

# HEBREWS

(Primary textbook: Holy Scriptures. Primary translation: NIV.)

## VI. JESUS' SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF IS SUPERIOR TO THE SACRIFICES OF THE OLD COVENANT AND SETS US FREE FROM SIN (9:1-10:39)

- A. The Tabernacle and Its Tools (9:1-5)
- B. The Day of Atonement (9:6-10)
- C. Jesus' Sacrifice Cleanses Our Conscience (9:11-14)
- D. Jesus' Death Inaugurates the New Covenant (9:15-22)
- E. Jesus' Sacrifice Was Once for All (9:23-28)
- F. Old Covenant Sacrifices Could Not Take Away Sin (10:1-4)
- G. Christ Offered His Body to Make Us Holy (10:5-10)
- H. Our High Priest Now Reigns (10:11-14)
- I. Witness of the Holy Spirit through Jeremiah (10:15-18)
- J. Let Us Draw Near to God and Spur One Another On (10:19-25)
- K. The Judgment of God on Those Who Keep Sinning (10:26-31)
- L. Reminder of Earlier Suffering (10:32-34)
- M. The Need to Persevere (10:35-39)

(This lesson will cover Section C, Section D, and Section E.)

Now that the writer of Hebrews has described that which is an "illustration for the present time" (9:9) – the tabernacle and rituals of the first covenant (9:1) – he now proceeds, in that light, to describe the superiority of Jesus' blood sacrifice. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to three major accomplishments of the shed blood of Christ: (1) the cleansing of our conscience (vv. 11-14), (2) the inauguration of the new covenant (vv. 15-22), and (3) our complete purification from sin (vv.23-28).

### **C. Jesus' Sacrifice Cleanses Our Conscience (9:11-14)**

1. When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, He went through what place? That is not what? That is to say, not a part of what? (v.11)

Note the comments of one man: "The use of the title 'Christ' may be more than a stylistic variation here since it appears more frequently in this chapter than in any other and is the exclusive manner of referring to Jesus in this chapter. Throughout, the Messianic expectation was an important dimension of our writer's exposition of Psalm 110:4 and it may be that our writer considers the Messianic title most appropriate for his explanation of the role which Christ's death played in putting the new covenant into effect."

2. He did not enter by what means? But He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by what means? Having obtained what? (v.12)

3. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are what? Sanctify them so that they are what? (v.13)

According to Numbers 19, the ashes of a heifer were to be mixed as needed with the water of cleansing which was applied to those who were unclean for their purification sin. People became unclean by what they touched and made anything else they touched unclean as well (Numbers 19:22). The unclean person was to be sprinkled on the third and seventh days and then washed and bathed for cleansing on the seventh day (Numbers 19:19). It is in this sense that they were cleansed “ceremonially” and “outwardly” (literally, “of the flesh”).

4. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself to God, how? Cleanse our what? From acts that lead to what? So that we may do what? (v.14)

What Jesus offered for our cleansing was “Himself unblemished.” Of course, the “unblemished” character of Jesus’ sacrifice is of even greater significance since He was the only One who could have ever presented Himself as an acceptable sacrifice. We know that He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15) while no other human has ever been (Romans 3:23) yet “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The blood of animals affected only an outward ceremonial sanctification of the flesh. It allowed the Jews to participate in worship, but they could only draw as near to God as the limitations of their priestly ritual would allow. The blood of Christ cleanses the conscience of the believer, allowing him to draw near in worshipful service to God. His life becomes one unbroken worship experience through Christ.

#### **D. Jesus’ Death Inaugurates the New Covenant (9:15-22)**

5. For this reason Christ is what? That those who are called may receive what? (v.15)

6. Now that He has died as a what? To set them free from what? (v.15)

This verse indicates that Christ’s death makes it possible for the entire community of faith, old and new, to receive this inheritance. Those whose sins were “committed under the first covenant” were set free not by the sacrifices and gifts of that covenant but only by the sacrifice of Jesus. Yet the inheritance can also be received by “those who are called” – the NIV employs the present tense to stress the abiding dimension of the Greek perfect tense which describes a past action continuing into the present.

7. In the case of a what? It is necessary to prove what? (v.16)

8. Because a will is in force only when what happens? It never takes effect while what is occurring? (v.17)

9. This is why even which covenant? It was not put into effect without what? (v.18)

The rituals commanded for consecration of the tabernacle used the blood of the sacrifices and a cleansing power is accorded to the blood (see Hebrews 9:22).

10. When Moses had proclaimed what to all the people? He took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and did what? (v.19)

Exodus 24 records the inauguration of the first covenant.

11. What did Moses say at that point? (v.20)

12. In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both what? (v.21)

13. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be what? And without what? There is what? (v.22)

Through the sacrifice of His blood, Christ became the mediator of a new and better covenant. (See Matthew 26:28 and 1 Corinthians 11:25.) Yet even as His death provided the great promise of a glorious inheritance for those under the New Covenant, it was also effective for the sins of those under the Old. To the ones who obeyed God's commandments, who looked beyond Joshua to Jesus, beyond Moses to Christ, beyond law to grace, and who perceived the spiritual realm by faith, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was retroactively efficacious in redeeming their transgressions. (See 1 Corinthians 10:4; Hebrews 11:10, 13-16, 26; 12:23.)

#### **E. Jesus' Sacrifice Was Once And for All (9:23-28)**

14. It was necessary, then, for what to be purified with these sacrifices? (v.23)

15. But what with better sacrifices than these? (v.23)

One commentator writes: "The better hope (Hebrews 7:7) offered by the better covenant (Hebrews 7:22; 8:6) looks forward to receiving better promises (Hebrews 8:6) because it was inaugurated by a better sacrifice (Hebrews 9:23)."

16. For Christ did not enter what? That was only what? (v.24)

17. He entered what place? Now to do what? (v.24)

Christ is now in Heaven itself, in the very presence of God.

18. Nor did He enter Heaven to do what? The way the high priest enters what place every year? How? (v.25)

Christ is not forced to leave and return again for He is able to remain in God's presence. The difference is in the blood.

19. Then Christ would have had to do what? Since what event? (v.26)

20. But now he has appeared once for all, when? To do away with sin, how? (v.26)

If Christ's single sacrifice were not sufficient for atonement, He would have had to do exactly what the other, earthly priests had always done. But it was not required for Him to do so. Thus His single sacrifice must have been sufficient.

The cancellation (doing way with) of sin's debt (our death, Romans 6:23) by the ransom paid (Christ's death) is both forceful and final.

21. Just as man is destined to do what? And after that to do what? (v.27)

22. So Christ was what? To take away what? (v.28)

23. And He will appear when? Not to do what? (v.28)

24. But to do what? To whom? (v.28)

Jesus' intercessory ministry, therefore, is further contrasted with that of the Levitical high priests. While they went into the Holy of Holies annually with the blood of others, Jesus' entrance into the Heavenly sanctuary followed the offering of Himself once, finally and completely, to remove sin. His death is never to be repeated. Just as men are destined to die once and then later to appear before God in judgment, so Christ has died once. When He reappears, it will not be to offer Himself for sin again, a work already completed, but to receive to eternal salvation those who have accepted His redemption and eagerly anticipate His return.

***“Making Disciples for the Master”***