

## STANDING FIRM IN WORSHIP

“Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe.”

(Hebrews 12:28 NLT)

This month we will once again commemorate Good Friday (April 3) and celebrate Easter (April 5). Easter (the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus) is connected to the sacrifice of Christ. Let us reflect on the meaning of Christ's sacrifice and the power of His resurrection and understand our calling to remain steadfast in worshiping, praying, praising, and worshipping God properly. God's Word in Revelation 15:4 says, “Who is there who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations will come and worship You, because Your righteous judgments have been revealed.” Because God is holy, as believers, we need to continue to be sanctified and perfected. The excellence of Christ's sacrifice as the perfect sacrifice can be read in Hebrews 10:1-18 and in verse 19 onwards it is explained that we can now have the courage to enter the holy place. The term "holy place" refers to the most holy place (Hebrews 6:19-20; 9:3). Worship in this most holy place is meant as a life of worship in His presence, where the role of a high priest, who in the New Testament is called worship in spirit and truth (John 4:23), is very crucial. And Hebrews 10:21 discusses Jesus' position as High Priest (not just an ordinary priest) who heads the House of God. And His House is us, if we hold fast to the end the faith and hope we boast (Hebrews 3:6). And because Christ has brought His own perfect blood into the most holy place, then all of us who have been redeemed by the power of His blood now have direct access to enter the most holy place. This is very different from the sacrificial system in the Old Testament. During the Old Testament, the Israelites did not have direct access to the Holy of Holies. They were represented only by the high priest (Hebrews 9:7), and even then, this was only done at certain times and under certain conditions. That is why what Christ did is called in Hebrews 10:20 a new and living way (“nothing before”) (because Christ is risen and alive). So, this new and living way was opened by Christ through the veil, namely, His own body. The depiction of Jesus' life as a veil is interesting. From one perspective, this veil represents the dividing line between God and humanity, but from another perspective, this veil also relates to God's glory on the one hand and human needs on the other. Christ is the High Priest over the House of God. The house of God here is not the temple, but all His people (1 Corinthians 3:16). As high priest, Christ offered the perfect sacrifice, once for all, so that this new and living way could be made available to us. The Greek text uses only one word for “approaching God” in Hebrews 10:22, *prosercomai*, which literally means “coming toward.” The addition of the word “God” to the word “approaching” refers to (communal) worship of God. The present tense used for “let us approach God” in Hebrews 10:22 implies the idea of continuing to worship God. In this end-time generation, we are invited to do as Hebrews 12:28 says, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks and serve God in a way that is acceptable to Him, with reverence and fear.” God wants us to continue to be true worshippers who remain steadfast in serving, praying, praising, and worshipping Him in His presence in a way that is acceptable to Him, with reverence and fear. Happy Easter!

*By Ps. Silwanus Obadja*