

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #7, Chapter 9:1-10

Read Chapter 9 before beginning this lesson. Be sure to ask the Lord for His help to understand and apply His Word in your life.

In Hebrews Chapter 7 we learned that Christ the high priest is superior to the priests descended from Levi. In Hebrews Chapter 8 we learned our high priest, Jesus, is the mediator of a better covenant. Now in Chapter 9 we will study how Christ's sacrifice is superior to the sacrificial system set up under the old covenant. With affection and reverence the author reveals the parts and pieces of the old covenant worship system in Hebrews 9:1-10, which points to the One who offered Himself once for all.

1. Though the first covenant was passing away (8:13), it still had value—the old covenant prepared the way for the new covenant, as we learn in this chapter. What did the first covenant have according to verse 1?

2. Look up the following passages to gain the sense of the word *regulation*: Luke 1:6; Rom. 1:32; 2:26; 8:4; and Heb. 9:1, 10. What does the author mean with the phrase, “*regulations of divine worship*?”

3. Numbers 28 and Deut. 10:12-13 are two places we can read about the regulations of divine worship under the old covenant. What do you learn about the worship God required under the old covenant?

4. The old covenant had regulations or commands that provided instruction in how God was to be worshiped. What do you learn about the specific way God is to be worshiped under the new covenant from the following verses? See John 4:23-24; 1 Cor. 14:26-33; 1 Thess. 5:12-22; 1 Tim. 2:8-12; 3:14-15; 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 1:13-25.

5. There is a principle here we must take care not to overlook. God has always given specific commands in how He is to be worshiped. Can you think of any areas where you need to take care to worship the Lord in the way He prescribes?

6. The earthly sanctuary is described as the *earthly place of holiness* (ESV). This holy sanctuary located in this world is described in verses 2-5. Let's begin by looking at verse 2 which says it had a tabernacle. What is a *tabernacle* (ESV *tent* [Strong's #4633])? See Ex. 39:32-34; 40:2, 18-20.

7. To read more about the items of the holy place see Ex. 25:23-40; 40:22-25; Lev. 24:5-9. What interesting details did you discover from those passages?

8. A possible discrepancy arises in verse 4 as to the actual location of the altar of incense in the tabernacle. Where does the author of Hebrews say the golden altar of incense sat (verses 3-4)? Now read Ex. 40:17-27; Lev. 16:12-13 to see where Moses placed it.
 - a. When did the high priest enter into the Holy of Holies? See Lev. 16:34; Heb. 9:6-7.

 - b. The *Believer's Bible Commentary* states, "Verse 4 says that the golden censer was also in the Most Holy Place. The Greek word translated *censer* can mean either the incense altar (mentioned in Ex. 30:6 as being in the Holy Place) or the censer with which the high priest carried the incense. The best explanation is the latter. The writer regarded the censer as

belonging to the Most Holy Place because the high priest carried it in from the incense altar into the Holiest Place on the Day of Atonement.”¹

9. What else was located in the Holy of Holies according to verse 4? What was inside it?

10. Why would those items be significant enough to reside in the ark of the covenant? For the manna see Ex. 16:33-35; Deut. 8:3, 16. For Aaron’s rod see Num. 17:1-11. For the tablets see Deut. 10:1-5.

11. Verse 5 mentions the “mercy seat.” What is that? See Ex. 25:21-22; 26:34; 30:6. Also notice: what is another name for the ark of the covenant?

12. Look up the definition for *mercy seat* in a Bible dictionary (NIV *atonement cover* [Strong’s #2435]). What added details do you discover about this piece of furniture in the tabernacle?

13. The writer of Hebrews terminates his discussion of the tabernacle’s contents with the words, “but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.” Why is that? See Heb. 8:1.

¹MacDonald, William and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Heb 9:4.

- a. What is his purpose in reciting these details of the tabernacle to his readers? See 9:9-10, 23-24; 10:1.
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14. The details of verses 1-5, though important in and of themselves, lay the groundwork for the continued comparison between the priests on earth and our great high priest in heaven, which the author now resumes in verse 6. Once the tabernacle was ready, what did the priests and high priests do according to verses 6-7?

 15. What are *sins committed in ignorance*? What other kinds of sins are there? See Lev. 5:18; Num. 15:27-31; Deut. 1:43; Ps. 19:12; Eph. 4:18; Heb. 10:26; 1 Pet. 1:14.
 - a. Though all are sins, why are the presumptuous sins worse?

 - b. What are some ways you can guard against willfully sinning against the Lord?

 - c. What if you have willfully sinned against the Lord, what now? See Is. 1:16; Acts 3:19; 1 Jn. 1:9.

16. What does the Holy Spirit indicate in verse 8?

17. Eager Beaver: The phrase, “The Holy Spirit is signifying this” hints at the guidance the Holy Spirit gave the Bible writers. What do the following verses teach you about how the Bible was written by God through men? See 2 Sam. 23:2-3; Acts 1:16; 3:18; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2 Pet. 1:20-21.

18. What do we learn about the tabernacle at the beginning of verse 9?

19. That information about the tabernacle from the beginning of verse 9 helps us understand the point being made in this section. D. A. Carson states, “At a literal level, the outer tent obscured the way into the second tent. At a symbolic level, the tabernacle and all its ritual stood in the way of direct and permanent access to God. In certain respects the law foreshadowed and prepared for the ministry of Christ. But when the new covenant was inaugurated, the inadequacies of the old covenant cult² became glaringly obvious.”³ What was the old covenant unable to do according to verses 9-10?

20. Why wasn’t the old covenant able to cleanse the soul from sin? See Heb. 10:1-4.

²The meaning of the term “cult” is to describe a system of religious beliefs, rather than referring to those whose beliefs are heretical to biblical truth.

³Carson, D. A., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, Rev. Ed. of: *The New Bible Commentary. 3rd Ed.* / Edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), Heb 9:1.

21. The writer of Hebrews uses terms like “symbol,” “copy,” or “shadow” to describe the old covenant in Hebrews 8-10. What is his purpose in using those terms? What does he hope to accomplish for his readers?
- a. Paul does something similar in 2 Cor. 3:7-11. How is this passage similar to what the author of Hebrews is doing in Heb. 9:1-10?
22. If readers of this book do not understand the purpose of the old covenant and revert back to Judaism what is at stake? See verses 11-12.
23. What is the significance of saying as verse 8 does that the entrance into the very presence of God remains hidden as long the old covenant rituals are adhered to and Jesus Christ is rejected? See Jn. 14:6; 2 Cor. 3:12-18; Heb. 10:19-22.
24. What warnings can you learn from this lesson?
- a. What encouragements can you take with you from this lesson?

A Time of Reformation has Come.