



Chapter 9

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Teacher

Northpark Community Church

Adult Bible Study

6:30-8:00 PM

Hebrews: Bible Study and Commentary
Jesus - Our Chief Priest

IX. Hebrews 9

A. The first holy place in this world - Hebrews 9:1

Hebrews 9:1 That first covenant between God and Israel had regulations for worship and a place of worship here on earth.

Rules → about the right way to serve God →

A holy place → in an unholy world →

God's desire → **people have a relationship with him →**

God's plan → **his Son would come into this world →**

Jesus → would establish a new and better relationship → between God and his people →
John 4:21-24 →

John 4:21 Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. ²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

The right way to serve God → **by his Holy Spirit →**

God's people → his temple → God's Spirit lives in them → 1 Corinthians 6:19

1 Corinthians 6:19 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself,

Author's purpose here → explain **the original holy place in this world → the tabernacle → the temple →**

B. The outer room of the tabernacle - Hebrews 9:2

Hebrews 9:2 **There were two rooms in that Tabernacle. In the first room were a lampstand, a table, and sacred loaves of bread on the table. This room was called the Holy Place.**

The **tabernacle** →

Moses → instructions from God → Exodus 25-26 →

Special **place** → special ceremonies →

Solomon → built the **temple** →

Two rooms → **the outer room** → **the Holy Place** →

Three pieces of furniture →

The **lampstand** → burn continuously through the night → Ex. 27:20-21

Exodus 27:20 **“Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to keep the lamps burning continually. ²¹ The lampstand will stand in the Tabernacle, in front of the inner curtain that shields the Ark of the Covenant. Aaron and his sons must keep the lamps burning in the Lord’s presence all night. This is a permanent law for the people of Israel, and it must be observed from generation to generation.**”

Table → **12 loaves of bread** → in the outer room

Leviticus 24:5 **“You must bake twelve flat loaves of bread from choice flour, using four quarts of flour for each loaf. ⁶ Place the bread before the Lord on the pure gold table, and arrange the loaves in two stacks, with six loaves in each stack. ⁷ Put some pure frankincense near each stack to serve as a representative offering, a special gift presented to the Lord. ⁸ Every Sabbath day this bread must be laid out before the Lord as a gift from the Israelites; it is an ongoing expression of the eternal covenant. ⁹ The loaves of bread will belong to Aaron and his descendants, who must eat them in a sacred place, for they are most holy. It is the permanent right of the priests to claim this portion of the special gifts presented to the Lord.”**

Altar for incense →

Ezekiel 41:22 There was an altar made of wood, 5 1/4 feet high and 3 1/2 feet across. Its corners, base, and sides were all made of wood. “This,” the man told me, “is the table that stands in the Lord’s presence.”

Incense → a sweet smell →

The priests burned it daily → Exodus 30:34-38 and Luke 1:8-11

Exodus 30:34 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Gather fragrant spices—resin droplets, mollusk shell, and galbanum—and mix these fragrant spices with pure frankincense, weighed out in equal amounts.

³⁵ Using the usual techniques of the incense maker, blend the spices together and sprinkle them with salt to produce a pure and holy incense. ³⁶ Grind some of the mixture into a very fine powder and put it in front of the Ark of the Covenant, where I will meet with you in the Tabernacle. You must treat this incense as most holy. ³⁷ Never use this formula to make this incense for yourselves. It is reserved for the Lord, and you must treat it as holy. ³⁸ Anyone who makes incense like this for personal use will be cut off from the community.”

Luke 1:8 One day Zechariah was serving God in the Temple, for his order was on duty that week. ⁹ As was the custom of the priests, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ While the incense was being burned, a great crowd stood outside, praying.

¹¹ While Zechariah was in the sanctuary, an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the incense altar.

The basic meaning → **God was present with his people** →

1. **A lamp** →
2. **The 12 loaves** → 12 tribes in Israel
3. **The incense** →

The people’s prayers → Psalm 141:2

Psalm 141:2 Accept my prayer as incense offered to you, and my upraised hands as an evening offering.

The incense → God would hear his people’s prayers →

C. The Holy of Holies behind the curtain - Hebrews 9:3

Hebrews 9:3 Then there was a curtain, and behind the curtain was the second room called the Most Holy Place.

The tabernacle → two rooms → a curtain →

The outer room → the Holy Place →

The inner room → only the chief priest → one special day in each year → Hebrews 9:7 →

Hebrews 9:7 But only the high priest ever entered the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. And he always offered blood for his own sins and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.

The Day of Atonement → Leviticus 16

The inner room → the **Holy of Holies** → God was present there →

God's glory there →

Exodus 40:34-38 and 2 Chronicles 7:1-3 →

Exodus 40:34 Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. ³⁵ Moses could no longer enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. ³⁶ Now whenever the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out on their journey, following it. ³⁷ But if the cloud did not rise, they remained where they were until it lifted. ³⁸ The cloud of the Lord hovered over the Tabernacle during the day, and at night fire glowed inside the cloud so the whole family of Israel could see it. This continued throughout all their journeys.

2 Chronicles 7:1 When Solomon finished praying, fire flashed down from heaven and burned up the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glorious presence of the Lord filled the Temple. ² The priests could not enter the Temple of the Lord because the glorious presence of the Lord filled it. ³ When all the people of Israel saw the fire coming down and the glorious presence of the Lord filling the Temple, they fell face down on the ground and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying, "He is good! His faithful love endures forever!"

The glory left → 1 Samuel 4 and Ezekiel 10

→ **the curtain** → Exodus 26:31-33 →

Exodus 26:31 “For the inside of the Tabernacle, make a special curtain of finely woven linen. Decorate it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and with skillfully embroidered cherubim. ³² Hang this curtain on gold hooks attached to four posts of acacia wood. Overlay the posts with gold, and set them in four silver bases. ³³ Hang the inner curtain from clasps, and put the Ark of the Covenant in the room behind it. This curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.

→ very important purpose → **it separated people from God** →

At Christ’s death → curtain tore apart → Mark 15:38

Mark 15:38 And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

God opened → **a new and living way for us into the Most Holy Place** → Hebrews 10:19-20

Hebrews 10:19 And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. ²⁰ By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place.

D. What was in the ark of the covenant? - Hebrews 9:4

Hebrews 9:4 **In that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides. Inside the Ark were a gold jar containing manna, Aaron’s staff that sprouted leaves, and the stone tablets of the covenant.**

The tabernacle → the Holy of Holies → **the ark of the covenant** →

The covenant →

The ark → **evidence of God’s covenant with Israel.**

A description of the ark → Exodus 25:10-22 →

Exodus 25:10 “Have the people make an Ark of acacia wood—a sacred chest 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ¹¹ Overlay it inside and outside with pure gold, and run a molding of gold all around it. ¹² Cast four gold rings and attach them to its four feet, two rings on each side. ¹³ Make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. ¹⁴ Insert the poles into the rings at the sides of the Ark to carry it. ¹⁵ These carrying poles must stay inside the rings; never remove them. ¹⁶ When the Ark is finished, place inside it the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you. ¹⁷ “Then make the Ark’s cover—the place of atonement—from pure gold. It must be 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. ¹⁸ Then make two cherubim from hammered gold, and

place them on the two ends of the atonement cover. ¹⁹ Mold the cherubim on each end of the atonement cover, making it all of one piece of gold.

²⁰ The cherubim will face each other and look down on the atonement cover. With their wings spread above it, they will protect it. ²¹ Place inside the Ark the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you. Then put the atonement cover on top of the Ark. ²² I will meet with you there and talk to you from above the atonement cover between the gold cherubim that hover over the Ark of the Covenant. From there I will give you my commands for the people of Israel.

Three things → inside the ark:

1. **The two stone tablets** →

Deuteronomy 9:10 The Lord gave me the two tablets on which God had written with his own finger all the words he had spoken to you from the heart of the fire when you were assembled at the mountain.

God's commands → the law → Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21

Jesus → obey them → Matthew 19:17-19; Matthew 5:19

Matthew 19:17 "Why ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. But to answer your question—if you want to receive eternal life, keep the commandments."

¹⁸ "Which ones?" the man asked.

And Jesus replied: "You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. ¹⁹ Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 5:19 So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

These commands → direct our actions, thoughts, attitudes → Matthew 5:21-30; Mark 7:20-23

Mark 7:20 And then he added, "It is what comes from inside that defiles you. ²¹ For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. ²³ All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you."

God's commands → all guilty → Romans 3:9-20; James 2:10-11

James 2:10 For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God's laws. ¹¹ For the same God who said, "You must not commit adultery," also said, "You must not murder." So if you murder someone but do not commit adultery, you have still broken the law.

The stone tablets → Deut. 10:1-5

Deuteronomy 10:1 "At that time the Lord said to me, 'Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones. Also make a wooden Ark—a sacred chest to store them in. Come up to me on the mountain,² and I will write on the tablets the same words that were on the ones you smashed. Then place the tablets in the Ark.'

³ "So I made an Ark of acacia wood and cut two stone tablets like the first two. Then I went up the mountain with the tablets in my hand. ⁴ Once again the Lord wrote the Ten Commandments on the tablets and gave them to me. They were the same words the Lord had spoken to you from the heart of the fire on the day you were assembled at the foot of the mountain. ⁵ Then I turned and came down the mountain and placed the tablets in the Ark of the Covenant, which I had made, just as the Lord commanded me. And the tablets are still there in the Ark."

The time of Solomon → 1 Kings 8:9

1 Kings 8:9 Nothing was in the Ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Mount Sinai, where the Lord made a covenant with the people of Israel when they left the land of Egypt.

2. A gold pot of manna →

Exodus 16:32 Then Moses said, "This is what the Lord has commanded: Fill a two-quart container with manna to preserve it for your descendants. Then later generations will be able to see the food I gave you in the wilderness when I set you free from Egypt."

³³ Moses said to Aaron, "Get a jar and fill it with two quarts of manna. Then put it in a sacred place before the Lord to preserve it for all future generations." ³⁴ Aaron did just as the Lord had commanded Moses. He eventually placed it in the Ark of the Covenant—in front of the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant. ³⁵ So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived at the land where they would settle. They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

A reminder → God provided →

3. Aaron's staff →

Hebrews 9:4 → **another object** in the Holy of Holies → a gold altar for incense →

Exodus 30:6 → this altar was in the outer room →

Exodus 30:6 Place the incense altar just outside the inner curtain that shields the Ark of the Covenant, in front of the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—that covers the tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant.^[b] I will meet with you there.

Leviticus 16:12-13 →

Leviticus 16:12 he will fill an incense burner with burning coals from the altar that stands before the Lord. Then he will take two handfuls of fragrant powdered incense and will carry the burner and the incense behind the inner curtain. ¹³ There in the Lord's presence he will put the incense on the burning coals so that a cloud of incense will rise over the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—that rests on the Ark of the Covenant. If he follows these instructions, he will not die.

E. What was the purpose of the Holy of Holies? - Hebrews 9:5

Hebrews 9:5 Above the Ark were the cherubim of divine glory, whose wings stretched out over the Ark's cover, the place of atonement. But we cannot explain these things in detail now.

The **Ark of the Covenant** → most sacred object → evidence of the covenant →

Punishment for looking inside → 1 Samuel 6:19-20

1 Samuel 6:19 But the Lord killed seventy men from Beth-shemesh because they looked into the Ark of the Lord. And the people mourned greatly because of what the Lord had done. ²⁰ "Who is able to stand in the presence of the Lord, this holy God?" they cried out. "Where can we send the Ark from here?"

The ark in → the **Holy of Holies** →

Chief priest → would not see inside the ark → only **the things round it** →

Description of these objects → Exodus 25:10-22

The two cherubim →

Cherubim → Genesis 3:24

Genesis 3:24 After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

2 Chronicles 3:10-13 →

2 Chronicles 3:10 He made two figures shaped like cherubim, overlaid them with gold, and placed them in the Most Holy Place. ¹¹ The total wingspan of the two cherubim standing side by side was 30 feet. One wing of the first figure was 7 1/2 feet long, and it touched the Temple wall. The other wing, also 7 1/2 feet long, touched one of the wings of the second figure. ¹² In the same way, the second figure had one wing 7 1/2 feet long that touched the opposite wall. The other wing, also 7 1/2 feet long, touched the wing of the first figure. ¹³ So the wingspan of the two cherubim side by side was 30 feet. They stood on their feet and faced out toward the main room of the Temple.

The two cherubim → on either side of the ark → like the description of God's throne
→ Psalm 99:1 →

Psalm 99:1 The Lord is king! Let the nations tremble!
He sits on his throne between the cherubim. Let the whole earth quake!

The 'mercy seat' → the 'place of atonement' →

The most holy act of God → in his Most Holy Place → **to forgive sins** →
God wanted to forgive!

God did not forgive → because of the holy buildings or their contents

→ because of the priests' ceremonies and rules

Psalm 51:16-17; Micah 6:7-8; Hebrews 10:4 →

Psalm 51:16 You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one.
You do not want a burnt offering.
¹⁷ The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit.
You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.

The purpose → **to teach people how God would forgive them** →

God can forgive us → **because of Jesus** →

F. Israel's priests and their daily work - Hebrews 9:6

Hebrews 9:6 **When these things were all in place, the priests regularly entered the first room as they performed their religious duties.**

The tabernacle → the temple →

The priests →

The altar → sacrifices / gifts to God →

The priests → **special duty to enter God's house** →

Things that the priests never did →

→ they never took any part of the sacrifices there

→ they never lifted the curtain that stood between the holy place and the Holy of Holies

→ **they never went into the inner room** → except for **the chief priest** → **one special day** each year →

The Day of Atonement →

Sin → separates people from God →

Only God can forgive us → **separate us from our sin** →

G. The Day of Atonement - Hebrews 9:7

Hebrews 9:7 **But only the high priest ever entered the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. And he always offered blood for his own sins and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance**

The **Day of Atonement** → Yom Kippur →

A **solemn** occasion →

Atonement → **what God does in order to deal with sin** → He **forgave** →

On this day → no usual activities → did not work, did not eat, wore rough clothes, prayed for forgiveness →

In Jerusalem → **the chief priest carried out his most important duty** of the year → entered the **Holy of Holies** →

Leviticus 16 → description →

The chief priest → **the blood of a sacrifice** →

The 'blood' → stands for → the life → Leviticus 17:11

Leviticus 17:11 for the life of the body is in its blood. I have given you the blood on the altar to purify you, making you right with the Lord. It is the blood, given in exchange for a life, that makes purification possible.

All the sacrifices and ceremonies in Leviticus → **teach us about Jesus**

His work → **atonement** →

His own blood → the cost of **atonement** →

Our chief priest → he offered his own blood →

God can forgive us →

H. The way into the holiest place - Hebrews 9:8

*Hebrews 9:8 **By these regulations the Holy Spirit revealed that the entrance to the Most Holy Place was not freely open as long as the Tabernacle and the system it represented were still in use.***

The design of God's house →

Holy Spirit → **teaching an important lesson** →

God provided → a system of priests →

God showed → how to offer the sacrifices →

God established → his house on earth →

God gave → opportunity for a relationship →

But that relationship was not yet complete →

God lived among his people → but still **separate** →

The holy place, where God is → **was not yet open** →

God does not want → **to be separate from the people** →

These arrangements → **temporary** →

At the proper time → God would do something new →

Hebrews 8:8 **But when God found fault with the people, he said:**

**“The day is coming, says the Lord,
when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel and Judah.**

That change → **God sent Christ into the world** →

→ a better priest → Hebrews 7

→ a better sacrifice → Hebrews 10:11-12)

→ a better house of God → Hebrews 9:24

Christ → established a **‘new and living way’** → Hebrews 10:20

John 14:6 **Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.**

Jesus calls himself → **‘the true and living way’** →

I. The parable of God’s house - Hebrews 9:9-10

Hebrews 9:9 **This is an illustration pointing to the present time. For the gifts and sacrifices that the priests offer are not able to cleanse the consciences of the people who bring them.¹⁰ For that old system deals only with food and drink and various cleansing ceremonies—physical regulations that were in effect only until a better system could be established.**

Jesus stories → ‘parables’

Parable → **teach** → about God → or about themselves

God's house → the tabernacle or temple → real places, real people and real events

→ **an important lesson.**

Ceremonies → cannot remove a person's sin →

Priests → offered people's gifts → cannot buy a right relationship with God →

Micah 6:6 What can we bring to the Lord?

Should we bring him burnt offerings? Should we bow before God Most High with offerings of yearling calves?

7 Should we offer him thousands of rams

and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins?

8 No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good,

and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

The death of an animal → does not pay for a person's sin → Psalm 51:16; Hebrews 10:4

The priests offered gifts → **to teach people about Christ →**

Free from the power of sin → by the death of Christ →

Before Christ → **to free them from their sin →**

David → Psalm 51 → needed God's help →

Acts 2:29 **"Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn't referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us.³⁰ But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David's own descendants would sit on his throne.**

³¹ **David was looking into the future and speaking of the Messiah's resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave.**

God's people did not understand → **they believed it →**

Luke 3:4 **Isaiah had spoken of John when he said, "He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord's coming! Clear the road for him!**

→ **eagerly waiting** → Luke 2:25-38; Luke 23:50-51

Luke 23:50 Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph. He was a member of the Jewish high council,⁵¹ but he had not agreed with the decision and actions of the other religious leaders. He was from the town of Arimathea in Judea, and he was waiting for the Kingdom of God to come.

J. The real house of God - Hebrews 9:11

Hebrews 9:11 **So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that greater, more perfect Tabernacle in heaven, which was not made by human hands and is not part of this created world.**

The 'tent' / 'tabernacle' → **heaven**

→ contrast heaven → with the temple →

The temple in Jerusalem →

King Herod → started construction →

John 2:20 **"What!" they exclaimed. "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can rebuild it in three days?"**

The design → God's plan → **a copy of the real holy place in heaven**
→ Hebrews 9:23

Copies important → **learn about heaven from the temple** →

→ learn about Christ's work from the work of Israel's priests

Acts 7:49 **'Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
Could you build me a temple as good as that?'**
asks the Lord.

'Could you build me such a resting place?

⁵⁰ **Didn't my hands make both heaven and earth?'**

Christ's work as our chief priest - Hebrews 9:12

Hebrews 9:12 **With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever.**

Comparison → **Christ's work with the work of Israel's chief priest** → Hebrews 9:7

The Day of Atonement →

Christ and Israel's chief priest → **the most holy place** →

Israel's chief priest → the most holy place → the tabernacle → Hebrews 9:3-5

Christ → the most holy place → heaven

Christ and Israel's chief priest → **took blood into the most holy place.**

Israel's chief priest → blood of animals →

Christ → offered his own blood →

He took → the punishment for our sins → Isaiah 53:4-6

Isaiah 53:4 **Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows^[a] that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!**

⁵ **But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins.**

He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

⁶ **All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.**

We are all guilty → Romans 3:9-23 →

Romans 3:23 **For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.**

We all deserve God's punishment → confess → invite → Acts 3:19

Acts 3:19 **Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.**

Israel's chief priest → **each year**

Christ → only **once** → Hebrews 9:25-28

→ **forgive our sins for all time** →

K. Why did animals die as sacrifices? - Hebrews 9:13

Hebrews 9:13 **Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity.**

Blood is important →

Life is in the blood → Leviticus 17:11 →

Leviticus 17:11 **for the life of the body is in its blood. I have given you the blood on the altar to purify you, making you right with the Lord. It is the blood, given in exchange for a life, that makes purification possible.**

YHWH → 'the God who is **always alive**'

Bulls and goats → special sacrifices → the Day of Atonement → Hebrews 9:7 And they were sacrifices on other occasions too (see Hebrews 9:19).

→ very special sacrifice → **the red heifer** → Numbers 19

If someone touched a dead body → unclean

These sacrifices → **made people holy** →

A strange mystery → **death could bring life** →

Its meaning can be clear → because of Christ's death →

Romans 6:23 **For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Ephesians 2:1 **Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins.**

Christ → **death can give us life** →

John 3:16 **"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.**

Why did Christ die → **he died as a sacrifice** →

L. The importance of Christ's death - Hebrews 9:14

Hebrews 9:14 **Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.**

The author of Hebrews → **influence** his readers → have **a powerful effect** → Hebrews 3:13

- worried about some Christians → Heb. 5:11-12
- not developing and becoming mature →
- they might neglect Christ's work to save them → Hebrews 2:1-3
- they cared about other Christians → Hebrews 6:10
- acting as if Christ's death was unimportant →

Christ's death matters →

God's people → waited for a **new and better relationship** →

Christ's death → Hebrews 9:26

Matthew 5:17 **"Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose."**

Christ → a better and more perfect sacrifice →

We receive → a new and living relationship → Hebrews 10:19-20

Christ's work → complete and perfect →

M. A covenant, a mediator, and a death - Hebrews 9:15

Hebrews 9:15 **That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.**

A covenant → peace agreement →

→ **a mediator**

A price for peace → **a death** →

2 Samuel 20:14-22 →

Sheba's death → necessary → Abel-beth-maacah could have peace →

Joab's army → would have destroyed the whole city Sheba had to

die → he opposed King David

2 Samuel 21:1-9 → Saul's family →

The cost → Saul refused to obey → Joshua 9

Without a new covenant → nobody could benefit from God's promises →

God said → **a new covenant** → Hebrews 8:8-12

That mediator → Christ →

A death →

God → **provide the sacrifice for people's wrong deeds** → Genesis 22:14

Genesis 22:14 **Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "the Lord will provide"). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided."**

The sacrifice → God's **own Son**, Jesus Christ → John 3:16

→ Christ's death → established God's new covenant → Christ's

death → God can forgive our wrong deeds → Christ's death → receive

God's promises →

N. Christ's death makes the covenant certain - Hebrews 9:16-17

Hebrews 9:16 **Now when someone leaves a will, it is necessary to prove that the person who made it is dead. ¹⁷ The will goes into effect only after the person's death. While the person who made it is still alive, the will cannot be put into effect.**

Three reasons → Christ's death was necessary:

1. → **so that people can have a relationship with God**
→ Hebrews 9:14

2. → **so that God can forgive our wrong deeds →**
Hebrews 9:15

3. → **in order to establish a permanent covenant →**
Hebrews 9:16-17

A peace agreement → hope to establish **a permanent relationship** →

The death → of the person who made the original agreement → a change in the relationship →

The dead man's family → the peace agreement → **a matter of honor** →

Christ's death had an effect →

His death → established the new covenant →

His blood → made the covenant certain and sure → Luke 22:20

Luke 22:20 **After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you."**

Christ's death → makes our hope certain → Hebrews 6:18-20

God's anger → a terrible thing → Hebrews 3:10-11; Hebrews 12:25

→ **no reason to suffer God's anger** →

He adopts us into his own family → → Hebrews 2:11-14; Hebrews 12:5-7, Galatians 4:1-7; Romans 8:23

Romans 8:23 **And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.**

O. Whose blood made the first covenant definite? - Hebrews 9:18

Hebrews 9:18 **That is why even the first covenant was put into effect with the blood of an animal.**

A death → a covenant → Hebrews 9:14-17

God → already made a covenant → Abraham, Isaac and Jacob →

Whose death → made that first covenant definite →

Christ → **really** died to establish it →

→ **Things in the old covenant** → **copies that teach the reality** →

The holy place → a **copy** → Hebrews 9:23 Israel's priests

→ **copied** the duties of Christ →

Christ's death → necessary → for first covenant →

The blood of animals → a **copy** →

Christ died → the reality is here →

God has spoken to us → in a clearer and more definite way → Hebrews 1:1-2; Hebrews 2:1-4

P. Each person must join in God's covenant - Hebrews 9:19

Hebrews 9:19 **For after Moses had read each of God's commandments to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, along with water, and sprinkled both the book of God's law and all the people, using hyssop branches and scarlet wool.**

Hebrews 9:19 → **Exodus 24:3-8**

Exodus 24:3 **Then Moses went down to the people and repeated all the instructions and regulations the Lord had given him. All the people answered with one voice, "We will do everything the Lord has commanded."**

⁴ **Then Moses carefully wrote down all the Lord's instructions. Early the next morning Moses got up and built an altar at the foot of the mountain. He also set up twelve pillars, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel.**

⁵ **Then he sent some of the young Israelite men to present burnt offerings and to sacrifice**

bulls as peace offerings to the Lord. ⁶ Moses drained half the blood from these animals into basins. The other half he splattered against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it aloud to the people. Again they all responded, "We will do everything the Lord has commanded. We will obey."

⁸ Then Moses took the blood from the basins and splattered it over the people, declaring, "Look, this blood confirms the covenant the Lord has made with you in giving you these instructions."

That ceremony → after God gave his commandments →

The purpose → so that each person joined in the covenant →

The next day → the ceremony with the blood →

The meaning → the covenant was definite → permanent

The blood of Christ → relationship with God definite →

Exodus → no blood - book →

The book → God's **holy** word →

Exodus → no scarlet (red) wool → hyssop

Priests used → to declare a person 'clean' → Leviticus 14:6; Numbers 19:6

Leviticus 14:6 He will take the live bird, the cedar stick, the scarlet yarn, and the hyssop branch, and dip them into the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the fresh water.

Numbers 19:6 Eleazar the priest must then take a stick of cedar, a hyssop branch, and some scarlet yarn and throw them into the fire where the heifer is burning.

Psalm 51:7 →

*Psalm 51:7 Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow*

Real meaning → **God can forgive a person's evil deeds**

¹ *O Lord, you have examined my heart
and know everything about me.*

² *You know when I sit down or stand up.
You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.*

³ *You see me when I travel and when I rest at home.
You know everything I do.*

⁴ *You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord.*

⁵ *You go before me and follow me.
You place your hand of blessing on my head.*

⁶ *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!*

Q. The purpose of the communion - Hebrews 9:20

Hebrews 9:20 Then he said, "This blood confirms the covenant God has made with you."

Hebrews 9:20 → **Exodus 24:8**

Exodus 24:8 Then Moses took the blood from the basins and splattered it over the people, declaring, "Look, this blood confirms the covenant the Lord has made with you in giving you these instructions."

A special ceremony → God's covenant →

Reminder of another ceremony →

Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples → a covenant →

The wine → meant his blood →

Disciples' **relationship with God → depended on the blood →** because of Jesus' death
→

Similar words to Moses →

Luke 22:20 After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you."

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it."

Jesus declared → **his blood** → **a new covenant** →

Continue → share bread and wine → remember Jesus' death →

1 Corinthians 11:23 For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread

²⁴ and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it."²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.

²⁷ So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.²⁸ That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking the cup

Communion → each person must invite Jesus into their own life →

Jesus changes people → completely →

2 Corinthians 5:17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

R. The use of blood in the Bible - Hebrews 9:21

Hebrews 9:21 **And in the same way, he sprinkled blood on the Tabernacle and on everything used for worship.**

Example →

Leviticus 8:15 and Moses slaughtered it. Moses took some of the blood, and with his finger he put it on the four horns of the altar to purify it. He poured out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. Through this process, he made the altar holy by purifying it.

The chief priest → the Day of Atonement →

Leviticus 16:18 “Then Aaron will come out to purify the altar that stands before the Lord. He will do this by taking some of the blood from the bull and the goat and putting it on each of the horns of the altar. ¹⁹ Then he must sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times over the altar. In this way, he will cleanse it from Israel’s defilement and make it holy.

The purpose of the blood → **to make the objects clean** →

The meaning important → not the ceremonies → because of **sin** →

Spoils objects of service →

Leviticus 16:15 “Then Aaron must slaughter the first goat as a sin offering for the people and carry its blood behind the inner curtain. There he will sprinkle the goat’s blood over the atonement cover and in front of it, just as he did with the bull’s blood. ¹⁶ Through this process, he will purify the Most Holy Place, and he will do the same for the entire Tabernacle, because of the defiling sin and rebellion of the Israelites.

Sin → death → Romans 6:23 →

Genesis 2:17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.”

The remedy → blood → means life →

The blood → forgiveness of sin →

Leviticus 17:11 for the life of the body is in its blood. I have given you the blood on the altar to purify you, making you right with the Lord. It is the blood, given in exchange for a life, that makes purification possible.

The ceremonies → important lessons about **Jesus** →

Jesus' death → the perfect sacrifice →

We deserve death → God offers us life →

S. The importance of the blood for Christians - Hebrews 9:22

Hebrews 9:22 **In fact, according to the law of Moses, nearly everything was purified with blood. For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.**

The Day of Atonement →

The blood was essential on many other occasions too.

The Old Testament → **the importance of the blood** →

The blood → God saved Israel's people →

Exodus 12:13 **But the blood on your doorposts will serve as a sign, marking the houses where you are staying. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. This plague of death will not touch you when I strike the land of Egypt.**

On that occasion, it was the blood that separated them from other people. The blood

→ separated Aaron's family → Israel's priests →

Leviticus 8:23 **and Moses slaughtered it. Then Moses took some of its blood and applied it to the lobe of Aaron's right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴ Next Moses presented Aaron's sons and applied some of the blood to the lobes of their right ears, the thumbs of their right hands, and the big toes of their right feet. He then splattered the rest of the blood against all sides of the altar.**

The blood → never eaten →

Leviticus 17:10 **“And if any native Israelite or foreigner living among you eats or drinks blood in any form, I will turn against that person and cut him off from the community of your people,**

Leviticus 17:11 →

Because of the blood → God can forgive →

God cares → about animals → Genesis 1:24-25; Proverbs 12:10; Jonah 4:11

Genesis 1:24 *Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened.²⁵ God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.*

God cares more → about people →

Matthew 10:29 *What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it.³⁰ And the very hairs on your head are all numbered.³¹ So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.*

Evil deeds → ruined relationship →

Death → for evil deeds →

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

God → wants to forgive →

Exodus 34:6 *The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, “Yahweh!*

The Lord!

The God of compassion and mercy! I am

slow to anger

and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.

⁷ *I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations.*

I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin.

A sacrifice more valuable → Christ, God's Son → **Christ**

→ **offered his own blood** → God accepted

→ Sacrifice of animals → temporary → Hebrews 10:1 The

reality → **Christ's death** →

→ **saves people** →

→ frees them from the evil forces →

the reason why God can forgive →

The result → a right relationship with God →

T. Heaven is a real place - Hebrews 9:23

Hebrews 9:23 **That is why the Tabernacle and everything in it, which were copies of things in heaven, had to be purified by the blood of animals. But the real things in heaven had to be purified with far better sacrifices than the blood of animals.**

Heaven → a real place →

God **really** is present there →

God's people → will have their home there →

John 14:2 **There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?**

God established copies → to teach his people about the reality →

The real holy place → is heaven

The blood of sacrifices → necessary →

The reality → is in heaven →

That better sacrifice → the death of Jesus Christ →

Jesus' death → on earth → went **into the most holy place in heaven**
→

U. The meaning of the Day of Atonement - Hebrews 9:24

Hebrews 9:24 **For Christ did not enter into a holy place made with human hands, which was only a copy of the true one in heaven. He entered into heaven itself to appear now before God on our behalf.**

The **Day of Atonement** →

Israel's chief priest → entered the **most holy room** → **one day** each year →

God forgave → his people's sins →

The real meaning → **Christ's return to heaven after his death** →

On the cross → **Christ suffered the punishment for us** →

Isaiah 53:4 **Yet it was our weaknesses he carried;
it was our sorrows that weighed him down.
And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God,
a punishment for his own sins!**
⁵ **But he was pierced for our rebellion,
crushed for our sins.
He was beaten so we could be whole.
He was whipped so we could be healed.**
⁶ **All of us, like sheep, have strayed away.
We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet
the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.**

Jesus → our chief priest → Hebrews 4:14 →

A right relationship with God → Hebrews 9:11-15 →

Christ entered heaven → **God the Father gave him a seat at his own right side** → Hebrews 1:3

He continues to pray and to speak to God the Father on our behalf (Hebrews 7:25).

→

Israel's chief priest → work on behalf of the people in Israel →

Christ's → work for all the people who put their trust in him →

V. Christ: our priest and our sacrifice - Hebrews 9:25-26

Hebrews 9:25 **And he did not enter heaven to offer himself again and again, like the high priest here on earth who enters the Most Holy Place year after year with the blood of an animal.²⁶ If that had been necessary, Christ would have had to die again and again, ever since the world began. But now, once for all time, he has appeared at the end of the age to remove sin by his own death as a sacrifice.**

Christ's work → similar to the work of Israel's chief priests → →

two important differences →

1. Israel's chief priest → one day each year → not complete work
→ Hebrews 9:7; Hebrews 2:14-15; Hebrews 10:1

Christ offered himself → only once for our sin → complete / perfect →
Hebrews 10:10-14

2. Israel's chief priest → **could not offer himself** for the people's sin → Hebrews 7:27

Christ → offered himself → no sin → the perfect sacrifice →

1 Peter 1:19 **It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.**

Romans 5:12 *When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.*

Christ's death → the beginning of a new age →

Romans 5:17 *For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.*

¹⁸ *Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.* ¹⁹ *Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous.*

²⁰ *God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant.* ²¹ *So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Christ's rule → already begun →

Mark 1:15 *"The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"*

When Christ returns → everyone will know it →

1 Corinthians 15:51 *But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed!* ⁵² *It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.*

W. The judgment of God - Hebrews 9:27

Hebrews 9:27 *And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment,*

The judgment of God → warn people

There will be a punishment for sin →

Revelation 20:11 *And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide.¹² I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books.¹³ The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds.¹⁴ Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death.¹⁵ And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Hebrews 3:16-19 → people Moses led → refused to believe God →

Punishment after death → much worse than punishments during this life →

A worse punishment → the person who opposes Christ on purpose →
Hebrews 10:28-29; 12:25

The author → constantly reminds us → God can forgive us → because Jesus died to take the punishment for our sin → **we must not refuse God's love** →

God's judgment → nobody will escape it → Hebrews 2:3

X. Christ died once to save many people - Hebrews 9:28

Hebrews 9:28 **so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.**

Christ died once → Hebrews 9.25-26 →

His death → enough to free people from the power of sin, death and the devil →

→ enough to save everyone who trusts him →

Wait eagerly → for his return →

Mark 13:33 *And since you don't know when that time will come, be on guard! Stay alert!*

³⁴ *"The coming of the Son of Man can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. When he left home, he gave each of his slaves instructions about the work they were to do, and he told the gatekeeper to watch for his return. ³⁵ You, too, must keep watch! For you don't know when the master of the household will return—in the evening, at midnight, before dawn, or at daybreak. ³⁶ Don't let him find you sleeping when he arrives without warning. ³⁷ I say to you what I say to everyone: Watch for him!*

God's people → want Christ to return → **need him to return** →

Christ → already defeated **the power of sin** →

Christ will return → as king and judge → rescue his people from all sin →

Christ's death → defeated **the power of death** →

Christ's return → will change that → 1 Corinthians 15

Christ defeated → **the devil's power** → Hebrews 2:14-15

^{1 Peter 5:8} *Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.*

Judgment → against the devil → power will end →

^{Revelation 20:2} *He seized the dragon—that old serpent, who is the devil, Satan—and bound him in chains for a thousand years. ³ The angel threw him into the bottomless pit, which he then shut and locked so Satan could not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were finished. Afterward he must be released for a little while.*

Group Discussion Questions

1. What do you find to be challenging in keeping the balance between your earthly home and your heavenly home?
2. In the days of the Hebrew tabernacle, God's very presence dwelled in the Holy of Holies. Today His presence is within us. In light of that, describe some practical ways in which the Israelites' experience with God was different from ours.
3. As a dwelling place for God, what were the limitations of the tabernacle? What are the limitations of our lives and hearts as dwelling places for God?
4. The mercy seat reminded the Israelites of blood shed to cover their sins. What experiences or items in your life remind you of the mercy you were shown through Christ's blood?
5. Instead of covering our sin, Christ's blood removes our sin in God's sight. How do you think your life would be different today if your sin was covered rather than removed?
6. The Hebrew Christians were tempted to return to the Jewish ceremonial rites rather than stay with the new way that Christ was showing them. Identify some ways that we sometimes feel more comfortable with the familiar, even though it is not necessarily what God has ordained.

Personal Study Questions

1. Verse 9 says that the gifts and sacrifices of the old covenant could not perfect the conscience of the worshiper. What does it mean to “perfect the conscience?”
2. What is the difference between trying to have your conscience feel clear and actually having a perfected (mature, complete) conscience? Is a distinction important?
3. What rituals do you cling to in hopes of perfecting your conscience (church attendance, Christian radio, good deeds, asceticism)?
4. How is the conscience of the worshiper truly perfected under the new covenant? How has Jesus’ shed blood made this possible?
5. How does knowing that Jesus is presently functioning as our high priest, interceding on our behalf in the presence of God, change the way you pray, give, go, deal with sin, etc.?
6. How could Is 42:1 help explain what is meant by “through the eternal Spirit” in Heb. 9:14?
7. How does Jesus’ blood secure eternal redemption for those who believe?
8. Are you struggling with guilt or shame for your sin? If so, remember that God has forgiven you, and your debt was paid on the cross. Rise up in forgiveness and faith!