Hebrews 9:23-24 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
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See ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"
(See also MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews)

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Hebrews 9:23 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: Anagke oun ta men hupodeigmata ton en tois ouranois toutois katharizesthai, (PPN) auta de ta epourania kreittosin thusiais para tautas.

Amplified: By such means, therefore, it was necessary for the [earthly] copies of the heavenly things to be purified, but the actual heavenly things themselves [required far] better and nobler sacrifices than these. (Amplified Bible - Lockman)

Barclay: So, then, if it was necessary that the things which are copies of the heavenly realities should be cleansed by processes like these, it is necessary that the heavenly realities themselves should be cleansed by finer sacrifices than those of which we have been thinking. (Westminster Press)

NLT: That is why the earthly tent and everything in it—which were copies of things in heaven—had to be purified by the blood of animals. But the real things in heaven had to be purified with far better sacrifices than the blood of animals. (NLT - Tyndale House)

Phillips: It was necessary for the earthly reproductions of heavenly realities to be purified by such methods, but the actual heavenly things could only be made pure in God's sight by higher sacrifices than these. (Phillips: Touchstone)

Wuest: It was therefore necessary on the one hand that the representations of the things in the heavens [the earthly tent] should be cleansed constantly with these [animal sacrifices], but on the other hand, the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these [the blood of the Lord Jesus].

Young's Literal: It is necessary, therefore, the pattern indeed of the things in the heavens to be purified with these, and the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these

THEREFORE IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE COPIES OF THE THINGS IN THE HEAVENS TO BE CLEANSED WITH THESE: Anagke oun ta men hupodeigmata ton en tois ouranois toutois katharizesthai (PPN):

- The copies - Heb 9:9,10,24; 8:5; 10:1; Col 2:17
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Therefore (See term of conclusion) (3767) (**oun**) in context serves to introduce the idea of necessity. The writer has made it abundantly clear in He 9:22 that blood must be shed in purification according to the law.

Steven Cole feels - **Therefore** goes back to the previous section, which made the point that forgiveness of sins is possible only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The blood sacrifices of the Old Testament all foreshadowed the supreme sacrifice of the Son of God. “The copies of the things in the heavens” (He 9:23) refers to the tabernacle and its furnishings. These things had to be cleansed by the blood of sacrificial animals. But these things were only earthly types of heavenly realities. The heavenly things themselves had to be cleansed with better sacrifices than these, namely, the blood of Christ. He uses the plural to refer to the one sacrifice of Christ, which gathered up into one all of the Old Testament sacrifices. Christ’s sacrifice “is so many-sided that it required a whole range of sacrifices to serve as adequate copies” (Donald Guthrie, Hebrews: Tyndale New Testament Commentaries [IVP/Eerdmans], p. 196). (Hebrews 9:23-28 Judgment or Salvation?)

Wiersbe explains it this way "Since God has ordained that remission of sins is through the shedding of blood, and since purification

comes through the sprinkling of blood, it is necessary that blood be shed and applied if the New Covenant is to be in force. The "patterns" (the Old Covenant tabernacle) were purified by the sprinkling of the blood. But the "originals" were also purified! The blood of Jesus Christ not only purifies the conscience of the believer (Heb. 9:14), but also purified the "heavenly things" (Heb. 9:23, nasb). (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor)

It was necessary - In other words, there was **no other way**. There is no other "escape hatch". No secret/mystical passage. No asterisk or fine print providing an exception to the need for Christ's blood. He is the Way, the only Way (Jn 14:6). The Way into the Holy of Holies is by no other Name under heaven (Acts 4:12).

Spurgeon - These things down below are only the patterns, the models, the symbols of the heavenly things; they could therefore be ceremonially purified with the blood which is the symbol of the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Necessity (318)(**anagke [word study]** from **ana** = up, again, back, renewal, repetition, intensity, reversal + **agkale** = arm when bent **or agcho** = to compress, press tight) refers to any necessity or compulsion, outer or inner, brought on by a variety of circumstances. It can mean necessity imposed either by external conditions or by the law of duty.

Anagke - 17x in 17v - Matt 18:7; Luke 14:18; 21:23; Rom 13:5; 1 Cor 7:26, 37; 9:16; 2 Cor 6:4; 9:7; 12:10; 1 Thess 3:7; Philemon 1:14; Heb 7:12, 27; 9:16, 23; Jude 1:3. **NAS** = compulsion(3), constraint(1), distress(3), distresses(1), hardships(1), inevitable(1), necessary(2), necessity(3), need(2), obliged*(1).

Copies of these things - the Old Covenant rites as in He 9:19 (see note).

Copies (5262) (**hupodeigma** from **hupo** = under + **deiknúo/deíknumi** = to show, to point to something, to make known the character or significance of something) means literally that which is shown below. It means an example, pattern, illustration. It refers to a sign suggestive of anything, an outline, a delineation, a suggestion. **Barclay** writes that **hupodeigma** means "a specimen, or, still better, a sketch-plan."

Hupodeigma - 6x in 6v - Jn 13:15 Heb 4:11, 8:5, 9:23 Jas 5:10 2Pe 2:6. NAS = copies(1), copy(1), example(4).

Paul has a similar statement in Colossians "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-- things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (Col 2:16, 17-note)

Heavens (3772) (**ouranos**) describes literally the expanse of space that seems to be over the earth like a dome. In the NT heaven and earth comprise all of creation, though the two are distinctive (Mt 6:9-note). God spoke both into existence and heaven is His realm. In Hebrew thought heaven was Jehovah's dwelling place and is the believer's true and eternal home. (see more detailed discussion) In the present context this word is a reference to the place where God dwells.

To be cleansed (2511) (**katharizo** from **katharos** = pure, clean, without stain or spot; English words - catharsis = emotional or physical purging, cathartic = substance used to induce a purging, Cathar = member of a medieval sect which sought the purging of evil from its members) means to make clean by taking away an undesirable part. To cleanse from filth or impurity. **Click here** (and here) for more background on the important Biblical concept of **clean** and **cleansing**.

Figuratively **katharizo** referred to cleansing from ritual contamination or impurity as in (Acts 10:15). In a similar sense katharizo is used of cleansing lepers from ceremonial uncleanness (Mt 8:2-3, et al) Another figurative use in 1John 1:9 (cf James 4:8, Hebrews 10:2) describes the purifying or cleansing from sin and a guilty conscience thus making one acceptable to God and reestablishing fellowship.

The **present tense** of **katharizo** indicates that the cleansing had to be continual activity.

Katharizo - 31x in 30v - Mt 8:2, 3; 10:8; 11:5; 23:25, 26; Mark 1:40, 41, 42, 7:19; Luke 4:27; 5:12, 13; 7:22; 11:39; 17:14, 17; Acts 10:15; 11:9; 15:9; 2Cor 7:1; Eph 5:26; Titus 2:14; Heb 9:14, 22, 23; 10:2; Jas 4:8; 1John 1:7, 9. **NAS** = clean(3), cleanse(5), cleansed(16), cleanses(1), cleansing(1), declared… clean(1), make… clean(3), purify(1).

With these - By these OT rituals or by the different materials of cleansing depicted in Hebrews 9:19ff. All of these OT pictures pointed to the **better sacrifice** of Christ.

BUT THE HEAVENLY THINGS THEMSELVES WITH BETTER SACRIFICES THAN THESE: auta de ta epourania kreittosin thusiais para tautas:

- **The heavenly things** - Heb 9:11,12,14,24; 10:4,10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17; Luke 24:26,46; John 14:3; 1Peter 1:19, 20, 21;

Revelation 5:9

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But - term of contrast

Spurgeon - Was the heavenly place itself defiled? No, that cannot be. But if you and I had gone there without atonement by blood, heaven would have been defiled. Look at the crowds of once sinful men and women who are daily entering there to dwell with God. How could they come there if the heavenly places had not been prepared for them? Look at the multitude of our prayers and praises that are daily going up there! Are they not all in a measure impure, and would it not have defiled heaven to accept them? But the Lord has gone there, and has sprinkled His blood upon the mercy seat, that so our prayers and praises—indeed, and ourselves also—may enter without let or hindrance.

Heavenly (2032) (**epouranios** - used 5 times in Ephesians - Eph 1:3, 20, 2:6, 3:10, 6:12 see **notes** Eph 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12) encompass the entire supernatural realm of God, His complete domain, and the full extent of His divine operation.

Epouranios - 19x in 17v - Jn 3:12; 1Co 15:40, 48, 49; Ep 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12; Phil 2:10; 2Ti 4:18; Heb 3:1; 6:4; 8:5; 9:23; 11:16; 12:22. **NAS** = heaven(1), heavenly(14), heavenly one(1), heavenly things(3).

What does it mean that the '**heavenly things themselves**" must also be cleansed with better sacrifices? As **Steven Cole** asks…

> What are the heavenly things and why do they need cleansing? A number of views have been put forth (Leon Morris summarizes these in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. by Frank Gaebelein [Zondervan], 12:91). We need to understand that the author is speaking spiritually. There is no literal altar or golden lampstand or table of sacred bread in heaven. But why would the spiritual counterparts in heaven (whatever they are) require cleansing? Some say that it is a dedicatory consecration, similar to the dedication of the tabernacle. Some relate it to the fact that Satan and the fallen angels have defiled heaven and that in His atonement, Christ disarmed them and triumphed over them, thus cleansing heaven.
>
> But in light of He 9:24, which states that Christ entered the true holy place in heaven to appear in the presence of God for us, the author is likely referring to the fact that we, God's people, are now His spiritual dwelling place (He 3:6). How can we be pure and free from defilement, so that God may dwell in us, not just individually, but corporately as His holy temple (Ep 2:21, 22; 1Pe 2:5)? The answer is that Christ's blood alone can cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (He 9:14). (Hebrews 9:23-28 Judgment or Salvation?)

Better (2909) (**kreitton/kreisson**) is a comparative of kratus (strong) and the comparative degree of **agathos** which means "good". This reminds one of our English comparative "good, better, best." That which is of high status, is more prominent or higher in rank (Of a person -Heb 7:7; of things Heb 7:19). Kreitton relates to that which has "a relative advantage in value" (BDAG) (Heb 6:9).

Friberg summarizes **kreitton/kreisson** - (1) of persons superior, better, higher in rank (Heb 1.4); substantivally more important person (Heb 7.7); (2) of what is more advantageous, better, more useful (1Cor 7.9); neuter as a substantive to. kreitton the advantage, the more profitable thing (1Cor 11.17; perhaps Heb 12.24), opposite to the worse; ta. kreissona more useful things (Heb 6.9); (3) neuter as an adverb (in a) better (way) (probably Heb 12.24).

Kreitton/kreisson means more useful, more profitable more advantageous, greater, superior; greater advantage. In this case it speaks of the book of Christ, even the use of the plural (sacrifices) as a description of the single offering of Christ.

Better in English - in a more excellent manner, to greater advantage, to a higher or greater degree. More advantageous. More acceptable. Superior excellence.

Kreitton - 19x in 18v - **NAS** = better(17), better things(1), greater(1). Kreitton in the Lxx = Pr 3:14, Pr 25:24.

1 Corinthians 7:9 But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is **better** to marry than to burn with passion.

1 Corinthians 7:38 So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do **better**.

1 Corinthians 11:17 But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the **better** but for the worse.

Philippians 1:23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;

1 Peter 3:17 For it is **better**, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

2 Peter 2:21 For it would be **better** for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.

Better is a **KEYWORD** (see key words) in Hebrews. This repetition of "better" demonstrates beyond all doubt to the Jewish reader that the **New** is better than the **Old** system. Study the uses below. What is **better**? You will need to read the surrounding context to answer this question.

Hebrews - A "Better" Book

Uses of "Better"

Hebrews 1:4 (note) having become as much **better** than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Hebrews 6:9 (note) But, beloved, we are convinced of **better** things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

Hebrews 7:19 (note) (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a **better** hope, through which we draw near to God.

Hebrews 7:22 (note) so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a **better** covenant.

Hebrews 8:6 (note) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better** covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

Hebrews 9:23 (note) Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with **better** sacrifices than these.

Hebrews 10:34 (note) For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a **better** possession and an abiding one.

Hebrews 11:4 (note) By faith Abel offered to God a **better** sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 11:16 (note) But as it is, they desire a **better** country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:35 (note) Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a **better** resurrection;

Hebrews 11:40 (note) because God had provided something **better** for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Hebrews 12:24 (note) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks **better** than the blood of Abel.

Criswell - The use of the plural to describe the single offering of Christ is a figure of speech known as the plural of majesty. (Criswell, W A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version)

Jamieson - The plural is used in expressing the general proposition, though strictly referring to the one sacrifice of Christ once for all. Paul implies that His one sacrifice, by its matchless excellency, is equivalent to the Levitical many sacrifices. It, though but one, is manifold in its effects and applicability to many. (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown)

Better sacrifices - Christ's **better** sacrifice is a major theme in **Hebrews 9:13-10:18**. The many sacrifices of the Levitical system were to be superseded by better sacrifices that would be represented in the one perfect sacrifice of Christ.

Spurgeon - The blood of bulls would suffice to purge the types, but the realities must have a richer sacrifice to cleanse them. In the tabernacle everything was done according to the pattern seen in the holy mount by Moses. In the temple no sacrifice was presented but according to divine command. The whole Aaronic ritual was very impressive. The priests in their holy robes, pure white linen garments, the golden altar, candlestick and table, the fire, the smoke, the incense—the whole thing was calculated very much to impress the mind. The first covenant provided a very magnificent service, such as never will be excelled. But for all that, costly, divinely arranged, impressive, yet it could not put away sin. The evidence of this is found in the fact that after one day of atonement they needed another atonement next year.

Philip Hughes asks what are the "**better sacrifices**" especially considering that Christ was sacrificed only once for all time "there is general agreement among commentators that the plural better sacrifices is not a precise but a generic plural, corresponding or accommodated to the plural "these rites" in the first clause of the verse: the inferior sacrifices of the Levitical system called, speaking generally, for **better sacrifices**. To be specific, however, they were superseded not by many sacrifices but by one, namely, the unique and fully adequate self-offering of the incarnate Son on the cross of Calvary (as our author repeatedly insists—see He 7:27; 9:12, 14; 10:10, 12, 14, so that he is not open to the charge of imprecision). His is the "one sacrifice for sins for ever" (He 10:12 KJV). Hence it is described here as **better**: it accomplishes once and for all that complete and eternal redemption which the imperfect sacrifices of the former system never could accomplish. (A Commentary On The Epistle To The Hebrews)

Sacrifices (2378) (**thusia** from **thuo** = to sacrifice or kill a sacrificial victim) means that which is offered as a sacrifice. An offering. A sacrifice. A victim. That which is sacrificially offered to deity. Most of the NT uses of thusia refer to that which is sacrificed (i.e., a sacrificial offering, Lk 2:24). **Thusia** speaks of Christ's sacrificial death as better (cf Heb 9:23, Heb 10:12).

Figuratively, **thusia** speaks of the the death of Christ, His offering to His Father (Eph 5:2). In Romans 12:1**thusia** speaks of the offering by a believer of his life to God. In Hebrews 13:1516 **thusia** refers to our praise, our doing good (not to gain merit or favor with God, but motivated by love and energized by the Spirit) and our sharing as acceptable offerings to God. In Php 4:18 **thusia** refers to the financial offering from the Philippian church.

One of the most instructive uses of thusia in Scripture is in the Septuagint of Psalm 51:17…

> The **sacrifices** (Hebrew = zebach; Lxx = thusia) of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. (**See exposition**)

Webster's defines **sacrifice** as act of offering to a deity something precious!

In the Old Testament there were two types of sacrifices, the **first** offered to deal with sin and the broken fellowship that resulted from the sin. The sacrificial blood was a picture of the bridging of the gap between the giver and God (although OT sacrifices for sin only covered over for a time, whereas Christ's sacrifice effectively and permanently removed all guilt of sin for those who believe in Him).

The **second** type of OT sacrifice was presented to God as an act of worship, the presenter having had his sins covered over by the blood of the sin offering, which resulted in his hearts being full of thanksgiving and praise to God which was reflected in the offering.

Thusia - 28x in 28v - Usage: sacrifice(14), sacrifices(14).

> Matthew 9:13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT **SACRIFICE**,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."
>
> Matthew 12:7 "But if you had known what this means, 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT A **SACRIFICE**,' you would not have condemned the innocent.
>
> **Comment**: Sacrifice at its root must begin with a heart wholly given to God in order to wholly acceptable to Him.
>
> Mark 12:33 AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and **sacrifices**."
>
> **Comment**: The worth of one's sacrifices to God depends on the state of one's heart and the motive behind the sacrifice.
>
> Luke 2:24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS."
>
> Luke 13:1 Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.
>
> Acts 7:41 "At that time they made a calf and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and were rejoicing in the works of their hands.
>
> 42 "But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, 'IT WAS NOT TO ME THAT YOU OFFERED VICTIMS AND SACRIFICES FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, WAS IT, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL?
>
> Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

1 Corinthians 10:18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar?

Ephesians 5:2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Philippians 2:17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the**sacrifice** and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.

Philippians 4:18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable **sacrifice**, well-pleasing to God.

Hebrews 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;

Hebrews 7:27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

Hebrews 8:3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer.

Hebrews 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,

23 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Hebrews 10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;

8 After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them" (which are offered according to the Law),

11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. 16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

1 Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Thusia - 396 verses in the non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Gen 4:3, 5; 31:54; 46:1; Exod 10:25; 12:27; 18:12; 24:5; 29:34, 41f; 30:9; 32:6; Lev 1:9, 13, 17; 2:1ff, 13ff; 3:1, 3, 6, 9; 4:10, 26, 31, 35; 5:13; 6:14f, 20f, 23; 7:9ff, 15ff, 20f, 29, 32, 34, 37; 9:4, 17f; 10:12, 14; 14:10, 20f, 31; 17:5, 7f; 19:5; 21:6, 21; 22:21, 29; 23:13, 16, 18f, 37; 26:31; Num 4:16; 5:15, 18, 25f; 6:15, 17f; 7:13, 17, 19, 23, 25, 29, 31, 35, 37, 41, 43, 47, 49, 53, 55, 59, 61, 65, 67, 71, 73, 77, 79, 83, 87f; 8:8; 10:10; 15:3ff, 8f, 24; 16:15; 23:3, 15; 25:2; 28:5, 8f, 13, 20, 26, 28, 31; 29:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18f, 21f, 24f, 27f, 30f, 33f, 37ff; Deut 12:27; 27:7; 32:38; 33:19; Josh 8:30; 22:23, 26ff; Judg 6:18; 13:19, 23; 1 Sam 1:21, 24; 2:17, 19, 29; 3:14;

6:15; 9:12f; 10:8; 11:15; 15:22; 16:3, 5; 20:6, 29; 26:19; 2 Sam 14:17; 1 Kgs 8:62ff; 12:27; 18:29; 2 Kgs 3:20; 10:19, 21; 16:13, 15; 1 Chr 9:31; 21:23; 23:29; 29:21; 2 Chr 7:1, 5, 12; 29:31; 30:22; 31:2; 33:16; Ezra 7:17; 9:4f; Neh 10:33; Job 1:5; 20:6; Ps 4:5; 20:3; 27:6; 40:6; 50:5, 8, 14, 23; 51:16f, 19; 96:8; 106:28; 107:22; 116:17; 141:2; Prov 7:14; 15:8; 16:7; 21:3, 27; Eccl 5:1; Isa 1:11; 19:21; 34:6; 43:23f; 56:7; 57:6f; 65:4; 66:20; Jer 6:20; 7:21f; 14:12; 17:26; 46:10; Ezek 39:17, 19; 42:13; 44:11, 15, 29; 45:15, 17, 24; 46:5; Dan 2:46; 4:1; 8:11ff; 9:21, 25, 27; 11:31; 12:11; Hos 3:4; 6:6; 8:13; 9:4; Joel 1:9, 13; 2:14; Amos 4:4; 5:22, 25; Jonah 1:16; Zeph 1:7f; 3:10; Zech 9:1; Mal 1:8, 10f, 13; 2:12f; 3:3f;

Than these - **Robertson** remarks that "To us it seems a bit strained to speak of the ritual cleansing or dedication of heaven itself by the appearance of Christ as Priest-Victim. But the whole picture is highly mystical."

A DIFFICULT PHRASE TO INTERPRET

Steven Cole writes that…

> verse 23 raises a question: **What are the heavenly things and why do they need cleansing**? A number of views have been put forth (Leon Morris summarizes these in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. by Frank Gaebelein [Zondervan], 12:9 1). We need to understand that the author is speaking spiritually. There is no literal altar or golden lampstand or table of sacred bread in heaven. **But why would the spiritual counterparts in heaven (whatever they are) require cleansing**? Some say that it is a dedicatory consecration, similar to the dedication of the tabernacle. Some relate it to the fact that Satan and the fallen angels have defiled heaven and that in His atonement, Christ disarmed them and triumphed over them, thus cleansing heaven. But in light of Hebrews 9:24, which states that Christ entered the true holy place in heaven to appear in the presence of God for us, the author is likely referring to the fact that we, God's people, are now His spiritual dwelling place (Hebrews 3:6-note). How can we be pure and free from defilement, so that God may dwell in us, not just individually, but corporately as His holy temple (see notes Ephesians 2:21, 22-note; 1Peter 2:5-note)? The answer is that Christ's blood alone can cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:14-note). (Hebrews 9:23-28 Judgment or Salvation?)

Leon Morris comments…

> There is a problem in seeing in what sense things in heaven—where God is (He 9:24)—need purification. Some deny outright that they need it, regarding the expression as a way of referring to God's people. Thus Bruce (in loc.) reminds us that the author tells us repeatedly that it is people's consciences that need to be cleansed; and so the author can speak of God's people as his dwelling, his house (cf. He 3:6). Others make essentially the same point and hold that it is not something material but spiritual that is seen as needing cleansing—a fact meaning that Christ's work is effective in the spiritual life of men, not in some material sanctuary. The difficulty with such interpretations is that, while what they say is true, "the heavenly things themselves" is a strange way of referring to men and women here on earth. Other commentators see in He 9:23 a reference to Satan's rebellion and think of that as somehow defiling heaven so that heaven itself needs cleansing. Still others think of purification in the sense in which it is used here as meaning not so much the removal of impurity as a consecratory or inaugural process. This, they feel, is not out of place with "the heavenly things" any more than with an earthly sanctuary. Akin to that is the view that the earthly sanctuary needed cleansing, not so much because it was unclean, as because it was the place where sinners were restored. So with heaven.
>
> On the whole, it seems best to recall that in the NT there are references to "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph 6:12); the "rulers of this age" (1Cor 2:8); the "powers" like "height" and "depth" (Ro 8:38, 39), as well as "angels" and "demons." Such references seem to indicate wickedness beyond this earth. And when Christ performed his atoning work, he "disarmed the powers and authorities, … triumphing over them by the cross" (Col 2:15). It was God's will "through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Col 1:20). This strand of teaching is not prominent in Hebrews. Nevertheless, the language used here seems to accord with it better than with other views. (Gaebelein, F, Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing)

Vincent addresses the question…

> How can it be said that the heavenly things needed cleansing? It is not easy to answer. Various explanations have been proposed, which the student will find collected in Alford's note on this passage. The expression is rhetorical and figurative, and appears to be founded on that feature of the Levitical ritual according to which the

high priest was required, on the Great Day of Atonement, to make an atonement for the sanctuary, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel." He was to do this also for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the great altar. See Lev. 16:16 ff. The rite implied that even the holy of holies had contracted defilement from the people's sin. Similarly, the atoning blood of Christ is conceived as purifying the things of the heavenly sanctuary which had been defiled by the sins of men. "If the heavenly city of God, with its Holy Place, is, conformably with the promise, destined for the covenant-people, that they may there attain to perfect fellowship with God, then their guilt has defiled these holy things as well as the earthly, and they must be purified in the same way as the typical law appointed for the latter, only not by the blood of an imperfect, but of a perfect sacrifice" (Delitzsch).

Criswell suggests that…

> Perhaps a clue is found in Job 15:15, "the heavens are not pure in His sight." Doubtless this is because Satan committed the first act of sin in heaven (Isa. 14:12-14), and because he still has access to the presence of God as the accuser of the brethren (Rev 12:10-note). (Criswell, W A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version. 1991. Thomas Nelson)

Vine - As to the question why the heavenly things should require to be cleansed, the subject before us is not only the remission of our sins, but our access into the presence of God as His worshipers, through the eternal redemption obtained for us. The sanctuary of the presence of God required the savor of redemptive sacrifice. Just as the high priests of old entered into the Holy of Holies with the blood of sacrifice, on behalf of the people as worshipers of God, so only by the cleansing blood of Christ on the cross could the very presence of God become the meeting place between Him and the believer. (Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson)

Philip Hughes offers a lengthy discussion on this thorny passage…

> In what sense are we to understand the affirmation that "the heavenly things themselves" needed to be "purified"? It is clear from the verse which follows and from He 8:5 above that the expression "the heavenly things" designates the sanctuary above which is "heaven itself," the reality of which the earthly sanctuary was but a shadow. The interpreter is faced with the problem of explaining how the heavenly reality, where the pure presence of God dwells, can be conceived as requiring any kind of purification. The explanation offered by Delitzsch and others, that heaven needed cleansing in the sense, first, that it had been darkened as the light of God's love had been replaced by the cloud of his wrath against sin and, second, that it had been rendered unapproachable to man because of man's sin, is unacceptable; for it is a serious misconception to imagine that the wrath of God is opposed to the love of God, or that these are two mutually exclusive motions or emotions in the Deity. God's wrath, no less than his love, is the expression of his holiness and purity, nor does he set aside wrath in order to display love; indeed, the cross is the supreme manifestation of the love and the wrath of God meeting together, for there the love of God absorbed the wrath of God as the incarnate Son enacted the love of God by taking both the sinner's place and his punishment. Moreover, the unapproachability of heaven to sinful man argues the need for the purification, not of heaven, but of the sinner: to redeemed mankind, cleansed from sin and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, heaven, previously closed, now lies open (He 10:19ff.).
>
> Also unsatisfactory is the opinion of Héring and others that the purification in question was effected by the dismissal of Satan from heaven (cf. Lk. 10:18; Jn. 12:31; Rev. 12:7ff.) and with him the removal of all defilement. Appeal is made to Ephesians 6:12, which speaks of the powers of wickedness in heavenly places, and to He 2:14f. above, where Christ is spoken of as overcoming the devil who has the power of death and delivering those he has held captive; but, while the victory of Christ is indeed the death-blow for Satan and the vindication of his own supreme lordship, the judgment and perdition of the devil were sure even apart from what took place at Calvary. It is inconceivable, further, that the glorious presence of God should be in any danger of defilement because of the rebellion of Satan.
>
> Another view, propounded by, among others, Spicq, Lünemann, and Owen, is that the "purification" of "the heavenly things themselves" means the "inauguration" or "consecration" of the heavenly sanctuary by reason of the "better" sacrifice of Christ. Support for this view is sought from our author's assertion above that the Mosaic covenant was inaugurated with blood (v. 18) and that under the law almost everything was purified with blood (v. 22), the conclusion being drawn that in the present context "to purify" and "to inaugurate" are equivalent terms. There is much to attract in this proposal, which has both simplicity and strength. In contrast to verses 19 to 22, however, which certainly refer to the inauguration of the former covenant, verse 23 is quite general in its scope, and this would seem to present a difficulty; but it could well be treated as a parenthetical

comment.

Another interpretation, which can claim a long history and includes among its advocates Chrysostom, Peter Lombard, Herveus, Luther, Cornelius a Lapide, Estius, Teodorico, F. F. Bruce, and Montefiore, understands "the heavenly things" mentioned here, or "the heavenly sanctuary" (as the same expression is translated in He 8:5 above), to be the people of God who together constitute the church or temple of God, "a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1Pet. 2:5). Bruce explains that "in order to be a spiritual house of this kind they must have experienced regeneration and cleansing by 'sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ' (1Pet. 1:2, 19, 22f.)." This concept, it can be argued, corresponds as antitype to the action of Moses, recounted in verse 19 above, when he sprinkled all the people with the blood of the covenant. True though this is, it is difficult to see how, except in a subsidiary manner, an interpretation along these lines is suited to the exegesis of the verse before us, for it requires an identification between "the heavenly sanctuary," or, as the next verse defines it, "heaven itself" into which the risen Christ has entered, and the community of the redeemed. The new temple is indeed being built with the living stones of Christian believers within whom Christ dwells, but this concept is not the same as that of the transcendental sanctuary into which the risen Lord entered at his ascension. Nor is the situation clarified by the supposition that our author means that "by the removal of the defilement of sin from the hearts and consciences of the worshippers the heavenly sphere in which they approach God to worship him is itself cleansed from this defilement" (F. F. Bruce, and similarly B. Weiss); for to speak thus is to speak really of the cleansing of sinners, not of heaven. The heavenly sphere is in fact inaccessible to uncleansed sinners (cf. Rev. 21:27); therefore to postulate its cleansing from the defilement it would otherwise have contracted if access had been possible to uncleansed sinners is to postulate a situation which is not factual but rests upon an unfulfilled and unfulfillable condition.

There is no need to seek precise and detailed parallels and correspondences between the cleansing ritual with its multiplicity of applications under the old system and the purification which is made available under the new. The former is complex and repetitious, the latter simple and comprehensive in its uniqueness. Our author's main intention is to emphasize the absolute superiority of the blood of the new covenant over that of the old. The purpose of Christ's coming was "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (He 7:26 below); and now, "holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens" (He 7:26), he has entered the pure sanctuary above. The blood-shedding and exaltation of him who is our fellow man and our forerunner (He 2:14; 6:20) have opened the way for mankind into the shrine of God's presence (He 4:14, 15, 16; 9:8; 10:19ff.); and the ultimate effect of the shedding of his blood of the new covenant will be the renewal of the universe, freed at last from sin, and filled with righteousness (He 12:28; Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1ff.; Acts 3:21; Ro 8:21). Such is the measure by which the former sacrifices are judged to have been surpassed by that better sacrifice which was offered once and forever by our great and eternal High Priest. (A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews- Philip Edgcumbe Hughes)

Andrew Murray in **The Holiest of All** writes that…

This is the great consummation to which all the teaching of the heavenly priesthood of Christ, and the true sanctuary, and the blood of the covenant leads up. Heaven itself is now opened up to us. Christ has entered, not simply on His own behalf, but entirely to appear before the face of God for us Yes, for us, His entering in has obtained for us boldness to enter in. His entering in was through the rent veil; there is no veil now between God and us. We are called to draw nigh in the fulness of faith. We are taught, Ye are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to God. Before the face of God, in the presence of God, is now the home of the soul. Heaven is not only a locality, with its limitations, but a state of life, that condition of spiritual existence in the full enjoyment of God's love and fellowship, into which Christ entered. Christ passed through the heavens, was made higher than the heavens. He ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.

Heaven itself, the Holiest of All, into which He entered, the presence of God, is now the sphere in which He exercises His heavenly ministry, into which He brings us in as an actual life and experience, in which we alone can truly serve the living God.

And what, we may well ask, what is the reason that so few of God's children can testify to the joy of entering in and having their abode here in the very presence of God? There can be but one answer, There is such a difference between being the heir of a promise and actually inheriting it. Each of the great words of our Epistle, as God's gift to each one of His children, has an infinitude of meaning and blessing and power in it. Christ a Priest for ever; the power of an endless life; He is able to sympathise, able to succour, able to lave completely; the true sanctuary, the new covenant, the blood cleansing the heavens, cleansing the conscience, wall these are divine realities, with a power and a glory that the heart of man cannot conceive.

It is only by faith and longsuffering that we inherit the promises. It is as we give up our whole heart and life to be just one act of faith, looking up and longing, praising and expecting, believing and receiving what God gives and works in Christ, that this life in the Holiest will be ours. It is as our faith sees the divine unity of the once for an and the for ever, that we shall be bold to believe that the for ever, the abiding continually, has in Christ been made ours once for all, and can be made ours in an entering within the veil as clear as that of Christ's. This faith will prove itself in longsuffering. First, as we diligently, perseveringly hold fast, and gaze and draw nigh and wait on God to take us within the veil; and then, as within the veil, in deepest humility and meekness and patience and resignation to God, we wait upon Him in service, to perfect us in the work for which we were admitted into His very presence.

But remember where all this begins, and wherein it all consists. Not without blood! With His own blood! How much more shall the blood of Christ! These words are the key to this blessed chapter of the opening of the Holiest to us. As we yield to the Holy Spirit, the Eternal Spirit, to testify to us how the way into the Holiest has been made manifest, and what the blood is by which it was done, and what the cleansing of our conscience in that blood to enter in and serve the living God, we shall in fulness of faith be bold to draw nigh and enter in and abide.

1. Think not that it will be too difficult for thee to dwell always with thy heart up yonder in heaven. When the sun shines on thee, thou dost not think of its distance; thou rejoicest in its warmth. It is so near to thee; thou enterest into it, and it enters into thee. Even so with Jesus and the heavenly life. Heaven comes down. The kingdom of heaven is come with power; the Holy Spirit gives and maintains it in thee. The veil is rent and the light and life of heaven is come down here where we serve in the Holy Place.

2. To open the way to heaven and to God, Jesus died to sin. He that hates and loses his life will find the way to the life of God.

3. Just as the cleansing of the tabernacle was part of the dedicating of the first covenant, so the sprinkling the heavenly sanctuary, the cleansing of the heavens with the blood of the new covenant, is our assurance that the sanctuary is open to us, and that the covenant is sure and will be fulfilled to us. (**Hebrews 9 Commentary from his book Holiest of All)**)

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us

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Greek: ou gar eis cheiropoieta eiselthen (3SAAI) agia Christos, antitupa ton alethinon, all' eis auton ton ouranon, nun emphanisthenai (APN) to prosopo tou theou uper emon;

Amplified: For Christ (the Messiah) has not entered into a sanctuary made with [human] hands, only a copy and pattern and type of the true one, but [He has entered] into heaven itself, now to appear in the [very] presence of God on our behalf. (Amplified Bible - Lockman)

Barclay: It is not into a man-made sanctuary that Christ has entered—that would be a mere symbol of the things which are real. It is into heaven itself that he entered, now to appear on our behalf before the presence of God. (Westminster Press)

NLT: For Christ has entered into heaven itself to appear now before God as our Advocate. He did not go into the earthly place of worship, for that was merely a copy of the real Temple in heaven. (NLT - Tyndale House)

Phillips: Christ did not therefore enter into any holy places made by human hands (however truly these may represent heavenly realities), but he entered Heaven itself to make his appearance before God as High Priest on our behalf. (Phillips: Touchstone)

Wuest: For not into holy places constructed by human hands did Messiah enter, which are the types of the genuine [holy places], but into heaven itself, now to be manifested before the face of God on behalf of us.

Young's Literal: for not into holy places made with hands did the Christ enter -- figures of the true -- but into the heaven itself, now to be manifested in the presence of God for us

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FOR CHRIST DID NOT ENTER A HOLY PLACE MADE WITH HANDS A *MERE* COPY OF THE TRUE ONE BUT INTO HEAVEN

ITSELF: ou gar eis cheiropoieta eiselthen (3SAAI) hagia Christos antitupa ton alethinon all eis auton ton ouranon:

- **Holy place** - Heb 9:11; Mark 14:58; John 2:19, 20, 21
- **Copy of the true** - Heb 9:9,23; 8:2)
- **But into heaven itself -** Heb 1:3; 6:20; 7:26; 8:2,5; 12:2; Ps 68:18; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Jn 6:62; Jn 16:28; Acts 1:9, 10, 11; 3:21; Eph 1:20, 21, 22; 4:8, 9, 10, 11; Col 3:2; 1Peter 3:22
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

In this last section of Hebrews 9 (He 9:23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28), all 3 aspects of Christ's ministry of salvation/redemption are pictured - (1) His First Coming to save us from the penalty of sin ("better sacrifices" He 9:23-note). (2) His present intercessory ministry in heaven to save us from the power of sin ("now appear… for us" He 9:24-note) (3) His Second Coming (He 9:28-note) to deliver us from the presence of sin.

Vincent - Under the old covenant, the blood shedding was symbolical: the death of the institutor was by proxy. In the ratification of the new covenant, Christ himself was the covenant-victim, and a real cleansing power attaches to his blood as the offering of his eternal spirit.

For (1063) (**gar**) - Always pause and ponder this strategic **term of explanation** which here introduces an explanation of the preceding passage.

Wuest says that "This verse is in explanation of the statement in the previous verse to the effect that the heavenly things had to be purified by blood superior to animal blood, and that Messiah did not enter the Holy of Holies on earth as High Priest, but the Holy of Holies of heaven itself." (Hebrews Commentary)

Leon Morris says that "**For**" introduces an explanation of what precedes. We have already had the idea that Christ's ministry was not in a sanctuary that is "man-made" (He 9:11), and here we come back to it. Not in such sanctuaries can the Atonement be made that really deals with sin. (Gaebelein, F, Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing)

Jamieson -"Resumption more fully of the thought, "He entered in once into the holy place,"Hebrews 9:12.

Christ (5547) (**Christos** from **chrio** = to anoint, rub with oil, consecrate to an office) is the Anointed One, the Messiah, Christos being the Greek equivalent of the transliterated Hebrew word Messiah. Study the 12 uses of **Christos** in Hebrews = Heb 3:6, 14; 5:5; 6:1; 9:11, 14, 24, 28; 10:10; 11:26; 13:8, 21

Not (3756) (**ou**) indicates absolutely not!

Enter (1525)(**eiserchomai** from **eis** = into + **erchomai** = come) means literally to come into and thus to enter into. Notice that enter into refers to a single event, a past completed historical event (after His ascension), but consequences of this event are **now** (see "but now" in Hebrews 8:6) and on our behalf (He 6:20-note; He 7:25-note).

Holy *place* (40) (**hagios**) means a place set apart from the profane or common and unto God and for the worship of and approach to the Holy God. Note that in this context the "holy place" stands for the Holy of Holies (the actual presence of God), even as the Ark of the Covenant in the earthly Holy of Holies represented the throne of God.

Holy place - This phrase occurs 60x in Scripture in NAS -

> Ex 26:33; 28:29, 35, 43; 29:30f; 31:11; 35:19; 39:1, 41; Lev 6:16, 26f, 30; 7:6; 10:13, 17; 16:2f, 16f, 20, 23f, 27; 24:9; Num 28:7; 1 Kgs 6:16; 7:50; 8:6, 8, 10; 1 Chr 6:49; 23:32; 2 Chr 5:11; 29:5, 7; 35:5; Ezra 9:8; Ps 24:3; Eccl 8:10; Isa 57:15; Ezek 41:4; 45:2ff; 48:12; Dan 8:13f; 9:24; Matt 24:15; Acts 6:13; 21:28; Heb 9:2, 8, 12, 24f; 10:19; 13:11

Made with hands (5499) (**cheiropoietos** from **cheir** = hand + **poieo** = to make) means manufactured by man or of human construction. Christ has not entered into a hand-made sanctuary.

Wiersbe makes an application warning us all to "Beware of trusting anything for your spiritual life that is "made with hands" (Heb. 9:24). It will not last. The tabernacle was replaced by Solomon's temple, and that temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. When the Jews returned to their land after the Captivity, they rebuilt their temple; and King Herod, in later years, expanded and embellished it. But the Romans destroyed that temple, and it has never been rebuilt. Furthermore, since the genealogical records have been lost or destroyed, the Jews are not certain who can minister as priests. These things that are "made with hands" are perishable, but the things "not made with hands" are eternal. (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor)

Spurgeon - Christ never went within the veil in the Jewish temple; that was but the symbol of the true holy of holies. He has gone

“into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.”

The copy - The representation.

Copy (499) (**antitupon [word study]** from **anti** = against, instead of, corresponding to + **tupos [word study]** = a type, model, figure, form, impression, print) is an earthly expression of a spiritual reality. Thus it represents something which symbolizes some spiritual truth. In modern Greek **antitupon** means a copy of a book. In the present case the earthly tabernacle prefigured the reality of the tabernacle of God in heaven.

Barnes explains that **antitupon** "properly means that which is formed after a model, pattern, or type; and then that which corresponds to something, or answers to, it. The idea here is, that the type or fashion--the true figure or form--was shown to Moses in the Mount, and then the tabernacle was made after that model, or corresponded to it. The true original figure is heaven itself; the tabernacle was an **antitype** of that--or was so formed as in some sense to correspond to it. That is, it corresponded in regard to the matters under consideration--the most Holy Place denoted heaven; the mercy-seat and the **Shekinah (see notes)** were symbols of the presence of God, and of the fact that he shows mercy in heaven; the entrance of the high priest was emblematical of the entrance of the Redeemer into heaven; the sprinkling of the blood there was a type of what the Redeemer would do in heaven.

Poole comments that this section "shows this to be a rational proof of the transcendence of Christ’s death and sacrifice; and this he demonstrates from the place of his ministry, far exceeding that of his type. The gospel High Priest did not, like Aaron, enter with his blood into the holy of holiest of an earthly tabernacle, frail and movable, and appear before the mercy-seat on the ark there, Heb 9:9.

But into heaven itself - "**But**" introduces a striking contrast between the heavenly substance and the earthly shadow.

> **Hebrews 1:3** (note) And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;
>
> **Hebrews 6:20** (note) where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.
>
> **Hebrews 7:26** (note) For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;
>
> **Hebrews 8:2** (note) a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.
>
> **Hebrews 8:5** (note) who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."
>
> **Hebrews 12:2** (note) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jamieson says "**into heaven itself**" refers to "the immediate presence of the invisible God beyond all the created heavens, through which latter Jesus passed (see on Heb 4:14; 1Ti 6:16).

Heaven (3772) (**ouranos**) is the expanse of space that seems to be over the earth like a dome. In context this refers not just to the atmosphere surrounding the earth but to Jehovah's dwelling place (see more detailed discussion).

Barnes - The Jewish high priest alone entered into the most holy place; and the other priests into the holy place. Jesus, being of the tribe of Judah, and not of Levi, never entered the temple proper. He had access only to the courts of the temple, in the same way as any other Jew had. See [Mt 21:12]. He has entered into the true temple--heaven of which the earthly tabernacle was the type.

True one (228) (**alethinos** from **alethes** = true, one who cannot lie) describes that which has not only the name and resemblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name, in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name and thus real, true and genuine not spurious, fictitious, counterfeit, imaginary, simulated or pretended.

Alethinos - 28x in 26v - NAS = sincere(1), true(26), true one(1).

> Luke 16:11; John 1:9; 4:23, 37; 6:32; 7:28; 8:16; 15:1; 17:3; 19:35; 1Th 1:9; Heb 8:2; 9:24; 10:22; 1 John 2:8; 5:20; Rev 3:7, 14; 6:10; 15:3; 16:7; 19:2, 9, 11; 21:5; 22:6.

The **holy place** is **true** in the sense that in its character it is all that is expected of it. In short, the thing described as true (the holy place) measures up to the specifications which a holy God would demand. The heavenly Holy of Holies is everything that could be expected of such a place. What delights await those God now calls "My beloved in Christ"!

NOW TO APPEAR IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US: nun emphanisthenai (APN) to prosopo tou theou huper hemon

- Heb 7:25; Ex 28:12,29; Zech 3:1; Ro 8:33; 1Jn 2:1,2; Rev 8:3
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

> 1 John 2:1+ My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, **we have an Advocate with the Father,** Jesus Christ the righteous; 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world
>
> Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

CHRIST'S CONTINUAL INTERCESSION FOR US

Steven Cole writes "We, who are not used to the physical rituals and sacrifices of the Jewish temple, may not struggle with the spirituality of Christian worship. But the first readers of this epistle were having a hard time letting go of the physicality of the temple and the sacrifices. So the author emphasizes again (Hebrews 8:1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 9:11) that "Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24-note). Under the Jewish system, the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies once a year to represent the people before God, but Jesus is in the true holy place permanently on our behalf! Furthermore, the high priest had to keep returning year after year with the blood of the sacrificial animals. But Jesus once for all offered His own blood. He didn't have to suffer and die over and over again from the foundation of the world. His one sacrifice at the consummation of the ages put away our sin (see Hebrews 9:26-note). "The consummation of the ages" is similar to Paul's phrase in Galatians 4:4, "**But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son….**" It implies the preexistence of Christ before His birth. It also means that the cross represents the apex or consummation of God's purpose of the ages, to glorify Himself. (Hebrews 9:23-28 Judgment or Salvation?)

Now (3568) (**nun**) means in the present moment. Even as you read these words, Jesus is in the presence of His Father and is there on our behalf. Amazing love.

Poole adds that the Risen Messiah…now appears as our advocating Mediator, pleading His merit for the remission of our sins, and rendering of God's face smiling on and favoring His clients, which was terrifying and affrighting to guilty Adam before: He 7:25-note, He 10:19-note Ro 8:34-note Re 5:6-note. 1 John 2:1, 2. Here He represents our persons to God's face, fitting in the mean while us beneath for our seeing Him face to face, and being blessed in the enjoyment of that prospect forever.

To appear - More literally "to be made to appear". Jamieson adds that…Mere man may have a vision through a medium, or veil, as Moses had (Ex 33:18, 20–23). Christ alone beholds the Father without a veil, and is His perfect image. Through seeing Him only can we see the Father.

> **Appear** (1718) (**emphanizo** from **en** = in, into + **phaino** = give light, illuminate, shine, shine forth) means to make apparent, to be manifested, to be shown. The aorist infinitive (infinitive expresses purpose) indicates that Christ has been "made to appear", the purpose of His presence there being to appear openly before God. Christ is made openly manifest before the face of God. The Levitical priest had to conceal the Ark of the Covenant and over arching **Shekinah** glory cloud (representing the presence of God) with the smoke of incense. Why? So that he might not look upon God face to face (see prosopon = towards the eye or face).
>
> **Emphanizo** - 10x in 10v - Matt 27:53; John 14:21f; Acts 23:15, 22; 24:1; 25:2, 15; Heb 9:24; 11:14. **NAS** = appear(1), appeared(1), brought charges(3), disclose(2), make… clear(1), notified(1), notify(1).
>
> **Vine** says that **emphanizo** is here used in the middle voice (**Ed**: Note that some interpret it as passive voice), signifying, to present Himself; and indicating His interest in doing so.

Expositor's Greek Testament - the darkness and clouds of incense in the old sanctuary were meant as much to veil the unworthiness of the priest from God as the glory of God from the priest. Now Christ appears before God face to face with no intervening cloud. Perfect fellowship is attained by His perfect and stainless offering of Himself. All is clear between God and man. For it is '**for u**s' He enters this presence and fellowship; not that He alone may enjoy it, but that we may enter into the rest and

blessedness that He won for us. (Expositors Greek Testament)

Wuest - This appearance of Messiah at the Cross, corresponds to the appearance of the high priest at the Brazen Altar on the Day of Atonement where the animal for sacrifice was slain. This is Messiah's first appearance. He puts away sin. His second appearance, recorded in verse 24, is in the Holy of Holies of heaven, His present appearance. There He appears in the presence of God for us who are saved. His presence there, brings believers into the presence of God. (**Hebrews Commentary**)

This same verb **emphanizo** is used in the Greek translation of Exodus 33:13 where Moses says to God…

> Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight, let me know (Lxx = emphanizo meaning to **reveal**) Thy ways, that I may know Thee, so that I may find favor in Thy sight. Consider too, that this nation is Thy people.

In the presence of God - To the face of God!

Jamieson - The saints shall hereafter see God's face in Christ (Rev 22:4+): the earnest of which is now given (2Co 3:18). Aaron, the Levitical high priest for the people, stood before the ark and only saw the cloud, the symbol of God's glory (Ex 28:30+).

The three appearings mentioned in Hebrews 9:24-28 are connected with the three aspects of the great Salvation of our Lord, the past, the present, and the future.

- **PAST** - "He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb 9:26)— Redemption/Justification/Past Deliverance
- **PRESENT** - "Now to appear in the presence of God for (HUPER) us" (Heb 9:24)—Intercession/Sanctification/Present Deliverance
- **FUTURE** - "He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb 9:27) —Transformation/Glorification/Future Deliverance

This same threefold deliverance is mentioned in 2 Cor 1:10, and corresponds with the threefold character of Christ, as prophet, priest, and king.

The second coming of Christ has not much prominence in the preaching of today, although it has a very large place in the Word of God. There are 260 chapters in the New Testament, and over 300 references to this great coming event. (7957 verses in NT divided by 300 means there is an allusion to the Second Coming in about 1 of every 26.5 verses).

WORD STUDY - Prosopon

Presence (4383) (**prosopon** from **pros** = towards + **ops** = eye, the part around the eye and so the face) means literally toward the eye or face. Of the **face** of Jesus transfigured (Mt 17:2), of His face spat in (Mt 26:67) and slapped (Mk 14:65). Most of the uses of **prosopon** refer to one's face ("toward the eye"). In Mt 11:10 (Lk 7:27, 9:52, 10:1) the idiom "before you face" is rendered "**ahead** of." Mt 16:3 Jesus acknowledges that they can "discern the **appearance** (face) of the sky?" To fall on one's face is to worship, to acknowledge the worth of the one before whom one falls (Mt 17:6, Lk 17:16, 24:5, Mt 26:39 = Jesus falling on His face to pray to His Father). Jesus said that the angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father Who is in heaven." (Mt 18:10). **Prosopon** expresses the idea of **presence** (Lk 2:31, Acts 2:28, 3:13, 19, Acts 5:41, 2Cor 2:10, 2Th 1:9, Rev 6:16, 12:14, 20:11 - Webster says **presence** = a being in company near or before the face of another, approach face to face) In Luke 9:51 Jesus "was determined to go to Jerusalem" which is more literally set or fixed His face, a Semitic (Hebrew) idiom which speaks of an unshakable resolve to do something (cp use of prosopon in Ge 31:21, Isa 50:7). To **send ahead** is the idiom to send "before one's **face**." (Mt 11:10, Mk 1:2, Lk 9:52). In Lk 9:51 to "fix one's face" speaks of determination. In Lk 9:53 "traveling toward" is more literally "his **face** was going." Prosopon is used figuratively to describe the **face** of the earth (Lk 21:35, cp "appearance" in Lk 12:56, Lxx - Ge 6:7, 7:4 = the **face** of the land).

Prosopon means to be **partial** in Mt 22:16 (Mk 12:14, Lk 20:21, Gal 2:6) (literally = "does not look to the **face** of men). Our Lord's cruel captors spat in His **face** (Mt 26:67) and slapped His **face** (Mk 14:65). The derivative verb **prosopolepteo** (**prosopon** = face + **lambáno** = receive) means literally to receive face and thus to show partiality.

Here in Heb 9:24 **prosopon** is the picture of Christ our Representative now being face to face with the invisible God our Father. Remember that the writer is speaking primarily to Jewish believers (and those who are being drawn to believe in Messiah) and thus the truth that Messiah appears in the presence of God would be a strong expression of Christ's nearness to God, something no Jewish high priest could ever hope to achieve. And again another reason for the struggling, tested Jewish readers not to doubt but to "Consider Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our confession." (He 3:1-note)

TDNT on **prosopon** in secular use - **1. Face.** The basic sense of prosopon is “face,” “countenance.” The plural occurs in Homer and the tragedians, but later the singular takes over. Human faces, or at times those of the gods, are at issue, with only occasional exceptions. A wider sense is “personal appearance,” “form,” “figure.” With kata “personal presence” is denoted. A figurative use is for a military front or the front of a building. **2. Mask**. The mask worn by actors resembles a face and is thus called a prosopon. The role or part is then denoted by the term. Another use is for the anonymous opponent in a dialogue. **3**. **Person**. A further meaning is the person either socially or grammatically or, at a later time, legally.

TDNT on **prosopon** in Septuagint - **1. Face.** Occurring some 850 times or more in the LXX, **prosopon** first means “face.” Falling on the face is an expression of veneration (Gen. 17:3). Seeing a king’s face means having an audience. The face of an animal is meant in Ezek. 1:10. “Appearance” is the sense in Gen. 40:7 (of a matter in 2Sa 14:20). The **prosopon** denotes the whole person in 2 Sam. 17:11 (Absalom). **2. Front Side.** Like the Hebrew original, **prosopon** may denote “surface” (Ge 2:6), or “edge” (Eccl. 10:10), or “front” in prepositional phrases signifying movement to or from, e.g., with apó (from), eis (to or before), ek (from), en (before), epí (on), katá (before or over against), metá (with), and pró (before). **3. God’s Countenance. a. Frequently prosopon denotes God’s countenance in anthropomorphic expressions**. God’s lifting his countenance means grace and peace. Prayer is made that his face may shine on Israel (Num. 6:25). Hiding his face denotes withdrawal of grace (Dt. 32:20). In penal wrath God turns his face against sinners (Ps. 34:16). Seeing God’s face is a special privilege (Gen. 32:3). Because of God’s holiness it involves peril; hence even Moses sees God’s glory only from behind (Ex. 32:23). God reveals himself through his word, not through seeing his face. **b. Various cultic expressions use the term**. Thus “**to see God’s face**” is to visit the sanctuary; believers seek God’s face (Ps. 42:3; Zech. 8:21–22). The accent here is not on seeing God but on assurance of his presence and favor. In Ps. 105:4 seeking God’s face is a daily procedure; it is a matter of supreme concern in Ps. 27:8. The holy bread is the **bread of the prosopon** in 1Sa 21:6, i.e., **the bread of the presence**.

Friberg's summary - (1) face, countenance; literally, as a part of the body face (MT 6.16); figuratively; (a) as denoting personal presence in person (1Th 2.17); idiomatically, with the sense varied by controlling prepositions: face to face (1Co 13.12); directly from (Acts 3.20); before, in front of (2Co 8.24); in the presence of (2Co 2.10); face to face, in person (Acts 3.13), openly, personally, to one’s face (Gal 2.11); with the presence of, by being with someone (Acts 2.28); in front of, ahead of (Mt 11.10); (b) as denoting the front side of something face; of the earth surface (Lk 21.35); (c) as denoting the external form of something appearance (2Co 5.12; JA 1.11); (2) by synecdoche person, individual (2Co 1.11)

NAS = ahead*(2), appearance(5), before*(2), coming*(1), **face**(37), **faces**(5), openly(1), outwardly*(1), partial*(3), partiality(1), people(1), person(1), persons(1), **presence**(11), sight(1).

Prosopon - 76x in 71v -

> Matthew 6:16 "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy **face** as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.
>
> 17 "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your **face**
>
> Matthew 11:10 "This is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER **AHEAD** (before your face) OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.'
>
> Matthew 16:3 "And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?
>
> Matthew 17:2 And He was transfigured before them; and His **face** shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.
>
> 6 When the disciples heard this, they fell **face** down to the ground and were terrified.
>
> Matthew 18:10 "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the **face** of My Father who is in heaven.
>
> Matthew 22:16 And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not **partial** to any.
>
> Matthew 26:39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His **face** and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."
>
> 67 Then they spat in His **face** and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him,
>
> Mark 1:2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER **AHEAD** OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY;

Mark 12:14 They came and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and defer to no one; for You are not **partial** to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?

Mark 14:65 Some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophesy!" And the officers received Him with slaps in the **face**.

Luke 2:31 Which You have prepared in the **presence** of all peoples,

Luke 5:12 While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his **face** and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

Luke 7:27 "This is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER **AHEAD** (literally = before your face) OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.'

Luke 9:29 And while He was praying, the appearance of His **face** became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming.

51 When the days were approaching for His ascension, He was **determined** (fixed his face) to go to Jerusalem;

52 and He sent messengers on **ahead** of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him.

53 But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling **toward** (his face was going) Jerusalem.

Luke 10:1 Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs **ahead** of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come.

Luke 12:56 "You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the **appearance** (face) of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?

Luke 17:16 and he fell on his **face** at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan.

Luke 20:21 They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach correctly, and You are not **partial** to any, but teach the way of God in truth.

Luke 21:35 for it will come upon all those who dwell on the **face** of all the earth.

Luke 24:5 and as the women were terrified and bowed their **faces** to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?

Acts 2:28 'YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR **PRESENCE**.'

Acts 3:13 "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the **presence** of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.

19 "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the **presence** of the Lord;

Acts 5:41 So they went on their way from the **presence** of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.

Acts 6:15 And fixing their gaze on him, all who were sitting in the Council saw his **face** like the **face** of an angel.

Acts 7:45 "And having received it in their turn, our fathers brought it in with Joshua upon dispossessing the nations whom God drove out **before** (from the presence of) our fathers, until the time of David.

Acts 13:24 after John had proclaimed **before** His coming (Before the face of His entrance) a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

Acts 17:26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the **face** of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

Acts 20:25 "And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my **face**.

38 grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they would not see his **face** again. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

Acts 25:16 "I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand over any man before the accused meets his accusers **face** to **face** and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges.

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then**face** to **face**; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

1 Corinthians 14:25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his**face** and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.

2 Corinthians 1:11 you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many **persons** on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many.

2 Corinthians 2:10 But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the **presence** of Christ,

2 Corinthians 3:7 But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his **face**, fading as it was,

13 and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his**face** so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away.

18 But we all, with unveiled **face**, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the **face** of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:12 We are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have an answer for those who take pride in **appearance** and not in heart.

2 Corinthians 8:24 Therefore **openly** (in the face of) before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

2 Corinthians 10:1 Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ-- I who am meek when **face** to **face** with you, but bold toward you when absent!

7 You are looking at things as they are **outwardly**. If anyone is confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again within himself, that just as he is Christ's, so also are we. (**NET Note**: The phrase is close to a recognized idiom for judging based on outward appearances (L&N 30.120). Some translators see a distinction, however, and translate 2Cor 10:7a as "**Look at what is in front of your eyes;**" that is, the obvious facts of the case (so NRSV).)

2 Corinthians 11:20 For you tolerate it if anyone enslaves you, anyone devours you, anyone takes advantage of you, anyone exalts himself, anyone hits you in the **face**.

Galatians 1:22 I was still unknown by **sight** to the churches of Judea which were in Christ;

Galatians 2:6 But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no **partiality**)-- well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

Colossians 2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my **face**,

1 Thessalonians 2:17 But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short while-- in person, not in spirit-- were all the more eager with great desire to see your **face**.

1 Thessalonians 3:10 as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your**face**, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?

2 Thessalonians 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the **presence** of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the **presence** of God for us;

James 1:11 For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its **appearance** is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natura**face** (Lit at the face of his birth) in a mirror;

1 Peter 3:12 "FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE **FACE** OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL."

Jude 1:16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering **people** for the sake of gaining an advantage. (**NET Note** - Enchanting **folks** [Grk "awing **faces**"] refers to the fact that the speeches of these false teachers are powerful and seductive.)

Revelation 4:7 The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a **face** like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.

Revelation 6:16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the**presence** of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

Revelation 7:11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their **faces** before the throne and worshiped God,

Revelation 9:7 The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their **faces** were like the **faces** of men.

Revelation 10:1 I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his **face** was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;

Revelation 11:16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their**faces** and worshiped God,

Revelation 12:14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the **presence** of the serpent.

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose**presence** earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

Revelation 22:4 they will see His **face**, and His name will be on their foreheads.

In the Septuagint - After they sinned they "hid themselves from the **presence** (Lxx = prosopon) of the LORD God." (Ge 3:8) In Ge 4:5-6 we see **prosopon** again used in context of sin - "but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his **countenance** (Lxx = prosopon) fell. 6 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your **countenance** (Lxx = prosopon) fallen?" In Ge 4:14 Cain protests “Behold, Thou hast driven me this day from the**face** of the ground; and from Thy **face** I shall be hidden, and I shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and it will come about that whoever finds me will kill me.” In Ge 4:16 "Cain went out from the **presence** of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden."

Prosopon - over 1200v in the **Septuagint** -

Ge 2:6-7; 3:8, 19; Ge 4:5-6, 14, 16; 6:7; 7:4, 23; 8:8f, 13; 9:23; 11:4, 8f; 16:6, 8, 12; 17:3, 17; 18:16; 19:1, 21, 28; 20:16; 23:8, 17; 25:18; 27:30; 31:2, 5; 32:20f, 30; 33:10, 18; 35:1, 7; 36:6; 38:15; 40:7; 41:46, 56; 42:6; 43:3, 5, 26, 31; 44:23, 26, 29; 46:30; 48:11f; 50:1; Exod 2:15; 3:6; 10:11, 28f; 14:19, 25; 16:14; 23:18, 20; 25:20, 37; 26:9; 28:23, 37; 32:34; 33:2, 20, 23; 34:6, 11, 24, 29f, 33, 35; 39:18, 20; Lev 8:9; 9:24; 10:4, 18; 13:41; 16:2, 14f; 17:10; 18:24; 19:15, 32; 20:3, 5f; 26:10, 17; Num 3:38; 6:25f; 8:2f; 12:14; 14:5, 42; 16:4, 22, 43, 45f; 17:9; 19:4, 16; 20:6; 21:11, 20; 22:3, 31; 24:1; 27:17; 32:21; 33:52, 55; Deut 1:17, 21, 30; 2:12, 21f, 25, 31, 33; 3:18, 28; 4:38; 5:4f, 7; 6:15, 19; 7:1, 6, 10, 19, 21f, 24; 8:20; 9:2ff; 10:17; 11:4, 23, 25; 12:29f; 14:2; 16:19; 20:3, 19; 22:6; 23:14; 25:9; 28:7, 25, 50, 60; 30:1, 15, 19; 31:3, 6f, 17f, 21; 32:20, 49; 33:27; 34:1, 10; Josh 2:10f; 3:10; 4:5, 7; 5:1, 14; 6:5; 7:4, 6, 10, 12; 8:5f, 10, 15; 9:24; 10:10ff; 11:6; 13:3, 6, 16, 25; 15:8; 17:7; 18:14, 16; 19:11; 23:3, 5, 9, 13; 24:8, 12, 18; Jdg 2:3, 14, 18, 21; 5:5; 6:2, 6f, 9, 11, 22; 9:21, 40; 11:3, 23f, 33; 13:20; 16:3; 18:23; 20:2; Ruth 2:10; 1 Sam 1:14, 18, 22; 2:11; 4:17; 5:3f; 7:7; 8:18; 9:12; 13:12; 14:13, 25; 15:7, 27; 16:7f; 17:49; 18:12, 15f; 19:8, 10; 20:15, 41; 21:6, 10, 12f; 22:4; 23:5, 26; 24:2, 8; 25:10, 23, 35, 41; 26:1, 3, 20; 28:14; 30:16; 31:1; 2 Sam 2:22, 24; 3:13; 7:9, 15, 23; 9:6; 10:9, 13f, 18; 11:11; 14:4, 7, 20, 22, 24, 28, 32f; 15:14, 18, 23; 17:11, 19; 18:8, 28; 19:4f, 8, 18; 21:1; 23:11; 24:20; 1 Kgs 1:23, 31, 50; 2:7, 15ff, 20, 29; 3:15, 28; 5:3; 6:3, 17, 21, 36; 7:6, 36, 49; 8:8, 11, 14, 22, 25, 31, 54, 64; 9:7; 10:24; 11:43; 12:8, 10, 30; 13:6, 11, 34; 14:24; 17:3, 5; 18:1, 7, 39, 42; 19:13; 21:4, 26f, 29; 2 Kgs 1:15; 3:14, 24; 4:29, 31; 5:1, 27; 6:32; 8:11, 15; 9:7, 14, 32, 37; 10:4; 11:2, 18; 12:17; 13:4, 14, 23; 14:8, 11f; 16:3, 14, 18; 17:8, 11, 18, 20, 23; 18:24; 20:2; 21:2, 9, 13; 22:19; 23:13, 27; 24:3, 20; 25:19, 26; 1 Chr 5:25; 10:1; 11:13; 12:1, 8; 16:4, 11, 27, 29f, 33; 17:8, 21, 25; 19:10, 15, 18f; 21:12, 16, 21, 30; 28:8; 29:11; 2Chr 1:13; 3:4, 8, 13, 17; 4:20; 5:9, 14; 6:3, 16, 31, 36, 42; 7:3, 14, 20; 9:23; 10:2; 12:5; 13:7f, 16; 19:7, 11; 20:3, 5, 7, 15, 18; 22:11; 25:17, 22; 28:3; 29:6; 30:9; 32:2, 7, 21; 33:2, 9, 12; 34:4, 27; 35:19, 22; 36:5, 12; Ezra 7:14; 9:6f; 10:6; Neh 2:2f; 4:9, 14; 5:15; 8:6; 10:33; Esth 5:1f; 7:8; 8:12; Job 1:11; 2:5; 4:15; 6:28; 9:24, 27; 11:15; 13:10, 20; 14:20; 15:27; 16:8; 17:12; 18:17; 19:8; 21:31; 22:8; 23:15, 17; 24:15, 18; 26:9f; 29:24; 30:10f; 32:22; 33:26; 34:19, 29; 38:30; 40:13; 41:13f; 42:8; Ps 1:4; 3:1; 4:6; 9:3; 10:5, 11; 11:7; 13:1; 16:11; 17:2, 9, 15; 18:8, 42; 21:6, 9, 12; 22:24; 24:6; 27:8f; 30:7; 31:16, 20, 22; 34:1, 5, 16; 35:5; 38:3, 5; 42:2, 5, 11; 43:5; 44:3, 15f, 24; 45:11; 50:21; 51:9, 11; 55:21; 57:1, 6; 60:4; 61:2; 67:1; 68:1f, 4, 8; 69:7, 17, 29; 78:55; 80:3, 7, 16, 19; 82:2; 83:13, 16; 84:9; 88:14; 89:14f, 23; 90:8; 95:2; 96:9, 13; 97:5; 102:2, 10; 104:15, 29f; 105:4; 114:7; 119:58, 135; 132:10; 139:7; 140:13; 143:7; 147:17; Prov 2:6; 4:3; 7:13, 15; 8:30; 15:13; 17:24; 18:5; 19:6; 21:29; 22:26; 24:23; 25:5, 7, 23; 27:17, 19; 28:21; 29:5, 26; Eccl 2:26; 3:14; 5:2, 6; 7:3, 26; 8:1, 3, 12f; 9:1; 10:5, 10; 11:1; Song 7:4; Isa 2:10, 19, 21; 3:9, 15, 19; 6:2; 7:16; 8:17; 9:15; 13:8; 16:4; 17:9; 19:1, 16; 24:1; 25:8; 28:25; 29:22; 30:28; 31:8; 34:15; 36:9; 38:2; 49:23; 50:6f; 51:13; 53:3; 54:8; 57:1, 14, 17; 59:2; 62:11; 63:12; 64:2, 7; Jer 1:8, 13f, 17; 2:27; 3:12; 4:1, 4, 26; 5:3, 22; 6:7; 7:12, 15, 19; 8:2; 9:7, 13, 22, 26; 10:2; 13:17, 26; 14:16; 15:1, 17, 19; 16:4; 17:16; 18:17, 20, 23; 21:8, 10; 22:25; 23:9f; 24:1; 25:16, 23, 26f, 33, 37f; 26:4, 19; 28:16; 30:6, 20; 31:36; 32:24, 31, 33; 33:5; 34:15, 18; 35:5, 11, 19; 36:7, 9, 22; 37:11, 20; 38:9; 39:17; 40:9f; 41:9, 18; 42:2, 11, 15ff; 44:3, 10f, 22f; 46:16; 48:44; 49:5, 19, 32; 50:5, 8, 16, 44; 51:51, 64; 52:12, 25, 33; Lam 1:5f, 22; 2:3, 19; 3:35; 4:16, 20; 5:9f; Ezek 1:6, 8ff, 12, 28; 2:6; 3:8f, 20, 23; 4:1, 3, 7; 6:2, 9; 7:18, 22; 8:11, 16; 9:8; 10:21f; 11:13; 12:6, 12; 13:17; 14:1, 3f, 6ff, 15; 15:7; 16:5, 18f, 63; 20:1, 35, 43, 46f; 21:2, 16; 22:30; 23:24, 41; 25:2; 27:35; 28:21; 29:2, 5; 32:10; 33:27; 34:6; 35:2; 36:17, 31; 37:2; 38:2, 20; 39:5, 14, 23f, 29; 40:12; 41:4, 12, 14f, 18f, 21f, 25; 42:10f, 13, 17, 19; 43:3; 44:4, 12, 15; 45:7; 47:1; Dan 1:10; 2:15, 31, 46; 3:19; 4:22, 33; 5:19, 24; 6:10, 12f, 26; 7:8, 10; 8:5, 17f, 23; 9:3, 7f, 10, 13, 17; 10:6, 9, 12, 15; 11:16ff, 22; Hos 2:2; 5:5, 15; 7:2, 10; 10:7, 15; 11:2; Joel 2:3, 6, 10f, 20; Amos 2:9; 5:8, 19; 9:4, 6, 8; Jonah 1:3, 10; Mic 1:4; 2:13; 3:4; 6:4; Nah 1:5f; 2:1, 10; 3:5; Hab 1:9; 2:20; 3:5; Zeph 1:2f, 7; 2:7; Hag 1:12; 2:14; Zech 2:13; 3:1, 3f, 8f; 4:7; 5:3; 8:21f; 14:20; Mal 1:8f; 2:3, 5, 9; 3:1, 14;

Barnes - As the Jewish high priest appeared before the **Shekinah**, the symbol of the Divine Presence in the tabernacle, so Christ

appears before God himself in our behalf in heaven. He has gone to plead for our salvation; to present the merits of his blood as a permanent reason why we should be saved

David J. MacLeod writes that - At His ascension Christ was formally installed as High Priest and began His present high priestly work. In the heavenly tabernacle today He represents His people (i.e., He secures their acceptance with God) (1Ti 2:5, Ep 1:6KJV); obtains free access for them into God's presence (Ro 5:2); intercedes in prayer for them (Ro 8:34, He 7:25) and grants them help (He 2:18); mediates their prayers to God and God's strength to them (2Ti 2:1); anticipates His return to earth to reign; and, at the end of the present session, will bless His people by bringing them deliverance into the kingdom. (David J. MacLeod, "The Present Work of Christ in Hebrews," Bibliotheca Sacra 148:590 April-June 1991)

Of God - Literally the Greek reads "**of the God**", the definite article (the) emphasizing the exclusivity of God. He is not one among a pantheon of gods but is alone the true and living God.

I agree with **MacDonald** who remarks that "It is difficult to understand why anyone would want to leave the reality and go back to the copy, why anyone would leave the great High Priest serving in the heavenly sanctuary to return to the priests of Israel serving in a symbolic tent. (MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson)

G Campbell Morgan - This is the fact which made possible the covenant. This was the supreme act of His priesthood, and it is continuous. In a former note we considered the statement that our great High Priest has "passed through the heavens" (Heb 4.14). Here it is said that He has entered into heaven. This is not a contradiction, but an interpretation. The heavens through which He passed are the created heavens. The Heaven which He entered is the uncreated abode of God Himself, the very Holiest of all. Thither He went "to appear before the face of God." The statement is apprehended in all its fulness of meaning when we put it into contrast with the greatest hour in the life and ministry of Moses. In an hour of supreme need and highest communion Moses asked to see the glory of God; that is, to behold His face. The answer was, "Thou canst not see My face"; but in grace he was given to see the back of God. The Son of God, in His glorified manhood entered into Heaven to be manifested before the face of God! There, as man, God beheld Him, and He beheld God. And this was for us. In His humanity ours was represented, our sin covered by His completed atonement, our imperfections can-celled in His perfection, our weakness ended in His strength. Henceforth we are accepted in the Beloved, and all the wisdom and might and love of God are given to us through Him in the covenant which God makes with us. (Morgan, G. C. Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

For (5228) (**huper**) in this context means in our place, as our substitute.

For us - While these are only 2 words in the Greek and English, what precious words they are to our sinful ears, for the Greek word "***huper***" means "on behalf of" or "in our place" (cp He 6:20-note - *where Jesus has entered as a forerunner* ***for us****, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*.) Just as the high priest appeared for a few moments before God in the incense filled Holy of Holies **for** (in the place of, on behalf of - as the representative of) the entire congregation of Israel on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:32, 33), our High Priest is now continually before the Father (at His right hand) on our behalf, and in that exalted position "He always lives to make intercession for" us (He 7:25-note).

Spurgeon - Jesus, as our Representative, is a hiding place to us from all the winds that would come to us by the way of the sepulcher. We are not afraid to die, for Jesus lives; and He said to His disciples, "Because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19). He has also gone up into heaven; in His glorified body, He ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us. So, whenever you have any dread about the future, recollect that you will be where He is. If you are a believer in Him, you must ascend to heaven even as He has done; and as He sits upon His throne, even so shall you; and as He is perfected in glory, even so must you be.

For us - other uses of this glorious phrase with a similar sense of Christ "**as our substitute**" - Ro 5:8; 8:26, 34; Gal 3:13; Eph 5:2; 1Th 5:10; Titus 2:14; Heb 6:20;9:24; 10:20; 1John 3:16

Guzik - It's not hard to believe that Jesus does appear in the presence of God. But to believe that He appears there ***for us*** is glorious!

Matthew Poole - "Now to appear in the presence of God for us;" where He now appears as our advocating Mediator, pleading His merit for the remission of our sins, and rendering of God's face smiling on and favoring His clients, which was terrifying and affrighting to guilty Adam before: see Heb 7:25, 10:19 Ro 8:34 1John 2:1, 2 Rev 5:6. Here He represents our persons to God's face, fitting in the mean while us beneath for our seeing Him face to face, and being blessed in the enjoyment of that prospect for ever.

Delitzsch writes that "It is enough that Jesus should show Himself for us to the Father: the sight of Jesus satisfied God in our behalf. He brings before the face of God no offering which has exhausted itself, and, as only sufficing for a time, needs renewal; but He himself is in person, by virtue of the eternal Spirit, that is, the imperishable life of His person, now and for ever freed from death, our eternally present offering before God (**Ed**: And one which is indelibly irrevocably validated by His scars, the covenant marks in His

hands and feet and side, the marks of His everlasting covenant - He 13:20-note)

Hallelujah! What A Savior
(Play hymn as you praise Him)
(Modern Rendition)

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood;
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!
—Philip P. Bliss