

Hebrews 9

Good morning and thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to Hebrews 9 please?

In the OT, God made a covenant with Israel that included priests and a Temple. But as we've been studying over the last couple of chapters of Hebrews, Jesus is a priest of a superior order - of Melchizedek. And Jesus works in a better Temple - in Heaven itself.

And now we shift from the discussion of the priesthood, to that of the sacrifices themselves. Beginning here in Chapter 9 we learn how Jesus offers a better sacrifice!

We're gonna study all of chapter 9, and the title of this morning's message is THE COMPLETE SACRIFICE
Let's pray

In our text this morning we're gonna see several references to the OT tabernacle, so let's take a moment and remind ourselves of its importance.

Remember, there were 2 temples built in Jerusalem.

But before Solomon built the 1st temple, God gave Moses and the Hebrews instructions to build a tabernacle.

SHOW PIC The tabernacle was a tent 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high. It was divided into two rooms. The larger room (the first part) was a 15 feet by 30 feet "holy place." Behind the

second veil was the smaller room, it was a 15 feet by 15 feet, called the Holy of Holies **CLOSE PIC**.

And as chapter 9 kicks off, we'll learn more about the reason for having the tabernacle

1 Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. God gave Moses blueprints for a tent or a "Tabernacle," You can think of the tabernacle as a mobile house of worship that traveled with Israel along their wilderness wanderings. In its courtyard was the altar on which sacrifices were offered.

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, **SHOW PICS golden menorah the table, 3 feet long, 1½ feet wide, and the showbread,** this table held twelve loaves of showbread, representing God's fellowship with the twelve tribes of Israel The bread acknowledged that God was the source of their sustenance. **CLOSE PICS**

...2 which is called the sanctuary;

This refers to the first part of the tabernacle known as the "holy place."

3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, And you'll remember that a veil, a thick curtain, separated the first part from the Holiest of All, also known as the "holy of holies. Remember, when the temple was built, there was also a veil that separated the holy of holies. Jesus tore that veil on the cross, showing we have access to God.

So this second, smaller part of the tabernacle...

4-5

4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. **SHOW PIC** pause here. The Ark was 4 foot long, by 2 foot wide, by 2 foot high and over it rested God's presence and glory. It was God's meeting place with His people.

Each item in the ark had incredible significance. The manna reminded Israel of God's provision and their ungratefulness.

Aaron's rod reminded Israel of their rebellion against God's authority.

The tablets of the covenant reminded Israel how they failed to keep the 10 Commandments. **CLOSE PICS**

But notice v 5-the mercy seat. The mercy seat was the "lid" for the ark of the covenant, made with the designs of cherubim upon it.

The blood of sacrifice was sprinkled upon the mercy seat for the forgiveness of Israel's sin on the Day of Atonement.

See this was all a picture. As God looked down into the ark, He saw the symbols of Israel's sin, rebellion and failure. But when the

blood of sacrifice was applied to the mercy seat, the blood of sacrifice covered His sight of the sin of Israel.

But now look how v5 ends

...5 Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. What a bummer!” Here’s the greatest Bible study that never was! A breakdown of these verses would’ve been fabulous. For everything about the earthly Tabernacle cast a light on NT truths.

Recall in 8:5 the author told us the Tabernacle was a small-scale replica of heaven itself. And so much of its symbolism foreshadowed Jesus.

The NT Gospels open up with this analogy. **Jesus in 1:14 And the Word became 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.**

But the author of Hebrews had more pressing matters to discuss...

6 Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. There were many priests working all at one time performing the work of the temple and the daily sacrifices. But they only went to the 1st part of the tabernacle, the holy place.

But only the High Priest had access behind the veil, into the presence of God and only 1x a year. And when he entered he

didn't come empty-handed. He came with the blood of a sacrificial animal...

7 But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; 8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. Once a year on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, it would be the high priest's privilege to go alone into the Holy of Holies to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat and catch a glimpse of the Shekinah glory of God.

When that day finally came, arrayed in his high priestly robes, he would sacrifice a bull on the brass altar in the courtyard. Then he would take off his high priestly garments and put on his linen garments, covered by a tunic and sash. Then he would sacrifice another bull as a sin offering for himself.

Later on two goats would be chosen by lot and a red scarlet cord would be tied around one, signifying it was the sacrificial goat. The other goat-the scapegoat-would be carried into the wilderness. **Leviticus 16 20 "And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. 21 Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. 22 The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.**

This was foreshadowing the work of Christ. Christ is the complete atonement for our sins. In many ways, He embodies each aspect of the Day of Atonement.

We are told that He is our great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14). He is also the “Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world” (Revelation 13:8) as a sacrifice for our sins.

And Jesus is our scapegoat. **2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

Our sins were laid on Christ – He bore our sins just as the scapegoat bore the sins of the Israelites.

9-10

9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. Tabernacle worship involved outward, superficial rituals regarding diet and hygiene, but it didn't purify the inner man. You can have clean hands, but a filthy heart.

11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come,[fn] with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Jesus, as our High Priest, ministers in a superior sanctuary — the very throne room of God.

This is obviously a place greater than anything human hands could ever make.

And how does Jesus minister?

12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. The OT sacrifices were repeated over and over again. But Jesus offered His blood once and for all. His sacrifice never had to be repeated or reapplied.

13-14

13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? To go back to the sacrifices under the OT was performing dead works. Which is the very thing these discouraged Jewish Christians were tempted to go back to.

And notice the encouragement here in v14. We're free from the law, not so we could live unto ourselves, but so we can serve the living God!

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Remember all of the animal sacrifices under the old covenant only covered sins. They never

took away sins. But Jesus' payment on the cross accomplished redemption for those under the first covenant. 16-17

16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. A testament (in the sense of a “last will and testament”) only takes effect when the person who made the testament dies. Therefore Jesus had to die for the testament — the new covenant — to take effect. Jesus not only wrote the testament, He rose again to be the executor!

18-20

18 Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.”^[fn] 21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. These verses remind us that a covenant with God was a bloody agreement. And all this blood and death stressed to Israel the seriousness of their sin.

Because of their actions under the OC, their own innocent lamb was taken and its throat slit. Often that lamb was like a pet - there was an attachment.

SHOW PIC Imagine taking your household pet - your cat or dog - putting Spot or Rover on a leash and taking your pet to the priest,

where it was slaughtered because of the stupid stuff you did.

CLOSE PIC

If we still did that we'd all see our sin in a different light! Sin is a serious crime and it deserves a severe penalty

22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. What does it mean-almost? Remember as part God's provision for the poor in Israel, He allowed them to bring a flour offering in place of an animal if they couldn't afford a lamb, or two doves.

This is what the OT law demonstrated. God's forgiveness requires the shedding of blood. Today our places of worship are clean and sanitary. But if you had walked into the Tabernacle, it looked and smelled like a slaughterhouse.

The job of the priest was like that of a butcher. One author writes, "The Old Testament sacrificial system... was a gory affair indeed! During the thousand-plus years of the Old Covenant, there were more than a million animal sacrifices. So considering that each bull's sacrifice spilled a gallon or two of blood, and each goat a quart, the Old Covenant truly rested on a sea of blood."

During the Passover a ditch had to be dug from the Temple to the Kidron Valley just to channel off the blood.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'

God told Adam and Eve the wages of sin was death. And since the nutrients of life flow to the rest of the body through the bloodstream; biblical reasoning demands that the debt of sin be paid by the spilling of innocent blood.

Of course, this is where many liberal critics ridicule Christianity.

The necessity of blood offends their modern sensibilities. They consider it barbaric. And I have one response to that, “So what!” It doesn’t matter what a bunch of theologians think.

If God is doing the forgiving; He can set the terms for that forgiveness however He chooses. And God has clearly told us “without shedding of blood there is no remission” of sin.

Whenever someone tries to eliminate the cross and blood, and sanitize Christianity, they are stripping it of its power!

We’re told in Revelation 5 in heaven we’ll see “a Lamb as though it had been slain.” Jesus, the Lamb of God, will bear the marks of crucifixion for all eternity. To negate the importance of His blood insults our Savior.

23-24

23 Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God

for us; It's not hard to fathom that Jesus is in the presence of God. but look at the end of v24—who does Jesus do this for? He does it for us!!

25-26

25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another— 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The Jewish Priest offered his sacrifice annually, but Jesus offered Himself, only once!

This is why we reject the doctrine of transubstantiation - the belief that the wafer and wine of communion turn into the literal body and blood of Christ when offered. If so, Jesus is sacrificed again and again. God forbid! He was sacrificed once!

On the cross all that needed to be done for our salvation was done - and it was done once and for all!

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. Jesus is not coming back to bear our sin. That was done once, and once is enough. No, He's coming back wearing a crown.

Jesus came to set us free from the power of sin. When He returns, He removes us from the presence of sin.

1 Cor 11 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat;[fn] this is My body which is broken[fn] for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1 Cor 11 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.