

In **Hebrews 9:24–28**, the author uses the verb “**to appear**” three times to describe three distinct moments in Christ’s redemptive work — each with a different tense and purpose:

1. Notice the magnificent sweep of these verses. **V. 26** speaks of the first appearing (the past), **v. 24** of the second appearing (the present), and **v. 28** of the third appearing (the future).
2. Each verse refers to us as believers.
3. These verses tell us what Christ has done, is doing and will yet do to deliver us from sin and its consequences. By His death we’re delivered from the penalty of sin, justified; because He is alive, He delivers us from the power of sin, and we’re being sanctified; when He comes again, He will deliver us from the presence of sin and we’ll be glorified.
4. These verses present the Lord Jesus in His three-fold office and work. **V. 26** presents Him as Prophet, as our Sin-bearer (**John 1:29**); **v. 24** presents Him as Priest, as our Saviour (**Hebrews 7:25**); **v. 28** presents Him as King, as our Sovereign (**1 Timothy 1:17**).
5. These verses speak of three mountains. **V. 26** speaks of Mount Calvary (**Luke 23:33**); **v. 24** speaks of Mount Zion (**Hebrews 12:22**); **v. 28** speaks of the Mount of Olives (**Acts 1:9-12**).

Hebrews 9:26: “he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

- **Grammatical Usage:** “**put away**” or in the Greek, “*athetēsín*” meaning, “abolish; cancel; set aside”; “**sacrifice**” or “*thysias*” meaning, “offering”.
- **Literal Interpretation:** he has appeared once and for all to abolish sin by the offering of himself.
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word.

1. THE FIRST APPEARING: Sacrifice

“he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:26).

Compare the word “**appeared**” with **1 Timothy 3:16**, **1 Peter 1:20**: it speaks of the Lord’s pre-existence, because Bethlehem was not His beginning; He was always one with His Father in eternity past. Notice that in this statement in **v. 26** we see three things:

- A. The fact of His first appearing is clearly and emphatically stated. It was a prophetically anticipated fact in the Old Testament scriptures which pointed forward to our Lord’s first coming. All literally fulfilled when He first came. The fact of His coming is also a historically verified fact, that He did actually come (**Galatians 4:4**).
- B. The purpose of His first appearing is emphatically stated. Why did Jesus appear at the end of the age? It was “**to do away with sin.**” This is the great purpose of His coming, to die as a sin-offering to redeem us. All the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to Him and He fulfilled every one (**John 1:29**; **2 Corinthians 5:21**; **1 Peter 2:24**).

C. Our response to the fact and purpose of His first coming is clearly indicated. Whose sin did He “**do away with**”? It was mine! (**Galatians 2:20**). He died to redeem me (**1 Peter 1:17-20**); to remove the penalty of my sin (**John 5:24**). I must therefore trust Him, believe and rejoice in all that He has done for me, also to have the assurance that my sins have been dealt with (**Isaiah 53:5-6**). Are you trusting Him as your Sin-bearer?

2. THE SECOND APPEARING: Intercession

“Christ...entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence” (Hebrews 9:24) Now Christ, by offering Himself, has dealt with our sin and entered heaven itself.

A. The fact of His appearing in heaven now is clearly stated. That is where He is – **“the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5)**. He has lived on the earth, has died and atoned for our sins; He has been raised and He ascended into heaven.

B. The purpose of His appearing in heaven now is clearly stated – **“now to appear for us” (v. 24)**. Why is He there? He is our representative, our great High Priest (**Hebrews 4:14**); our Advocate (**1 John 2:1**). Now He appears in God’s presence as our risen, exalted and living Saviour.

C. Our response to the fact and purpose of His appearing in heaven is clearly indicated. He is now there **“for us”** – praying for us (**Hebrews 7:25**) and sustaining us by His grace (**2 Corinthians 12:9**). We must trust Him and rely upon Him for these gracious ministries. Are you trusting Him as your Saviour?

3. THE THIRD APPEARING: Salvation

“he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him” (Hebrews 9:28).

The words **“not to bear sin”** mean that when He comes the second time it will be apart from sin altogether, for sin has been dealt with once-and-for-all by the offering He made of Himself. The words **“to bring salvation”** mean that when Christ comes again, He will save His people from the presence of sin. Notice:

A. The fact of His appearing the second time is clearly stated. We see the importance of the words in **v. 28** – **“he will appear a second time.”** Jesus declared his second coming, so did the apostles, and does the Book of Revelation repeatedly.

B. The purpose of His appearing the second time is clearly stated. He is coming to take His own people away from the presence of sin and His coming will mean our glorification.

C. Our response to the fact and purpose of His appearing the second time is clearly indicated. There are those who are **“waiting for him,”** so we must be ready (**Matthew 24:44**); we must watch for Him (**Matthew 25:13**); we are to expect Him (**Luke 21:28**); we are to wait for Him (**1 Thessalonians 1:10**).

These three appearances cover the full scope of Christ’s work:

- Past — Finished work of atonement.
- Present — Ongoing intercession and ministry.
- Future — Final salvation and judgment.

➤ **Conclusion:** Is your past, present and future tied to Christ’s work?