

Hebrews Chapter 9 Continued

Hebrews 9:9 "Which [was] a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;"

“Figure”: The Greek word is *parabole*, from which the English word *parable* is derived. The Levitical system was a *parable*, an object lesson, about what was to come in Christ.

“For the time”: “For” is ambiguous enough to allow for two different meanings and interpretations:

- (1) “During” the time of the Old Testament; or
- (2) “Until” and “pointing to” the current Christian era.

The second interpretation is “according to which” (from an alternate Greek reading), referring to the “parable” rather than to the time. It was an object lesson from the past pointing to the present time. This latter interpretation is preferable because of the explanation (in verse 10). “The present time” is “the time of reformation.”

“Gifts and sacrifices”: The first term might refer especially to the grain offerings under the Old Covenant, which were for thanksgiving or dedication. That would leave the second term to refer to blood offerings for the expiation of sins (see Lev. 1-5).

However, “gifts” is used (in 8:4), to refer to all of the various sacrifices (8:3). The 3 occurrences of the phrase in the New Testament (8:3; 9:9), employ a Greek construction which expresses a closer relationship between the two terms than is normally indicated by the word “and.” This could indicate that no distinction should be made between the terms, and the “for sins” should be taken with both.

“Perfect, as pertaining to the conscience”: Again, this term refers to salvation. The sacrifices of the Old Testament did not remove the offerors’ guilty conscience or provide them with full forgiveness for their sins (10:1-4). It was only symbolic of something else that would, namely Christ.

The conscience is a divinely given warning device that reacts to sin and produces accusation and guilt. That cannot be relieved apart from the work of Christ (verse 14; 10:22). At the time of salvation, it is quieted from its convicting ravings, but it is not deactivated. Rather, it continues its work, warning the believer about sin. Believers should seek a clear conscience.

We have been, in the last few lessons, comparing the earthly Tabernacle with the Tabernacle in heaven. We also have been comparing the earthly high priest, with our eternal High Priest.

The sacrifice and the shedding of animal blood could never do away with sin, but the precious Blood of the Lamb of God (Jesus Christ), defeated sin on the cross for all time for everyone who will accept it.

1 Peter 3:21 "The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

Hebrews 9:10 "[Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation."

“Meats and drinks” (Lev. 1-47), contains further legislation on the consumption of animals. Abel’s offering hints at a “post-fall/pre-Flood” diet of animals (Gen. 4:4). After the Noahic flood, God specifically had granted man permission to eat meat (Gen. 9:1-4), but spelled out the specifics as covenant legislation.

“Washings”: In the Old Testament Levitical system. There were many ceremonial cleansings, which were outward signs of heart cleansing (Exodus 3:18-21; Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28; Mark 7:4, 8). The New Covenant called for an inner washing (Titus 3:5), that regenerated the soul.

These washings and ordinances here, remind me very much of the formality in many of the churches. Christianity is not a ritual you perform once a week, but Christianity is of the heart. If you are truly saved, you are in love with Jesus Christ.

“Imposed on them”: The Levitical ordinances regulated the visible actions without changing the inner man (10:4).

“Reformation”: The Greek term means “restoring what is out of line”. All things are set straight in Christ. The reformation is the New Covenant and its application.

Church is not some formal thing you do. You love to go to church, and talk about Jesus all the time. The person, sold out to Jesus, looks forward to fellowshiping with other Christians.

Ephesians 2:15 "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace;"

God wants you to desire in your heart to please Him, not to keep a bunch of rituals. Salvation is of the heart. If you believe in your heart the Lord Jesus, and confess that He rose from the grave you will be saved. Let us look at one more Scripture on how to please God.

1 Samuel 15:22 "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD [as great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey [is] better than sacrifice, [and] to hearken than the fat of rams."

“Hearken”, meaning: “to obey”. You are what your heart is. Reformation just means, Jesus came and reformed the law into grace.

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:"

Verses 11-12: The reference (in verse 12), to “the holy place” (Greek ta hagia), needs to be understood as the Holy of Holies. This Greek phrase is not used consistently for any one part of the tabernacle. (In verse 2), it is used for the Holy Place; (in verse 25), it has reference to the Holy of Holies. Thus, the usage of the phrase must be determined by the demands of the context.

These two verses clearly relate to the inner sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, as have the preceding verses (verses 7-10). These two verses present the essentials in operating the new covenant: a superior sanctuary and an infinitely superior sacrifice.

Christ has opened the inner sanctuary (Most Holy Place), of the heavenly tabernacle, quite in contrast to the closed sanctuary of the earthly.

Hebrews 9:11 "But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;"

“Of good things to come”: The reference appears to be to the “eternal redemption” (verse 12).

(In 10:1), the “good things” refer back to the “salvation” (of verse 28; Rom. 10:15). Most Greek editions of the New Testament accept the reading “that have come.” In the context, both readings refer to the things of the New Covenant.

It is just a matter of perspective: whether from the view point of the Levitical system where the realities of redemption were “to come,” or the viewpoint of those in the Christian era where the realities of redemption “have come” because Christ has completed His work.

“Not of this building”: The phrase is the explanation of “not made with hands”, it is the creation of God alone. The sanctuary where Christ serves is heaven itself (verse 24; 8:2).

Here are 2 Scriptures that should let us know that what God has in heaven is greater than any Tabernacle we might build here on the earth.

Acts 17:24-25 "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" "Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;"

God cannot be housed in a building of this earth. All heaven and earth cannot contain Him. He is omnipresent (everywhere all the time). He can dwell in your heart and still be at the right hand of the Father all at the same time.

God is a Spirit. If we are to truly know Him, it must be in our spirit. The only reason the Word (Jesus Christ), took on the body of man, was so that He could save us.

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

The very reason Jesus did not come in Spirit alone, was so He might relate better to our problems in the flesh. The high priest (to be a good one), must be able to know and understand the problems of his people. Jesus, not only relates to us, but has prepared for our time of separation from this old tabernacle of flesh that we will discard at our death.

2 Corinthians 5:1 "For we know that if our earthly house of [this] tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Hebrews 9:12 "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us]."

“Goats and calves”: Only one of each was sacrificed on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:5-10). The plural here represents the numbers sacrificed as the Day of Atonement was observed year after year.

“By his own blood”: The same phrase (is used in 13:12). Nothing is said which would indicate that Christ carried His actual physical blood with Him into the heavenly sanctuary. The Sacrificer was also the Sacrifice.

“Once”: Christ had no sin and needed no sacrifice for Himself. And only one sacrifice (by Him), was needed, one time only, for all men, for all time.

“Eternal Redemption”: This word for redemption is found only here and (in Luke 1:68; 2:38). Its original use was for the release of slaves by payment of a ransom.

Purification of Heaven. The most holy place in existence is in the presence of God or in heaven. The primary purpose of the blood of Christ was to propitiate (satisfy), the wrath of God and pay the price of redemption.

But also, as the earthly high priest used the blood of bulls and goats to cleanse the Holy of Holies, so Christ, the Eternal High Priest, entered heaven to purify it "by his own blood." Although heaven is a perfect place, Satan also had access to it (Job 1:6). The purification of heaven probably entailed the casting out of Satan.

Purity ought also to characterize the earthly dwelling place of God, that is, the Christian who Christ indwells (Gal. 2:20). The Christian is therefore called the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19).

Galatians 3:13 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree:"

We have touched on this before, but it bears repeating. The only thing the blood of the animal could do was cover the sin. The blood of the perfect Lamb (Jesus Christ), wiped all of our sins away as if they had never been there.

Sin for the true believer died on the cross. We have been washed in His precious blood and made every bit whole (white as snow). Though our sins had been crimson red, now we are white as snow.

Revelation 7:14 "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Verses 13-22: Christ's death was necessary for the fulfillment of the older covenant and the establishment of the new.

Hebrews 9:13 "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:"

"The ashes of a heifer" It is said that, in the history of Israel, only 6 red heifers were killed and their ashes used. One heifer's ashes would suffice for centuries since only a minute amount of the ash was required.

This refers to the ceremony involving the red heifer (Num. 19). A heifer would be taken outside the camp, killed, and then burned. As it was burning, the priest would throw cedar, hyssop, and scarlet wool upon it. Afterwards, the ashes would be gathered and stored outside the city.

When anyone became ceremonially unclean because of contact with a dead body, these ashes would be mixed with water and sprinkled on that person. This procedure certainly demonstrates the largely ceremonial nature of purification provided by the old covenant practices.

“Unclean”: Defiled, the Greek term is literally “common” or “profane.” Not that it was ceremonially unclean, but that it was not sanctified or set apart unto God.

The word was used in Jesus’ discourse on what defiles a man (Matt. 15:11, 18, 20; Mark 7:15, 18, 20, 23), in the Jews’ complaint that Paul had defiled the temple by bringing Gentiles into it (Acts 21:28), and in reference to the meats which Peter had been invited to eat (Acts 10:15; 11:9).

According to the Mosaic regulation, the red heifer’s ashes were to be placed “outside the camp” and used in a ceremony for symbolic purifying from sin (Num. 19:9; 13:11-13).

Hebrews 9:14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

“How much more”: Superior to the cleansing capability of the ashes of an animal is the cleansing power of the sacrifice of Christ.

“The blood of Christ”: This is an expression that refers not simply to the fluid, but the whole atoning sacrificial work of Christ in His death. Blood is used as a substitute word for death (Matt. 23:30, 35; 27:6, 8, 24-25; John 6:54-56; Acts 18:6; 20:26). This is stating even more emphatically that the blood of animals could not save your soul and give you a clear conscience.

Jesus did not just cover our sin with His precious blood, He paid the penalty for our sin with His precious blood and we have a full pardon. We no longer have those sins; they are washed away in the blood of the Lamb.

“The eternal Spirit” (see note on 2:4; Isa. 42:1; 61:1; Luke 4:1, 14). Some interpreters argue that the lack of the definite article in the Greek makes this a reference to Christ’s own “eternal spirit” (in the sense of an endless life, 7:16). However, the references to the Holy Spirit (in 2:4 and 6:4), are also without the definite article.

The use of “eternal” as a qualifier serves to relate the Spirit to the “eternal redemption” (verse 12), and the “eternal inheritance” (verse 15), which Christ accomplished by His sacrificial death.

“Offered himself” (John 10:17-18). The animals in the Levitical system were brought involuntarily and without understanding to their deaths. Christ came of His own volition

with a full understanding of the necessity and consequences of His sacrifice. His sacrifice was not just His blood, it was His entire human nature (10:10).

“Without spot”: In the LXX, the term is used for describing acceptable sacrifices including the red heifer (Num. 19:3; Exodus 29:1; Lev. 1:3). A similar reference is found (in 1 Peter 1:19).

“Conscience” (see verse 9 note).

“Dead works”: “Purge your conscience from dead works”: This Old Testament form of repentance is the turning away from evil deeds that bring death. (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23), and turning to God. Too often the Jew only turned to God in a superficial fashion, fulfilling the letter of the law as evidence of his repentance. The inner man was still dead (Matt. 23:25-28; Rom. 2:28-29).

“To serve the living God”: Salvation is not an end in itself. The believer has been freed from sin to serve God, saved to serve (Rom. 6:16-18; 1 Thess. 1:9). The contrast between dead works and the living God (3:12; 10:31; 12:22), is basic (James 2:14-26).

Hebrews 9:15 "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [that were] under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

“Mediator” (9:15). The word describes a go-between or an arbitrator, in this case between man and God (1 Tim. 2:5; Gal. 3:19-20).

“Death”: In the making of some biblical covenants, sacrifices were involved. When God made the covenant with Abraham, 5 different animals were sacrificed in the ceremony (Gen. 15:9-10). The Mosaic Covenant was affirmed by animal sacrifices (Exodus 24:5-8).

“Redemption”: The term used here is found more frequently than the term used (in verse 12; 11:35; Luke 21:28; Rom. 3:24). Jesus’ death retroactively redeemed all those who had believed in God under the Old Covenant (Rom. 3:24-26). This is in keeping with symbolism of the Day of Atonement. Annually the High-Priest would atone for or cover the sins that the people had committed in the preceding year (Lev. 16:16, 21, 30).

“The redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament”: The Old Testament sacrifices could not take away sin (10:4); they merely made a provisional atonement, a temporary covering, for sin. Christ’s sacrifices expiated all those past sins that had received such atonement (Rom. 3:25).

“First testament”: The actual first covenant historically was made with Noah (Gen. 6:18; 9:9). Next came the covenant made with Abraham (Gen. 15:18). By context, however, the older covenant under discussion in this epistle is that which is called the Mosaic

Covenant or the Covenant of Law (Exodus 19:1 - 20:21). "First" in this verse, therefore, means the former, older covenant with which the Levitical system is connected.

"They which are called": Literally "the ones having been called," looking back to those under the old Covenant who were called to salvation by God, based on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to come long after most of them had died. The reference, as always in the New Testament epistle, is to the effectual calling related to salvation (3:1), which in this context refers to Old Testament believers.

"Promise of eternal inheritance": That is, salvation in its fullness (3:11; 4:1, 9; 6:12; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

The Old Testament sacrifices might be compared to the writing of a check. The paper on which it is written is practically worthless. Yet it is used and accepted in a place of money, since it is backed by what has been deposited in the bank.

Christ's death was deposited from the foundation of the world as that which backed the Old Testament sacrifices. With Christ's death on the cross, the deposit was released and all the past checks were honored and paid.

The New Testament is actually the last will and testament of Jesus Christ. We are the inheritors of the things He has promised us in the will. A will is not activated until the one that drew it up dies. Now we can lay claim to our inheritance in Jesus Christ if we live up to the requirements of the will.

1 Peter 1:3-4 "Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,"

An inheritance is not something you work to get; it is a gift from the writer of the will. We just believe, and receive.

Titus 3:7 "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Verses 16-17: The word "testament" (Greek diatheke), refers here to a will (in accordance with the Greek usage of the New Testament era), even though the Greek word is commonly used in Hebrews and throughout the New Testament for a covenant. A will requires the death of its maker before it can be set in force.

Christ's sinless life could not establish the New Testament. His death, involving His shed blood, was necessary.

Hebrews 9:16-17 "For where a testament [is], there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." "For a testament [is] of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

A last will and testament illustrates the necessity of Christ's death. "Covenant", is the same Greek word translated "testament," but the term takes on the more specialized meaning in this context. The benefits and provisions of a will are only promises until the one who wrote the will dies. Death activates the promises into realities.

Jesus is the Testator above. The only time you can lay claim to your inheritance is after the Writer of the will has died. Grace is a free gift (our inheritance).

Hebrews Chapter 9 Continued Questions

1. In verse 9 of Hebrews chapter 9 we find that the blood of animals could not clear the _____.
2. What two Tabernacles have we been comparing in these lessons?
3. Which high priests have we been comparing?
4. What does 1 Peter 3:21 tell us baptism does for us?
5. What things were imposed on the followers of God before the reformation?
6. Christianity is not a ritual to be performed, it is what?
7. In Ephesians 2:15 we learn that Jesus abolished in His flesh what?
8. Where do we find the Scripture that says, to obey is better than sacrifice?
9. For by grace are ye saved through _____.
10. The tabernacle that Jesus builds is not made with _____.
11. We find in Acts 17:24 that He is Lord where?
12. What does omnipresent mean?
13. Why did Jesus take on the form of flesh?
14. Where do we find the Scripture that says, The Word was made flesh?
15. What must a high priest do, to be a good high priest?

16. If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of _____.
17. Jesus purchased our redemption, not with the blood of goats, but by what?
18. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the _____.
19. What was the difference in the results of the blood of the goat being offered, and the blood of the Lamb of God being offered?
20. Though our sins were crimson red, now are they white as _____.
21. In Revelation 7:14, they had washed their robes in what, and made them white?
22. What 3 things sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh?
23. What purges our conscience from dead works?
24. what 2 things are called corruptible in 1 Peter 1:18?
25. From when had Jesus been foreordained to cleanse us from our unrighteousness with His shed blood?
26. Who is the mediator of the New Testament?
27. When is a will activated?
28. What hope does the resurrection of Jesus bring the Christian?
29. Describe this inheritance from 1 Peter 1:4.
30. How do we collect our inheritance [two words]?
31. How are we justified?
32. Who is the Testator in Hebrews 9:16?