

Text: Heb 9.27-28

Let's start with a pop-quiz. Who can complete this statement?

It is appointed unto man ...

Completion: ... once to die, but after this the judgement.

That is the bulk of the first verse of our text today. It is usually thought of in isolation as a Bible proof for a point of *anthropology*, that is, the Doctrine of Man.

However true these points are for every man, those points aren't the point of the text, we need the context. That's what we will look at today.

I've given our message the title:

Appointed Once for What?

The answer to this may seem obvious, but in the context, our expected answer is uncertain. You will see what I mean by the time we are done.

The story of our text is one of someone on a mission on behalf of others. The mission is accomplished, but it is not completely resolved. There is one more step to take.

How to illustrate this?

I don't have a particular story in mind, but I recall that my grandfather got started as a homesteader in the early part of the 20th century. This was not his story, but I can imagine a story like this:

- A man sets out to homestead, promising his sweetheart that he will come for her once he has proved up.
- Homesteading (as I understand it) took about five years from beginning to the point the "land was yours."
- So, the young man sets off. He builds a rough house. He cultivates the land, he raises his first crops.
- When all is done, he heads to the old home place and marries his girl.
- Together, they return to the homestead to build their life on their own land.

That is something like the story I have in mind from our text. Let's read Heb 9 now: Heb 9.23-28, our text is 27-28

Proposition: The believer is appointed for salvation, and it is certain.

I. The certainty starts with a comparison

A. The language of comparison

1. Verse 27: “and inasmuch as”
2. Verse 28: “So Christ also”

The statement about “men” is compared to the statement about Christ – there is a parallel, a comparison

B. Anthropology: The premise of the comparison

1. The universal expectation of death “as in Adam, all die” (1Co 15.22)
2. The consequent expectation of judgement
 - a. The Gk word for “judgement” gives us the English word “crisis”
 - b. What do we mean by this judgement
 - 1) Here, the term is used generally of the expectations of men
 - 2) In the Bible, more than one judgement is described
 - a) The judgement seat of Christ
 - b) The judgement of the tribulation survivors
 - c) The judgement of all the lost (Great White Throne)
 - 3) What we mean here is a general sense of judgement
 - a) The time, the specific judgement, are not in view
 - b) This is the universal expectation of man, death, followed by judgement at some point
3. The expectation of judgement is more widespread than most will admit
 - a. There is a sense that there must be a payday for wickedness [justice must be done]
 - b. Most unbelieving people do not like to admit of personal judgement
 - 1) They will deny that they deserve judgement

- 2) They will deny that there is a judgement
- 3) Sometimes, this universal expectation makes fearful (don't want to talk about death)
- 4) Yet many will think that "really bad" people must get some kind of justice

C. Christology: The parallels in Christ

1. So also: Christ offered up (death)
 - a. Participle in the passive, this doom was done to him (appointed for him)
 - b. For every man, it is appointed; for Christ, he was offered
 - c. One death, in parallel with man
2. So also: judgement?
 - a. Is there a parallel judgement for Christ?
 - b. This is not directly mentioned in the text, but we will come back to it later

II. The certainty depends on a return

A. The appearances considered

Note the literal word order in v. 28

^{YLT} **so also the Christ**, once having been offered to bear the sins of many, **a second time, apart from a sin-offering, shall appear, to those waiting for him — to salvation!**

1. He appeared once — to bear the sins of many
 - a. "of many" means "of all" essentially, even though "all" are not believers

"He says the sins of *many*, that is, of all, as in Romans 5:15. It is yet certain that all receive no benefit from the death of Christ; but this happens, because their unbelief prevents them. At the same time this question is not to be discussed here, for the Apostle is not speaking of the few or of the many to whom the death of Christ may be

available; but he simply means that he died for others and not for himself; and therefore he opposes many to one.”¹

Rm 5.15 ¶ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

- b. Why are “all” not believers? Because they are unbelievers, yet they *could* be believers if they would
- c. The one appearance is in keeping with Isa 53

Isa 53.12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet **He Himself bore the sin of many**, And interceded for the transgressors.

2. The point of our text is the appearing the second time
 - a. The second appearance is “without reference to sin”
 - b. The first appearance was “with reference to sin” because he came “to bear the sins of many”
 - c. Not so the second appearance: there is a different purpose altogether
- B. The second appearance is eagerly anticipated
 1. As we said, not all believe – those who don’t believe don’t eagerly await
 - a. If they think of the return of Jesus at all, it must be with dread: “after this the judgement”
 - b. In any case, they have no reason to love Jesus, or long for him
 2. For those who believe, there is great eagerness (the Christian hope)
 - a. Rm 8.19

¹ John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries* (Galaxie Software, 2002), Heb 9.28.

Rm 8.19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

b. Rm 8.23

Rm 8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

c. Rm 8.25

Rm 8.25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

d. 1 Cor 1.7

1 Cor 1.7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

e. Gal 5.5

Gal 5.5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.

f. Phil 3.20

Phil 3.20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

C. In the comparison, the “second appearing” compares to “judgement”

1. For men: death → judgement
2. For Christ: offered for sins → second appearance

This brings us to the last and main point of this text

III. The certainty is for salvation

A. Again, the literal word order

^{YLT} so also the Christ, once having been offered to bear the sins of many, a second time, apart from a sin-offering, **shall appear**, to those waiting for him — **to salvation!**

B. Through these messages we've made comparison to the Day of Atonement

1. Our emphasis has been on what Christ did in the Holy of holies – covered our sins with his blood
2. Here I will read a description from Allen

“The two appearances of Jesus mentioned in Heb 9:26, 28 correspond to the appearances of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. His first appearance was in the outside courtyard to offer the sacrifice on the altar of burnt offering. From here, he entered the sanctuary, carrying the blood for atonement, and in so doing he passed out of sight of the people. The people anxiously awaited his return. Upon completion of his duties in the inner sanctuary, he emerged to the great joy of all the people.”²

- a. Why the great joy when the high priest returned?
- b. He wasn't dead — the atonement in the Holy of holies was therefore accepted by God – it was *judged* and *approved*
3. Here is a description from the Apocrypha of Jewish thinking when the high priest emerged

Sirach 50.5 How glorious he was, surrounded by the people,
as he came out of the house of the curtain.

⁶ Like the morning star among the clouds,
like the full moon at the festal season;

⁷ like the sun shining on the temple of the Most High,
like the rainbow gleaming in splendid clouds;

⁸ like roses in the days of first fruits,
like lilies by a spring of water,
like a green shoot on Lebanon on a summer day;

² Allen, 488.

⁹ like fire and incense in the censer,
like a vessel of hammered gold studded with all kinds of
precious stones;

¹⁰ like an olive tree laden with fruit,
and like a cypress towering in the clouds.

C. The Lord Jesus going behind the veil

1. Salvation – death, being offered once to bear the sins of many – is accomplished
2. Ascension – he ascended to the holy place in the heavens to offer his blood (spiritually) before God

Heb 9.11-12 ¶ But when Christ appeared *as* a high priest of the good things to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

3. Appearing the second time
 - a. Proves that the offering he made is accepted
 - b. Proves that the sin of the believer is judged in Christ (on the cross)
 - c. Proves that the salvation he brings is certain

Conclusion:

Proposition: The believer is appointed for salvation, and it is certain.

Everyone dies.

If they die in themselves, they are judged in themselves → no salvation.

If they die in Christ, they are judged in Christ → Salvation!