

# LESSON 9

---

## THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT

When we understand the gospel, we appreciate the value of the Law that helped in bringing us to Christ (Gal. 3:24). The writer of Hebrews took his audience on a journey backward in time to the days of the tabernacle in the wilderness.

The temple and its precursor were only pictures of the most holy place in heaven. Temple ritual was merely a type of true worship. This epistle, written to Jewish Christians, taught that they must give up the regulations of the old Law and enter the heavenly temple in spirit. Indeed, in worship, they could go directly to God's throne, which they could not even approach under the old covenant (4:15, 16).

For New Testament Christians, learning how and why God gave us the church as the singular place where He would dwell (see Eph. 2:20, 21) should cause us to approach Him with boldness. Then, coming to understand its function in His overall scheme, we will indeed grow closer to God.

### LESSONS FROM THE TABERNACLE (9:1–10)

Jesus, our better sacrifice, is the theme that fills 9:1—10:18. Key words in Hebrew occur again and again in the Greek text, including the words translated "offer," "offering," "sacrifice," "covenant," "blood," and "sin."

1. Why did the old covenant have "regulations of divine worship" (v. 1)?
2. What did the veil between the holy place and the Most Holy Place represent?
3. Explain what happened on the Day of Atonement.
4. How should we understand "conscience" in verse 9b?
5. To what does the term "regeneration" in verse 10 refer?

## **CHRIST'S DEATH AND ATONEMENT (9:11–15)**

Christ's appearance as our High Priest is a basic truth of the Christian faith. As the old covenant high priest passed through the holy place, Jesus has passed into the real holy place. He is in the presence of the Father, who truly sits in the Most Holy Place. With our new High Priest, the old shadows are no longer necessary.

This passage, 9:11–15, could well be called "the heart of Hebrews." Its golden thread, its central theme, is the blood of Jesus. As we study it, let us ask, "What has Jesus given us through His blood?"

6. How does Jesus allow people to attain perfection under the new covenant?
7. What was the relationship between ceremonial cleansing and moral cleansing under the Law?
8. Explain what is meant by "dead works" (v. 14).
9. How does redemption of sins through Jesus' death on the cross have a retroactive effect?
10. How does the history of the word "covenant" aid your understanding of how Jesus works as a mediator?

## **CHRIST AS TESTATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT (9:16–22)**

Four divine necessities are brought before us in this passage. The Greek word translated "necessity" is used twice in these nine verses (vv. 16, 23). Certain conditions must be met in order for the new covenant, or testament, to be effective.

11. Why did the promises of Jesus' testament/covenant go into effect only after His death?
12. Considering verses 18 through 20, what do you think is the purpose of blood in the inauguration of both covenants?
13. What does the use of blood to atone for sin indicate?

**CHRIST'S ENTRY  
INTO GOD'S PRESENCE (9:23–28)**

Once more, we see Christ entering heaven itself (v. 24). We are still in “the heart of Hebrews.” The phrase “it was necessary” suggests that there could have been no acceptable worship without the cleansing or purifying of the utensils of the tabernacle. The tabernacle was a type of the church. Jesus died “once for all time” for His church, we will die once, and Christ will come one more time.

14. What does the word “now” in verse 24 imply?
15. What differences between Christ as High Priest and previous high priests does the author of Hebrews elicit in verses 25 and 26?
16. What are the three truths of verses 25 and 26?
17. What will Christ do when He comes “a second time” (v. 28)?