

Moving into the New Covenant

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[0 : 00] We're going to be finishing the ninth chapter of Hebrews next week, meaning we'll kick it off with a very important detailed detailed 10th chapter this fall.

! Which the Jew was under and the Jewish guys in this Hebrew church, they had been under that old covenant and their parents and their grandparents and go back 1600 years.

And it was a tough break. It was a very tough break for them. Last time we covered Hebrews 9, 1 to 7. Today we're going to begin with the old covenant, just a few words, and then move into the new covenant.

But I want to talk about just briefly the significance of the old covenant, and we find that in Hebrews 9, verses 8 to 10.

By this, the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing, which is symbolic for the present age.

[1 : 30] According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

Those are kind of confusing words. We'll talk about them briefly. But there we find the Holy Spirit of God teaching truth concerning the old covenant.

And first he teaches that the worship of God under the old covenant was limited. It had limitations. For one thing, there was no access to God.

You didn't have access to God. I mean, you get up for your morning prayers and you didn't come into the presence of God. Evening prayers, same thing. The people could only approach God through the earthly high priest, and only one time a year, and the earthly high priest could go so far, the people couldn't go at all, and they could go no further, just through Him.

Additionally, the old sacrifices accomplished at best a temporary cleansing. I've said before, that's why there were no chairs in the tabernacle, because the priest never sat down because the work was never done.

[3 : 09] There was always another sin to atone for. In that regard, the sacrifices of the Old Testament, we're talking about rams and goats and sheep and all, they at best provided a temporary cleansing.

And I can just imagine some guy saved up his money and bought a nice unblemished ram and took it down there to sacrifice for his sins, and he committed a sin walking out, and now he's there, I've got to start over.

That was kind of the attitude. In that regard, the sacrifices of the Old Testament were imperfect. The people of Israel, and this is a key point, and it really kind of applies to a lot of Christians today, the people of Israel were never quite certain that they had been fully cleansed from sin and reconciled to God.

Has enough been done that I'm clean? That I have reconciliation with God the Father? And whether that was really true or not, and let's face it, there's a lot of believers that think that.

But that's like saying, did Jesus do enough to cleanse me? You know, we don't ever go there, guys. If we're in Christ, you're clean.

[4 : 42] Because of Him. Not because of anything I did. I promise you. Even in the example of the scapegoat, and I don't know if I've talked about that much.

I may in the future. But they used to put the sins on a scapegoat, and then they'd let him go. They'd chase him away, and he'd go out in the desert. They'd never see him again.

That was symbolic of your sins have been taken away. They're out there in the desert somewhere. But they always worried, what if the scapegoat came back?

What if he comes back and finds his way back into the camp? What happens then? Bottom line, the system did not provide a freedom of conscience.

The conscience, which God created for us, and it's a good thing. The conscience was never totally assured that I'm in good stead with the Lord.

[5 : 47] I've been cleansed. And of course, the big problem was the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over. They were only temporary.

In fact, the sacrifices were repeated day in and day out from year to year for something like 1,600 years. And it was an assembly line. And it became a cash cow.

We know when Jesus was on earth, because the high priest and his father-in-law, Caiaphas and Annas, they owned the animals, and they would sell them at a high price.

And if you brought your own now, they'd find a reason to reject it. Now you have to buy a better one.

It was a cash cow for them. We need to try and get a mental picture of Israel in the tabernacle.

Kind of hard for Gentiles in the 21st century, but we're going to try. The people, of course, had no access to the Holy of Holies.

[6 : 52] They couldn't go into the Holy of Holies. The room next door to the Holy of Holies was called the Holy Place. They couldn't go in there. They couldn't go in there.

And by giving them this system, God was proving something to the people. By giving this system, he was proving that without a Redeemer, without a Savior and a Messiah, they had no access to him.

They could only come to him through those means. And that, of course, is just as true today, more so. None of us can rush into the Holy of Holies.

Why? What must occur? Well, we must be cloaked in the righteousness of our substitute, who took our place on the cross, who died for our sins.

The Lord Jesus Christ. Cloaked in his righteousness, we have access to the Father and the very Holy of Holies. So, we must have a perfect high priest in order to gain access to the throne room, and there we find the mercy seat of God.

[8 : 24] It used to be the judgment seat. But when Jesus atoned for our sins, it became a mercy seat. The Jews had a symbol of access in the earthly high priest, but no actual access.

And that poor guy was scared to death. He's going to do something wrong. I told you they put a rope on him, because they couldn't go in after him. If he messed up and God killed him, they had to reel him out like a fish. This access I'm talking about was not accomplished until Christ's atoning death on the cross.

The Bible says, when he ascended, he led captivity captive. By this, he provided the faithful access to God's presence. Now, with all the Old Testament cleansings and sacrifices carried out for the people by the earthly high priest, there was still a problem.

That was conscience. God gave us all a conscience. The tabernacle was described as a symbol of that which was to come.

The word symbol in Greek is *parabolae*, from which we get the English word parable. The Old Testament, in many respects, was a parable from which we can learn the great truths that were revealed in the New Testament.

[9 : 56] Dr. McBride used to say physical things happen to Israel that have spiritual applications to the church. But the Old Covenant was never able to clear the conscience of the people.

And consequently, they were never totally freed from the guilt that sin leaves. And that's true with a lot of believers.

Today, Christian people. In the Old Covenant, guilt was not removed. That cleansing was external only. They had to repeat it.

Sinful men still need to be reformed in their living. That was never provided under the Old Covenant. That very word, reformation, means to make straight.

That is a way of saying to make things right. And that's only accomplished in Christ. There's no other name under heaven by which that can happen.

[10 : 59] The Old Covenant was rich with meaning and with symbolism. But the Old Covenant would one day pass away.

And it did. And that meant that the Old Covenant ultimately did not satisfy God and really provided no satisfaction for man. But the Old Covenant served its purpose in that it pointed men to their need for a Savior.

That was the magnificent thing about it. The Old Covenant pictured the work of Christ. Now these guys, back a couple thousand years ago, they didn't grasp that. They didn't have the full light we have. We can see that now with the Spirit of God in us. It pictured the work of Christ. As we have looked at the Old Covenant with its sacrifices, with the Day of Atonement, as we read Leviticus chapter 16, we go there and we see Christ in every verse, in every word.

It's all about Him. Every bit of it is about Him. It was designed to show men something better was coming.

[12:28] And when we come to the life of the church of the Hebrews, it had come. It had come. Amazing. But the something better was coming and that would only occur in the New Covenant.

So we've seen many of the characteristics of the Old Covenant. Next, we're going to explore some of the characteristics of the New Covenant. Hebrews 9, 11-14.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, He entered once for all into the holy places.

He entered not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with ashes of the heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

[14:04] Again, we must be reminded that the Old Covenant was not wrong. It was merely incomplete. Completion would not come until the incarnation and death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Now, we've been studying throughout this the old symbols and types and realize that all these pointed to Jesus. Jesus. Dr. DeHaan used to say he's in every verse.

If you haven't found him there, you haven't understood that verse. He said, sometimes he's in the shadows. You've got to dig. Sometimes he's out front. The old things were external, physical, and temporary.

The new things were better. It's described as better things to come. They are internal, they are spiritual, and they are eternal. The old covenant could never fully accomplish its purpose.

The new covenant accomplished and continues to accomplish just what it set out to accomplish. The new sanctuary.

[15:18] sanctuary. That's one thing that was accomplished. There was a new sanctuary. But when Christ appeared as high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent, and the tabernacle, and the tabernacle, and the tabernacle, the old tabernacle, then through the greater and more perfect tent, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

When compared to the earthly, the Lord Jesus Christ, as heavenly high priest, had an infinitely greater sanctuary in which to minister.

The old tabernacle was designed by God intricately, hundreds of verses. He spent five verses on creating the stars.

He spent chapters and verses on the creation of the tabernacle, which was temporary. The material that went into the construction of the tabernacle was found in earthly created things.

Wasn't anything heavenly that came down to build the earthly tabernacle. It was an impressive structure, though temporary. The priests ministered inside the tabernacle, and I can just imagine it was undoubtedly beautiful.

[16:52] But at the end of the day, the structure was merely a tent made of animal skins. And one day, it would be destroyed.

People keep looking for the tabernacle in the Holy Land. I think those animal skins pretty well deteriorated by now. I would guess. Later, Solomon, of course, built the temple in Jerusalem. It was very ornate, very beautiful, more so really than the tabernacle. But it too was made of material found on the earth.

And the temple, like the tabernacle, was subject to deterioration. And like everything in creation, second law of thermodynamics, it too was subject to ultimate destruction.

And it was helped along by the Romans who sacked Jerusalem in 70 AD, burned the temple to the ground. The new heavenly sanctuary is not made by men or of earthly materials.

[18:06] God in heaven made all of the items found in the new sanctuary. God also made everything on earth.

But heaven is His dwelling place where He sits on a throne in the new sanctuary. We earlier learned that Christ, like Melchizedek, that's a name we should be familiar with, is a priest-king. As such, He both rules and ministers from the same place. In that regard, the sanctuary and the Lord's palace are the same.

Now we're talking heavenly. The passage we are dealing with are in regard to the sanctuary. Heaven is described as the perfect tabernacle not made with hands.

It is there that Christ ministers for us in heaven in the throne room of God at God's right hand. Now on earth, the priests entered the holy place in order to minister for the people, but they could not bring the people along with them.

[19:27] They'd have been struck dead. Those people would have died. People were not permitted to enter. Nadab and Abihu didn't figure that out. They entered. They were consumed.

And of course, the priests, and there were thousands of them, they could not go beyond the holy place and enter into the holy of holies.

That was off limits to all but the earthly high priest and then only on the day of atonement. But as our heavenly priest, Christ takes us boldly into the sanctuary, into the very holy of holies, into the presence of the Father Himself.

That's absolutely staggering. If you visit Israel, don't go up to the Orthodox and try to explain that to them. They'll reject that. From the spiritual standpoint, true believers already live with God in the sanctuary.

Although physically, we are temporarily located on earth for now. Christ has both gone before us and in a sense taken us with Him because we live in Him.

[20:58] believers dwell with Christ. Ephesians 2, verses 4-6, But God, being rich in mercy because of the great love with which He loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

This is what the Scriptures mean when we are told that our citizenship is in heaven. We live in a foreign country.

Earth. Just consider Earth as a country. We live in a foreign country. God gave us a name for living here.

He called us ambassadors. What does an ambassador for the United States do? He represents the president in foreign nations. What do we do as ambassadors?

[22:15] We represent our King, the Lord Jesus Christ. But our assignment is merely temporary. And one day, we will be physically with our Lord and with our High Priest.

And that can happen at any moment. It can happen for us individually through death. It can happen to us through the rapture of the church, which I liken to stepping over a stream and you're with the heavenly church.

You're there. MacArthur says, more has to happen when you're saved than when you die and go to be with the Lord. You die and you're with Him.

Under the New Covenant, we see new services. Verse 12. He entered once, this is Christ in heaven, He entered once for all, all who would believe, into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. Well, that's key. An eternal redemption. Do you ever think about Jesus in the throne room? And what is He specifically doing at any particular time?

[23:51] I think of things like that from time to time. I wake up in the night and wonder what the Lord is up to at that moment. From the scriptural standpoint, the Lord Jesus is engaged, I think, in three primary functions.

First, He's busy ministering with His own blood on the basis of His shed blood. It is no longer animal sacrifice that the Lord has to deal with.

It is His own blood shed upon the cross for the redemption of His people. Unlike the world's religions, the sacrificer was also the sacrifice.

That's why we're different from the world's religions. I've gone around and around with good friends of mine in the Muslim world over that point.

Second, He is dealing with a sacrifice that had to be made only once. Sometimes I hear people think Jesus is coming back as a baby in a manger and going to be crucified again.

[25 : 02] No, that's one time event. He's coming back on a horse of war to rescue people that have been abused by this culture called earth.

One sacrifice. Animal sacrifice continued for another thousand years and was never able to take away sins permanently.

They never took away sins. But the Lord's sacrifice was sufficient for all people for all time. Now we're going to be studying that in more detail in the next chapter.

Third, He is able to obtain eternal and not temporary redemption like the Jew had in the Old Covenant. He has cleansed His people of their sins past, present, and future.

It all happened in His one act of redeeming grace. What about a new significance? Verses 13 and 14.

[26 : 14] For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

The Old Covenant was weak and imperfect yet it served the purpose for which God designed it. How much better will Christ's New Covenant established with power and perfection serve its purpose?

The New has a better purpose but it also accomplishes its purpose in a better and perfect way. The Old Sacrifice represented a cleansing of sin that was essentially external.

It could not permanently take away sin. It had to be repeated daily year in and year out. It did however accomplish the purpose for which God designed it.

But the purpose of the new sacrifice was to actually cleanse inside. And the Lord said that's where sin is and the writers of the New Testament that's where sin starts in the heart and the mind.

[27 : 52] This is an internal cleansing and this is important because that's where sin originated. It was a superior purpose that was accomplished in a superior manner.

Now when Christ was on earth He was totally obedient totally submissive to the Father. In fact the cross was Christ offering Himself to the Father.

And that way we were delivered and our conscience was cleansed of dead works. And now we're able to serve the living God. We are freed from guilt something the Old Testament Jew never had. And neither do many in the church today because they don't understand the magnitude of Christ's finished work. In Christ we can say this truth let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10 22 which we'll get to in the fall. in the Old Covenant the outside was made clean at least temporarily probably until they walked out of the tabernacle.

[29 : 20] Christ cleanses from the inside and that's where the problem dwells. We must recognize this fact. The old man is not cleaned up.

Instead in place of the old man Christ recreates a new man. We are recreated people in Him.

That is what redemption is all about. We do not look for the blood of bulls and goats to help us. We look only to Christ because our salvation is complete in Him.

I'm reminded of the young man who came to the preacher and he asked him what must I do to be saved? The preacher said well it's too late.

The young man was horrified. He thought he'd missed salvation. The old preacher went on to explain that he was unable to do anything to be saved.

[30 : 28] Christ had already done that for him. So when you ask the old preacher what must I do to be saved? He said Christ has already done that. Then he explained all that.

The proof of that is that he believed which is itself a gift of God leading to salvation and eternal life. Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9 for by grace you have been saved through faith.

This is not of your own doing. It is the gift of God not a result of works so that no one may boast. Christ. Our salvation was accomplished by Christ.

Thus it was done perfectly. It was done without error. He is our permanent high priest and king. We sometimes hear talk about the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

I don't know if we really fully understand what that is, but I think anybody that says I've carefully considered Christ but I'm going to look for salvation some other direction.

[31 : 38] I'm going to go straight to God the Father and find my salvation. Bypass Jesus. That's probably blasphemy of the Holy Spirit who came to reveal Christ as our Savior and Redeemer.

Now next week represents our final lesson until we regroup in September.

Next week we'll be finishing our look at Hebrews chapter 9 and this fall pick it up in Hebrews chapter 10 but I want to close by whetting your appetite for the verses that we'll cover next Monday therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance since a death has recurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant for where a will is involved the death of the one who made it must be established for a will takes effect only at death since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood for when every commandment of the

Lord had been declared by Moses to all the people he took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people saying this is the blood of the covenant God commanded for you in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship indeed under the law almost everything is purified with blood and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rights but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices in these for Christ has entered not into holy places made with hands which are copies of the true things but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf nor was it to offer himself repeatedly as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own for then he would have to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world but as it is he has appeared once for all all who believe at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself and just as it is appointed for man to die once and after that comes judgment so Christ having been offered once to bear the sins of many will appear a second time not to deal with sin but to deal with those who are eagerly waiting for him

I guess the question is brothers are you eagerly waiting for Jesus