

Sweat

Sweat is mentioned three times in the Bible –

It is firstly mentioned in the setting of the Garden of Eden where it is referred to as the result of Adam's sin and disobedience:

*“By the **sweat** of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground..”*
(Gen.3:19).

Sweat becomes the symbol of the curse on man as result of sin . It speaks of effort, exertion and strain.

In the New Testament there is also a reference to sweat, again the setting is that of a garden, the Garden of Gethsemane; this time it is the Son of God sweating as result of having to suffer in order to pay the price for setting people spiritually free from the curse of sin:

“And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground” **(Luk.22:44).**

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us...”
(Gal.3:13).

The curse on sin starts in the first garden and the atonement for it starts in the second one.

There is a third reference to sweat in the Bible, this time it is in the context of the priests doing duty in the service of the Lord:

*“They alone are to enter my sanctuary...they alone are to come near my table to minister before me and perform my service. When they enter the gates of the inner court, they are to wear linen clothes; they must not wear any woollen garment while ministering at the gates of the inner court or inside the temple. They are to wear linen turbans on their heads and linen undergarments around their waists. **They must not wear anything that makes them perspire”*** **(Ezek.44:17-18).**

This is a picture of serving in the power of the Holy Spirit – the effort of man, his religious works, rules and rituals, cannot please God. Sweat speaks of self effort and exertion.

Believers are New Testament priests in the service of the Lord:

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light **(1 Pet.2:9).**

Our salvation and our pleasing of our heavenly Father does not depend on our religious works or our keeping of the law for

"...by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy"
(Heb.10:14)..

Our own efforts in the flesh are in vain; only what is done in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit and based on the merit of Christ, can please God and bear fruit that will last.

When Jesus was asked: *"What must we do to do the works God requires?"* Jesus answered: *"The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent"* **(Joh.6:28-29).**

Conclusion

In our zeal to serve God we must be careful to prayerfully trust the Holy Spirit to lead us into the works God wants us to be involved in:

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" **(Eph.2:10).**

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"
(Acts1:8).

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