutes the “meritorious cause” for our need for redemption. According to Owen (1968: 164), the “supreme efficient cause is God Himself”, the Ruler and Judge of all men put us all into a state of bondage and captivity, the instrumental cause is the curse of the law, and the external cause is “the power of Satan over the souls and consciences of men” (Owen, 1968:164).

The fact that Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice provided mankind with eternal redemption constitutes our heartbeat, and this study agrees with the above claims by Smith (1984), Marshall (2004), Morris (1983) and Nelson (2003). In the following paragraphs, this study will endeavour to show how Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice was a ransom price for redemption.

#### **10.6.1.7 Jesus’ blood-Life sacrifice was a ransom price for redemption**

In order for redemption to be operational, it requires the payment of a ransom price whereby “the guilt of sin is expiated”. There must be satisfactory atonement to divine justice, the removal of the curse of the law, and the destruction of the power of Satan. Christ achieved all this by entering into the heavenly sanctuary with His blood. This deliverance or salvation is everlasting in its instrumentality, and results or benefits - it remains valid forever more. Therefore, He whose faith was the greatest and most impressive would be the most submissive and most productive Christian (Lenski, 1966:297-300).

The final clause reveals the result of all this: “thus securing eternal redemption”. Hebrews 5:9 describes Jesus as “the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him”. Here, the message conveyed sounds the same – it is only that a different word is used: “salvation” may refer to wealth and well-being, as well as deliverance, and seems to be more generic, but “redemption” is more connected to the ransoming of captives and slaves’ liberation - it is therefore adequate in the current context to express the idea of a costly deliverance. The eternal redemption is contrasted to the temporary atonement achieved by earthly priests: they had to give their offerings yearly, but Jesus made His sacrifice once and for all (Wilson, 1987:153).

In his exegesis of Hebrews 9:13, Lenski (1966) points out the following: Christ’s sacrifice is not through the medium of animal blood, but the medium of His own blood. The blood of sacrifice is evaluated in accordance with the victim that is immolated and the consequence of the value - Christ’s blood delivers. “For” reiterates and thus clarifies the measuring of value, as well as the measuring of value of the result. However, it shows the value, in a broader sense, as far as animal sacrifices are concerned, and in a more complete manner as far as Christ’s sacrifice is concerned, as well as in a personal manner as far as the worshipper or recipient of the effect and benefit of the sacrificial blood is

concerned (Lenski, 1966:295). Morris (1983) claims that the main idea is that of paying a price in order to obtain freedom. For instance, sinners are slaves, but Jesus paid the price by shedding His precious blood in order to set them free (Morris, 1983:84; cf. Tolmie, 2005).

This study agrees with Lenski (1966), Wilson (1987) and Morris (1983) in support of the view that Jesus' blood-life sacrifice was a redemption price, because there is no other price that can ever equal an incommensurable price such as that of the creator and owner of the universe giving Himself as a supernatural price for the liberation of the world (Jn 3:16). The following paragraphs will discuss how the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus makes eternal atonement for sins.

#### **10.6.1.8 Jesus' blood-life sacrifice makes eternal atonement for sins**

The instrumentality of the sacrifice of Christ is further emphasised. The sacrificial rituals of the Day of Atonement seem to have constituted the main thrust of the argument up to this point, with a focus on the reference to "goats and calves" and to "the Most Holy place". Jesus made atonement through His own blood, not through animal blood. The superior quality of His sacrifice is further highlighted by the phrase "once for all". The absolute finality of Christ's sacrifice is here in mind (Morris, 1983:84).

With regard to Hebrews 9:14, Smith claims that the writer once again makes a proposal, as he does with Hebrews 1:4. He allocates limited validity and effectiveness to the old order, due to all its inappropriateness. The red heifer and animal sacrificial victims were to be unblemished, that is, without lameness or blindness. In the same manner, Christ was also without any defect. However, the researcher here is pondering the phrase "how much more". Christ was not merely without any physical deficiency. He was identical to us in every way, but sinless (Heb 4:15). It was not only His limbs, bones and eyes, but also His soul and spirit and heart were unblemished (Heb 7:26). Jesus' sacrifice of Himself was performed on earth, but not "as part of an earthly cult or ritual, not upon an earthly altar, and not for the sake of an earthly temporary benefit. His blood was not carried through a material tent and smeared on a physical ark" (Smith, 1984:112).

Jesus' offering was of the highest spiritual order, valid and highly effective in the "realm" of the eternal Spirit. His death outside the camp was an event once for all in the "eternal order of heaven". It took place "in the transcendent heart of the universe and therefore its potency is universal in space and in time, unrepeatable and enduring" (Smith, 1984:112).

It is precisely the innermost soul that must "be reached and touched" (Heb 7:10) If we are not to be merely purified from the pollution of contact with a human bone or a house in which a person has died, but to be cleansed from dead works (Heb 6:1; Mk 7:1-23) and turn to the living God with spiritual worship (Smith,

1984:112; Jn 4:23-24), people may therefore be said to have arrived at the state of maturity or perfection that Christ has attained, if they come before God with purity of heart, sanctified by the work of Christ, with every barrier removed (Smith, 1984:113; see also Heb 2:10; 6:1; 7:11, 19; 9:9). In terms of Hebrews 9:14, MacDonald hypothetically states that if the heifer's ashes were endowed with the power to cleanse such a severe form of flesh contamination, how tremendously powerful is the blood of Jesus in cleansing from "inward sins of the deepest dye" (MacDonald, 1971:130).

This bit of proverbial wisdom seems somewhat out of context, but, like several earlier remarks, it aids materially in the development of imagery in this passage. The fact that human beings die but "once" ( $\square B \nabla >$ ) reinforces the *reductio ad absurdum* of verse 26. Christ's sacrifice can also only take place once. At the same time, the parallel between human death and Christ's offering in the next clause further emphasizes the unity of Christ's atoning act (Attridge, 1989:265). In Hebrews 9:28, the second half of the concluding comparison returns to explicitly cultic language. Whereas verse 26 associated Christ's "appearance" with the remission of sin, it is now His singular offering ( $\square B \nabla > B \Delta \equiv \Phi, <, \Pi 2, 4H$ ) that is again in view. The reference to its atoning function, "to take away the sins of many" ( $\bar{\rho} H \vartheta \bar{B} \equiv 88^{TM} < \square <, <, (6, \rho < \square: \nabla \Delta \vartheta.: \nabla)$ ), is reminiscent of the language of the servant songs in Isaiah, no doubt because that language had been appropriated in early Christian liturgical traditions (Attridge, 1989:266).

Christ, who had made this singular atoning sacrifice, will "appear once again" ( $f6 * \Lambda \vartheta \Xi \Delta \equiv < \dots \notin N 2 Z \Phi, \vartheta \nabla 4$ ). The adverbial phrase clearly indicates that the parousia is involved, and the verb is often also associated with the second coming. The verb is framed by two further phrases that characterise Christ's return. The first, "without sin" ( $\Pi \Pi \Delta \vartheta H \square: \nabla \Delta \vartheta.: \nabla H$ ), recalls Hebrews' frequent description of Christ's own sinless nature, but it does not primarily point, if at all, to that quality. Instead, the phrase indicates that Christ's second coming will not have the atoning purpose of the first - it will be apart from sin in its aims and effects. The positive counterpart to this is the suggestion that Christ will appear for "salvation" ( $\bar{\rho} H \Phi T \vartheta \Delta.: \nabla <$ ). While salvation has been introduced by the activity of Christ, it has yet to be consummated. The eschatological overtones are continuing for those who "wait for" Christ, since  $\square B, 6 * \Xi \Pi, \Phi 2 \nabla 4$  is a common term for such an expectation (Attridge, 1989:266).

Morris (1983), Smith (1984), MacDonald (1971) and Attridge (1989) are unanimous concerning the fact that the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus Christ made eternal atonement for sins, impacting the whole being, both externally and internally, liberating the soul, mind, heart and body, and making forgiveness of sins an eternally acquired, living reality. This study agrees with them in that the super-mega, once and for all blood-life sacrifice of Jesus spread the Gospel that there is no longer a sacrifice for sins, because Jesus' blood-life sacrifice is final (Heb 10:18). This section has shown how the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus made



Christ which destroys all stains must necessarily intervene” (Wilson, 1970:110-111, cf. Guthrie, 1983, Morris, 1983 and Lane, 1991).

The parallel with Hebrews 9:14 also emphasises the weakness of the interpretation of this verse in highly mythological or abstract terms. If a person assumes that the writer is alluding to the apocalyptic notion of the expulsion of Satan from heaven, and if there is no hint of this myth in Hebrews, but only the writer knows of it, it is not an explicit part of his repertoire of images. A person may prefer to see the cleansing of heaven as the removal of the cosmic reality of sin (Attridge, 1989:161-162). However, while sin is certainly a defilement to be cleansed, the object of the cleansings in these interpretations is much too general. They deal with the paradoxical notion that heaven is in need of cleansing, and miss the specific symbolic value of  $\text{ἁγία Ἐβραϊστικῶς}$ . A person may insist that the “heavenly realities” are symbolic of eschatological events or institutions, but this approach does not shed much light on what it means for these eschatological entities to be cleansed (Attridge, 1989:262).

Attridge maintains that what these symbolic readings frequently ignore is the way in which the presentation of imagery suggests a philosophical framework or set of associations that is crucial for delivering the existential meaning of the image. In fact, the meaning is hardly in doubt. As the reflection on spirit and conscience in 9:14 suggests, the heavenly or ideal realities cleansed by Christ’s sacrifice are none other than the consciences of the members of the new covenant, the inheritors of eternal salvation (Attridge, 1989:262).

While the writer of Hebrews uses imagery of a heavenly temple with roots in Jewish apocalyptic traditions, he does not develop this imagery in a crude, literal way. In Hebrews, as with platonically inspired Jews such as Philo, the language of cosmic transcendence is a way of speaking about human inferiority. What is ontologically ideal and most real is the realm of the human spirit. The writer of Hebrews thus recognises, as do contemporary Jews of various persuasions, that true cultic cleansing is a matter of the heart and mind. He presents this insight by means of a metaphysical interpretation of a traditional apocalyptic image. This image and its interpretation also display his fundamental Christian beliefs, since cleansing of the mind and heart takes place not through human effort, but through God’s act in Christ (Hurst, 1984:41-74).

If one assumes a zeugma, it is possible, as some suggest, to change the verb “purified” in order for it to mean “consecrated” or “dedicated”. However, as Westcott (1984) suggests,  $\text{ἁγία Ἐβραϊστικῶς}$  is deliberately used to signify not so much heaven itself but rather the spiritual sphere in which atonement becomes a reality to the believer. Hewitt goes on to say that Tasker proposes a similar view, saying: “By entering heaven the sacrificed Savior transfers from an earthly localized realm into a spiritual universal sphere the benefits of His passion”. Consequently, His blood can be said to be sprinkled on the hearts and

consciences of Christian believers, enabling them to draw near to God through Him (Hewitt, 1973:152).

The above discussion reveals the fact that scholars such as Lane (1991), MacDonald (1971), Wilson (1970), Hewitt (1973), Attridge (1989) and Hurst (1984) generally emphasise the effects and benefits of Jesus' blood-life sacrifice's supernatural power in reaching the consciences of worshippers. However, Lane (1991) and Attridge (1989) associate the cleansing of worshippers' consciences with that of the heavenly realities which, according to them, are symbolic of eschatological events. This section has indicated how the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus cleanses worshippers' consciences. The following section will examine how the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus was performed through the Eternal Spirit.

#### **10.6.1.10 Jesus' blood-life sacrifice was performed through the Eternal Spirit**

Christ's sacrifice was "through the eternal Spirit". This phrase is understood differently by different people. The following are the different interpretations attributed to it: "Through an eternal spirit" refers to "the willing spirit in which He made His sacrifice in contrast to the involuntary character of animal offerings". The other interpretation is "Through His eternal spirit" (MacDonald, 1971:130). This study is of the view that the Holy Spirit is in perspective here, and that Jesus offered His sacrifice under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Another factual phrase concerning the offering of Christ is that it is "through the eternal spirit". This is indeed a vast departure from the Leviticus animal offerings. Christ offered His sacrifice with a complete and deliberate awareness of what He was doing, which is completely impossible for animals (Guthrie, 1983:188). More significantly, the term "eternal spirit" has no article in Greek, and must therefore initially be related to the spirit of Jesus, in contrast to His flesh (Guthrie, 1983:188). However, the Holy Spirit is certainly also being referred to here, since Jesus was working hand-in-hand with the Holy Spirit. It is only of Jesus that it would be said that His spirit was eternal, a "fact which even sacrificial death could not affect. Since the redemption to be secured was eternal (Heb 9:12), it was necessary for the offering to be made by one endowed with eternal spirit" (Guthrie, 1983:188-189).

There is a problem in Hebrews 9:14 which has to do with the determination of what "the eternal Spirit" actually represents: whether a person should understand it to mean Jesus' own spirit, since the Holy Spirit is nowhere else known as the "eternal Spirit" (Morris, 1983:85). This causes some people to prefer the usage that relates it to Jesus' own spirit. The words include His whole nature, as well as His spirit - all active in His saving work. Thus, it can be said that Jesus "offered Himself in His essential nature which is spirit". However, it seems more likely that it is the Holy Spirit that is being referred to here, thus implying that the Holy Spirit

was involved in the atonement act, just as the heavenly Father was (e.g. Jn 3:16). Therefore, it was with the full participation of the Holy Spirit that Jesus offered Himself as an “unblemished” sacrifice (Morris, 1983:85).

The sinless High Priest (Heb 4:15; 7:26) was also a spotless victim. The free offering of Himself to God was the culmination of a life of perfect obedience (see Heb 5:8-9; 10:5-10). The fact that His offering was made  $\nu\theta\tau\epsilon\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ , that is, “through the eternal Spirit”, implies that He had been divinely empowered and sustained in His office. The formulation does not occur anywhere in the New Testament or early Christian literature, but may be understood as a name for the Holy Spirit. An appropriate reference to the Spirit is found in Isaiah 42:1 and 61:1, where the servant of the Lord is qualified for the task by the Spirit of God (Lane, 1991:229; Spicq, 1982:429-435).

Unlike MacDonald, Wilson suggests that the phrase “who through the eternal spirit” ... “does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but to the spirit which was His own, that is, to Christ’s nature. Also, the word “eternal” here means “heavenly”. Therefore, the meaning is: through the heavenly aspect of His deity Christ makes the offering” (Wilson, 1970:110). This is also seen in the opening words of the Epistle: “...the Son, after he had made propitiation of sins in Himself”. The verb here is in the middle voice, which is important, according to Wilson, as an expression of what is taking place or happening within Christ’s person (Wilson, 1970:110).

The above discussion leads this study to conclude that MacDonald (1971), Gutthrie (1983), Morris (1983), Lane (1991) and Wilson (1970) stand together in support of the view that the Eternal Spirit represents the Holy Spirit, unlike the assertion that it refers to Jesus’ own spirit. They support the fact that the Holy Spirit was the empowering agent when Jesus was offering His blood-life sacrifice. This study agrees with them because the members of the Godhead always work together in the fulfillment of God’s eternal redemptive plan. This section has shown how Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice was performed through the Eternal Spirit, and the next section will discuss the fact that Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice sanctions the superiority of His sacrifice, because it was the sacrifice of Himself.

#### **10.6.1.11 Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice sanctioned His sacrifice’s superiority because it was the sacrifice of Himself**

Allen (1972) points out two things that render the sacrifice of Jesus absolutely superior to those of the Old Testament:

- Jesus sacrificed His own life and His own blood - God’s life is immeasurably superior to animals’ lives, therefore Jesus’ sacrifice is immeasurably superior to animal sacrifices. His sacrifice signalled finality,

as it was offered once for all (Allen, 1972:66). See Hebrews 9:25-26 in this regard.

- Jesus' sacrifice achieved eternal redemption for mankind (Heb 9:28). There is a powerful assertion that: "without the shedding of the blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb 9:22). The blood bore the mysterious matter through which God brought life into existence (Allen, 1972:66).

Since life is seen to be in the blood (see explanation of blood in chapter 9), a part of the power of God lodges in the blood. To offer blood was therefore to offer the "ultimate gift of life itself" - the sacrifice was not a "superstitious, magical ritual", but the giving of the best in sacrificing blood to God (Allen, 1972:66). Blood is very costly, since once it is shed, life is gone (1Pt 1:18-19). The shedding of blood signifies the dangerousness of sin and the inexpressible difficulty with which sin was absolved or forgiven (Allen, 1972:66). It was not God's anger that was appeased. The sacrificial blood, instead, was "God's own perfect love that made sin so difficult to forgive" (Allen, 1972:66).

The more one loves, the tougher it becomes to forgive those who hurt those that one loves. In the same manner, God cannot easily forgive our sins. A cheap or easy forgiveness is no forgiveness at all, because it fails to visualise the dangerousness of sin, which causes others to experience terrible pain. "For God to forgive He must not only love, He must maintain His moral integrity". He has to be wounded and experience the most acute pain for our transgressions (Is 53:5). God accomplished this through the ultimate and final sacrifice offered for our sins by His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (Allen, 1972:66). It can be inferred from this that, since some of the power of God is in the blood, this power is released through sacrificial performances in order to accomplish a specific task during or after the sacrifice.

Christ's act of atonement was accomplished by "offering Himself" (ἑαυτὸν προσφέρειν). For the first time in the text, the sacrificial act of the heavenly High Priest is explicitly mentioned. The notion that Christ's death was an act of self-sacrifice for sins is certainly traditional. The natural inference that the sacrificial act a priest performs was not explicitly drawn by those numerous Christian writers who deploy this motif (Attridge, 1989:214). The writer of Hebrews now proceeds to make that inference, possibly inspired by the title of High Priest, traditionally applied to Christ in virtue of His role as the heavenly intercessor, a role that has dominated the development of the priestly motif up till now. The high priestly sacrificial action of Christ will now be explored through an elaboration of the imagery of the Yom Kippur ritual, to which the writer alluded with the emphatic "once for all" (ἅπασι) (Attridge, 1989:214).

The phrase "offered Himself" means that the living God, who appeared in the human form, became both the High Priest and sacrificial victim, and deprecated His own glory for the propitiation of our sins, both with the priestly act and ransom paid (Wilson, 1970:110). "Without spot to God" points to the fact that the

instrumentality of the Leviticus sacrifices resided in the external perfection or beauty of the sacrifice, but Jesus offered Himself to God as an unblemished sacrifice, exempt from any moral corruption or impurity (Wilson, 1970:110).

The phrase “He offered Himself” reveals the fact that it was both willful and predetermined, and “without blemish” elevates it to the highest moral level. The perfect distinctiveness of Jesus lies in His accomplishment of God’s will. It goes without saying that, from a superbly infinite sacrifice, infinite results must be expected. Its purification reaches consciences and removes sin and guilt from worshippers’ consciences (Guthrie, 1983:189). The reference in the expression  $\vartheta \in \forall \underline{\zeta} : \forall \vartheta \varepsilon \neg O \Delta 4 \Phi \vartheta \varepsilon \neg$ , “the blood of Christ”, is not to the material substance but to the action of Christ, who offered Himself to God as an unblemished sacrifice, as the relative clause of verse fourteen makes clear (Lane, 1991:228).

The formulation is entirely appropriate to the immediate context as a graphic synonym for the death of Christ and its sacrificial significance. This understanding is confirmed when Heb 9:11-14 are retrospectively summarised in Hebrews 9:15b by the phrase “a death having occurred for the redemption from transgressions committed under the former covenant”. The self-sacrifice of Christ on Calvary qualifies Him to enter the heavenly sanctuary, and to consummate His redemptive task in the presence of God (Lane, 1991:228).

The relative clause  $\odot H * 4 \square B < \beta : \forall \vartheta \varepsilon H \forall \emptyset T < . : \varepsilon \Lambda \varepsilon \forall \Lambda \vartheta \in < B \Delta \varepsilon \Phi Z < (6, < \square : T : \varepsilon < \vartheta ( 2$ , used in a clausal sense (“seeing that He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit as an unblemished sacrifice to God”), shows what makes Christ’s sacrifice absolute and final. The word  $\square : T : \varepsilon <$  has a ring of sacrificial terminology. In the LXX and elsewhere in Jewish Hellenistic sources, this term denotes the absence of defects in a sacrificial animal (e.g., Nm 6:14). It was chosen to emphasise the perfection of Christ’s sacrifice (Lane, 1991:228).

Desilva (2000) sees in this the effective removal of every impediment to the worship of God. The reference in the expression  $\vartheta \in \forall \underline{\zeta} : \forall \vartheta \varepsilon \neg O \Delta 4 \Phi \vartheta \varepsilon \neg$ , “the blood of Christ”, is not to the material substance but to the action of Christ, who offered Himself to God as an unblemished sacrifice, as the relative clause of verse fourteen makes clear (Lane, 1991:228). Allen (1972), Attridge (1989), Wilson (1970), Guthrie (1983), Lane (1991) and Desilva (2000) agree on the fact that Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice sanctions the superiority of His sacrifice, since it is the sacrifice of God, of Immanuel, for His own people. Therefore, there is no sacrifice that can be greater than this.

In this section, the researcher has attempted to show that Jesus’ entrance into the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood-life sacrifice accomplished the following: it secured eternal redemption, functioned as a ransom price for redemption, made eternal atonement for sins, and cleansed the worshippers’ consciences because it was performed through the Eternal Spirit. The fact that Jesus’ blood-life sacrifice was the sacrifice of Himself sanctions the superiority of

His sacrifice over and beyond all Leviticus sacrificial typologies. In the following section, this study will show how Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for various types of benefits.

## **10.7 JESUS' BLOOD-LIFE SACRIFICE COMMUNICATES POWER FOR MANIFOLD BENEFIT**

### **10.7.1 INTRODUCTION**

Jesus did not desire to be the recipient of the benefits provided by His sacrificial act. He was a spotless sacrificial victim (Heb 9:14), not in the external meaning of ceremonial law, but as the sinless one (Heb 4:15; 7:26). In this way, Jesus distinguished Himself from all casual priests whose sinful conditions obligated them to first sacrifice for their own sins (Heb 5:3; 7:27; 9:7). This was a peculiar sacrifice - the Priest was at the same time the victim and the sacrifice performer (Nelson, 2003:258). However, the sacrifice performer was not among the beneficiaries of the sacrifice's results. In this fashion, Hebrews fosters a "Christology from above" in terms of the exalted Son and heavenly High Priest, and a "Christology from below", describing one who was willfully and obediently inflicted with terrible pain and shame while in the flesh (Nelson, 2003:258).

The description of Jesus' sacrifice in the Epistle to the Hebrews emphasises the positive aspects of Christ's atoning sacrifice. It communicates power for soteriological benefits through atonement, cleansing and sanctification, and permanent access to God is possible for Christians. It brings psychological benefits through the cancellation of guilt, removal of sin and cleansing of worshippers' consciences, and finally, it communicates power for sociological benefits through impacting on the lives of Christian believers and building a community of worshippers (Nelson, 2003:259).

#### **10.7.1.1 Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for soteriological benefits**

The Epistle to the Hebrews uses a broad scope of Old Testament language concerning the results of sacrifice, in order to portray the soteriological benefits of Jesus' sacrificial work (Marshall, 2004:611-615). The sacrifice of Jesus primarily makes its beneficiaries holy (Heb 2:11; 10:14; 13:12) through the sacrificial apparatus of His body and blood (Heb 10:10, 29). Therefore, Hebrews can afford to call Christian believers "holy ones" (Heb 3:1; 6:10). It has to be well understood here that "holiness" must be perceived as a moral and ethical category that transforms people's lives into lives of people of the holy God, rather than just a ritual category. This developmental process already exists in Leviticus 11:44-45 and Leviticus 17-26 (Morris, 1983:88-89).

Secondly, Christ's sacrifice changes Christian believers from a state of impurity to one of purity (Heb 1:3; 9:14). The Old Testament relegates this concept to the

ceremonial cleanliness required in order to be involved in the worship of God (Lv 16:30). Hebrews, however, distorted the initially distinct ideas of purifying and making holy (Heb 9:13), a gauging of different ideas which sometimes exist in the Old Testament (Lv 16:19). Given the fact that the guise of holiness calls for purity, the two concepts normally become interwoven (Lindars, 1991:93).

Thirdly, Christ's sacrificial work takes away sin (Heb 9:26, 28). It was performed because of sin and for the removal from sin. As an action that cancelled the hindrance to the relationship between God and His people, it was a work of atonement made at "the cover of the ark", the "mercy seat", like on the Day of Atonement (Peterson, 1982:148-155). Other benefits acquired through the power communicated by the sacrifice of Jesus can be viewed as redemption (Heb 9:12, 15), salvation (Heb 2:10; 5:9; 7:25) and forgiveness (Heb 9:22). His was an all-encompassing sacrifice, made for many and for all time (Nelson, 2003:260).

Hebrews emphasises Christ's sacrifice's "once for all" instrumentality and uniqueness. In a similar theological way, the writer of Hebrews remembers the fact that the sacrificial ritual of Exodus 24 used the binding power of blood to launch the covenant (Heb 9:19-22). The redemptive benefits of this new covenant are portrayed in Hebrews 9:8-12 and 10:16-17, 29 (Jr 31:31): the law ascribed upon human hearts, sins forgiven and sanctification attained (Nelson, 2003:260). Ultimately, one can say that the sacrifice of Jesus has granted believers an unclouded access to God's presence. The Leviticus sacrificial ritual created some hindrances and shortcomings to such access (Heb 9:2-7). Consequently, access to what is really holy was denied insofar as the ritual procedures of that time were still operational (Heb 9:8-10). The right of drawing closer to God, which was reserved for priests, has now been extended to all Christian believers (Ladd, 1979:576).

Christ's appearance in God's presence established a path for us to follow. He went in "on our behalf" (Heb 9:24), and the process of coming closer is "through Him" (Heb 7:25). Hope has gone behind the curtain, in a similar way to Jesus' entry, "a forerunner in our behalf: (Heb 6:19-20), making a way to God" (Heb 7:19; 10:19-20). This drawing near to God is a question of faith (Heb 11:6). Furthermore, secure communication with the terrible holiness of God calls for holiness and purity (Nelson, 2003:260). Holiness is a condition *sine quoi non* in order to see God (Heb 12:14), and Christ's holiness and purity renders the coming close in worship a reality (Heb 9:14; 10:19-20).

Drawing near to God is something that Hebrews 4:16 and 10:22 encourages its readers to do, in order to obtain mercy and grace (Nelson, 2003:260). This study has attempted, in the above paragraphs, to highlight some of the benefits enjoyed by Christian believers as a result of the power communicated through the blood-life sacrifice of Jesus. It makes them holy and brings them into a state of purity by taking away sin and establishing a permanent relationship between God and them. It also provides them with eternal redemption, salvation and

forgiveness of sins, including an unclouded access to the presence of God, into which Jesus entered on our behalf, making the drawing near to God through Him in order to obtain grace and mercy a living reality. In the next section, this study will indicate how Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for psychological benefits.

#### **10.7.1.2 Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for psychological benefits**

The Epistle to the Hebrews deals with the "perfection" of the Christian as the result of Christ's work (Heb 10:14; 11:40; 12:2). It is not only a question of objective atonement that removes all the hindrances to a "divine-human" relationship, but also one of metamorphosis, which transforms the Christian believer in a radical way (Nelson, 2003:261). Christ's sacrifice is the antitype of Leviticus sacrifices, which could not perfect worshippers or purify their consciences from feelings of sin and guilt (Heb 7:11, 19; 9:9; 10:1-2). In other words, there is a psychological benefit, including the conscience (Heb 9:14), heart (Heb 10:22) and a "perfecting of faith" (Heb 12:2). Perfection signifies the removal of all traces of remembrance of sin on God's part (Heb 10:14, 17-18), but also the removal of the painful consciousness of sin on the part of Christian believers (Smith, 1984:112-113). See Hebrews 9:14; 9:9 and 10:2-3 in this regard.

The old sacrificial system was inappropriate for taking care of such "internal feelings of remorse" –that is, a guilty conscience. The writer of Hebrews seems to extend the symbolic dualism of the earthly and heavenly processes of cultic cleansing with the dichotomy of flesh and conscience. Old Testament sacrifices dealt with the external, but could not cleanse the worshippers' consciences of the burden of sin and its guilt (Heb 9:9-10). They were founded on typological laws and regulations (Heb 7:16, 18; 10:1). This means that the blood of animals was sufficient for the purification of the external aspect, but the blood of Christ purifies the conscience (Wilson, 1987:153-154). See Hebrews 9:13-14 in this regard.

Given the repetitive nature of Israel's sacrifices, they were psychologically inadequate (Heb 9:25-26; 10:1-2; 10:11). They do not efface "the consciousness of sin" or the "feeling of being guilty". Contrary to this, Christ's "once for all" sacrifice is psychologically satisfactory and appropriate for all time. Beneficiaries are elevated from "bad conscience" to "good conscience". The blood of Jesus cleanses the conscience from "dead works" (Heb 9:14), that is, "deeds that lead to death". See Hebrews 6:1 in this regard (Nelson, 2003:262).

The psychological benefits of Christ's sacrifice can be seen in terms of ratification and inauguration of the new covenant, which stipulates that divine laws are written on the hearts and minds of God's people, and that their iniquities shall be remembered no more (Heb 10:16-18). Old Testament sacrifices constituted a yearly "reminder of sin" (Heb 10:3; generalising LXX Nm 5:15), but the new

covenant declares that God forgets sins (Heb 8:12; 10:17). The Christian believer's "heart" is washed clean and it becomes "true" (Heb 10:22), which has to do with a person's inner life and awareness. Christ's sacrifice fulfilled this, as He was willfully determined to do God's will (Heb 10:7-10). Christian believers have now acquired soft, flexible and obedient hearts, hearts empowered through the grace of God to shun false doctrines (Brown, 1982:178-181). See Psalm 95:8, Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:6; 10:16 and 13:9.

There is also some drama-like language in the Epistle to the Hebrews in connection with the phrases "fearful prospects of judgment" (Heb 10:27), "the hands of the living God" (10:31), and "living God" (12:18-24). This God is indeed the "judge of all". However, this should not cause us to panic and lose heart, because Jesus, our mediator, is also there, and His second coming at the end of time will signify salvation for believing Christians (Heb 9:28; 10:39). Christ's death removed the source of death, as well as human beings' psychological bondage to the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15). The virtue of faith, intensely shown in Hebrews 11:4, 5, 7, 12, 19, 28 and 35, defeats death.

The "dramatic, albeit confused, language of Hebrews 6:18-19 comforts those "who have taken refuge" to seize the hope set before us" (Nelson, 2003:262). In this section, the researcher has briefly discussed how Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for psychological benefits: it communicates the power to heal the conscience and the heart, granting perfection of faith. It takes care of internal feelings of remorse or guilt, and initiates the ratification and inauguration of the new covenant. Christian believers' hearts are washed clean and rendered soft and obedient. Therefore, they can stand before the Judge of all (God) without panic, because Jesus, their Mediator, is there - He who has removed the psychological bondage of fear of death.

### **10.7.1.3 Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for sociological benefits**

The Epistle to the Hebrews recommends "full participation" in the Christian congregation's worship, substantiating a pastoral role in communal worship (Heb 4:16; 10:23-25). This communal worship results from the fact that Jesus' blood-life sacrifice has liberated Christian believers from the danger of "dead works". Consequently, recipients of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice express their undivided gratitude through metaphorical sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise, including the confession of His name (Heb 12:28; 15), as well as generous deeds of compassion and love (Heb 13:16). The mysterious rendering "we have an altar" in Hebrews 13:10 seems to refer to Christ's eternal and all-encompassing sacrificial act. The cross of Jesus constitutes a paradigm of the writer's emphasis of the fact that disparaging evaluations by the outside world are worthless (Nelson, 2003:264).

The shame of the cross is granted supreme value (Heb 6:6), and the shock-provoking and lamentable, shameful cross became outstanding as a pattern for Christian believers' own efforts (Heb 12:1-3). God vindicated and magnificently exalted Christ to the supreme position of kingly honour (Heb 5:7-10; 12:2). In contrast to sacrificial remains of the Day of Atonement that were burnt outside the camp, Hebrews compares this to the crucifixion of Jesus "outside the gates", and encourages Christian believers to meet Jesus "outside the camp", "a place where disgrace and shameful abuse, suffering and loss are experienced, where obedience, service, and faithfulness must be practiced" (Nelson, 2003:265). It is quite clear from this that Jesus' blood-life sacrifice established a community of worshippers, a society of liberated people who are set apart to gather together, and to serve and worship the living God.

In this regard, Johnson commented that: "the anthropology of Hebrews cannot be separated from its ecclesiology. The individual per se is never in view in the pamphlet: it is always man as the worshipper as a member of a cultic community" (Johnson, 2001:119). Believers are motivated to assemble together (Heb 10:25). Ultimately, "the goal of the pilgrimage of the faithful is communicated not in terms of 'private, individual salvation or reward but in terms of membership in a city, a kingdom, the assembly of the first born who have been enrolled in heaven'".

## 10.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to provide an exegesis of the sacrifice of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Even though the theme of sacrifice is described in almost every book of the New Testament, given the fact that the field is very broad, this study decided to focus on the sacrifice of Jesus in Hebrews. The researcher has discussed the nature of the sacrifice of Jesus, showing that it was representative, substitutionary and penal. Thereafter, this chapter discussed the motivation behind the sacrifice of Jesus and its purpose, arguing that it was to taste death for mankind, bring sons to glory, make atonement for sin and render the devil powerless. The superiority of the sacrifice of Jesus was then discussed, and the view was that the sacrifice of Jesus accomplished God's will with regard to sacrifices. Christ's seated posture implies that His sacrificial work is accomplished once and forever, and the ratification of the new covenant confirms that sin has been removed. The way in which the bodily sacrifice of Jesus dealt with sin is also significant here.

Based on the fact that both the sacrificial victim's body and blood may be offered separately as sacrifices, that is, the blood of Jesus as a sacrifice and the body of Jesus as a sacrifice, and given the fact that both sacrificial aspects overlap or complementarily respond to the entirety of the common understanding of sacrifice, this chapter endeavoured to use blood-life for a sacrifice. This is because the life of every living creature is in the blood, and blood-life sacrifice can be viewed as a blood sacrifice or sacrificial blood. In this lengthy section, the following topics were discussed: firstly, Jesus' blood-life sacrifice sanctions His

sacrifice's superiority. Here, the entrance of the Leviticus high priest into the earthly sanctuary through an animal blood-life sacrifice was discussed - this was a prerequisite for his entrance in order to atone for his own sins and those of the people.

Secondly, the significance of the blood-life sacrifice in the old order was discussed, which is mainly characterised by external, ceremonial purification, granting sins covering and forgiveness. The benefits of animal blood-life sacrifices in the symbolic earthly sanctuary featured as a means to foster a relationship and fellowship between God and His people, according to His legal precepts, as these were typologies pointing to Christ's event. Animal blood-life sacrifices and the purification significance of the red heifer's ashes were also discussed, and this dealt mainly with the sprinkling of the blood of goats and bulls upon the furnishings of the most Holy place, and the sprinkling of the red heifer's blood seven times in the direction of the Temple, as well as the sprinkling of water mixed with the heifer's ashes upon those defiled by touching or coming into contact with a dead body, all of which was done for the purification of these defiled people.

This chapter went on to discuss the fact that Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary through His own blood-life sacrifice emphasises His sacrifice's superiority. His entrance into the presence of God for us brought about tremendous results with regard to sacrificial rituals: Jesus' blood-life sacrifice secures eternal redemption, is the ransom price for redemption, makes eternal atonement for sins, and cleanses worshippers' consciences, removing sin and guilt. Jesus' blood-life sacrifice was performed through the Eternal Spirit - it emphasises the incomparable superiority of Jesus' sacrifice, because it was the sacrifice of Himself. All this seems to reveal something peculiar to the blood - life is in the blood, or blood is life.

Therefore, a mysterious power resides in the blood, and when blood is being shed, it communicates some power that affects the lives of worshippers. Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for soteriological benefits: it makes worshippers holy and places them in a state of purity and a continuous relationship with God. It grants them redemption, salvation and full forgiveness of their sins, including an unclouded access to God through Jesus Christ. Jesus' blood-life sacrifice communicates power for psychological benefits: consciences and hearts are cleansed, sin and guilt are removed, internal feelings of remorse are taken care of, and worshippers are delivered from the psychological bondage of the fear of death, since Jesus' blood-life sacrifice and resurrection overcame death. It thus communicated power for sociological benefits, because the power of Jesus' blood-life sacrifice achieves complete and total liberation from dead works, in order to worship the living God. Christian believers are united as a worshipping community, a society of liberated, saved, redeemed people who socialise and gather together to worship and serve the living God. They express their gratitude to Him as they confess His name, and show compassion through

sharing and mutual support. All this information will be used in this study's comparison with African material.