

Introduction

- Explaining events at multiple levels
 - maybe the workings of a bike:
 - could explain about wheels going round, about wheels made with spokes in balanced tension, about how the chain transmits the energy from the rider's efforts via the pedals to the rear axle, how the gears make most efficient use of that energy, how the steering works, how the brakes work...
 - all correct, observed in splendid detail!
- But tells you nothing of the **purpose** of the ride!!
 - was it a kid learning to ride?
 - a pleasure trip?
 - a commute to work?
 - a sponsored cycle to raise funds for some particular cause?
- Both explanations are valid, but they tell us different - related - things
- Same thing happens in Scripture
 - core events of the Christian faith happen as Jesus comes to the Cross of Calvary, is killed, lies in the tomb and is raised to life on the 3rd day
 - we have descriptions of the events in the Gospels
 - but our understanding of the **meaning**, the **purpose** of those events is largely left to the letters, the epistles
- SU Teaching Materials Editing Group
 - for a while sought to keep teaching to one gospel...
 - easier for kids to see the reality of the events unfold;
 - clearer we weren't just jumping around randomly in Scripture;
 - could give a gospel out and get them reading it as we looked at each incident;
 - matched the stated intention of the gospel writers - eg:
 - *"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* (John 20:31)
 - etc, etc!
- **But:**
 - hard to **explain** the Cross from the gospel accounts
 - what happened is clear; **why**, **what it achieved** is less so!
- Probably familiar with Paul's great explanation of the Cross in Romans
 - or, at least, that that is what Romans is about!
- In some ways **Hebrews does the same thing here:**
 - presents us with an explanation of the events of the Cross so that we **understand**, **appreciate** and **praise!**

Exposition

- Old Covenant's true value is that it explains, points to, is a reflection of the New Covenant, the true reality
 - or, knowing the Old Covenant you could look on at Jesus' death and resurrection and **see** the reality, where without that knowledge it would just have been another victim of Jewish political intrigue and Roman cruelty.
 - there are a mix of comparisons (**its like the Old Covenant**) and distinctions (**its better than the Old Covenant**)

Work through a few of the points of connection/distinction:

- **His blood, not blood of goats and bulls** (v.12)
 - *(external cleansing, external actions, where Christ's offering is essentially spiritual in its efficacy)*
 - *(blood stands for death of the sacrifice, for the life offered that another might have life)*
- **Heavenly sanctuary, not earthly** (v.11, 23-25)

- **Real sanctuary, not copy (v.24)**
 - which he entered once, not again and again (v.25-28)
 - corollary: suffered once, not again and again
- **Its a completed work (v.28)** - but not reached final fulfilment
 - there was in much of the OT a telescoping of now and not yet of the coming of the Messiah - his first and second comings were overlaid, because they couldn't see the distinction from in front!
 - here the writer is unpicking Jesus first coming as Redeemer from his second as Judge and the fulfilment that will come then
- **All of this is establishing both:**
 - the **superiority** of the new covenant, the new promises between God and man, the sacrifice of Christ, etc, etc
 - and also the **similarity** of intended purpose - the old covenant was designed to rescue us from the consequences of rebellion, to deal with the problem of sin and a holy God, to bring God's people into his presence, to form the basis (foundation) for the on-going relationship of obedient service for that people of God; it pointed forward to a promised land, a restored relationship, a time of blessing, prosperity and intimate fellowship with God
- **All of this is what the new covenant in Jesus does for us properly!**

Consequence

- **New life!**
 - eternal redemption
 - end of separation from a holy God!
 - welcome, entrance into his presence
 - salvation, rescue from sin and its consequences - all the nasty stuff that happens in sin's wake
 - clean consciences enabling us to serve (v.14)
- **Great Saviour**
- **Great Contest** - cosmic significance
- **Great Future**