**Hebrews 9:1-14 A Better Sanctuary**

**October 19-20, 2016**

*God never asked anyone to give up anything without offering something far better in exchange. The chief obstacle in the way of the Hebrew faith was their failure to see that everything connected with the ceremonial law (covenant sacrifices, priesthood, and ritual) was preparatory and transient. So the writer pursues a clear explanation of the better character of the New Testament. The point was not to demean the old way of relating to God, but rather to show its shadowy incompleteness. To paraphrase vs 13 & 14, God is saying “If the old things were so good as mere symbols, how much better are the final realities that they symbolize. If the external, physical, and temporary covenant accomplished its purpose so well, how much better will the internal, spiritual, and eternal covenant accomplish its purpose?” In this continued contrast of the Old and New Covenants the author summarizes the characteristics of the old sanctuary and services, and then highlights the characteristics of the new sanctuary and services.*

*If the Old Covenant weak, and imperfect as it was, served its purpose how much better will Christ’s covenant power and perfect, serve its purpose? The new not only has a better purpose, but also accomplishes its purpose in a better way, a perfect way. The purpose of the old sacrifice was to symbolize, externally, the cleansing of sin. It accomplished this purpose. The purpose of the new sacrifice, however, was to actually cleanse internally (where sin really exists). It accomplished its purpose in a superior way. The former priests cleaned up the outside, and only symbolically, imperfectly, and temporary. But Christ cleanses from the inside, where the real problem is. He does more than cleanse the old man; He replaces it with a new man. He cleanses our conscience, but he also recreates our person. In Christ, we are not cleaned up old creatures but redeemed new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

*Tabernacle/Sanctuary: The Pentateuch records 5 different names for the tabernacle: (1) “sanctuary,” denoting a sacred place or set apart, i.e., holy, place; (2) “tent,” denoting a temporary or collapsible dwelling; (3) “tabernacle,” from “to dwell,” denoting the place of God’s presence (as well as other titles); (4) “tabernacle of congregation, or meeting”; and (5) “tabernacle of the testimony.” The tabernacle was to provide a place where God might dwell among his people. In the tabernacle was the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, which was covered with embroidered curtains. This was the sanctuary, the holiest place, where God dwelt. Hebrews said that Christ now dwells in a new sanctuary. Christ’s sanctuary or place of ministry under this new arrangement is not an earthly tabernacle but a Heavenly one. There he continues to minister on behalf of his people.*

*Blood Sacrifice: This is the first of many references to the blood of sacrifice, which was part of the Old Covenant system of atonement. This term is especially central to Hebrews 9:1- 10:18, where it identifies the deaths of Old Testament sacrifices and of Christ (see 9:12-14) as blood sacrifices. It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. Note, however, that the shedding of blood in and of itself is an insufficient sacrifice. Christ not only had to shed His blood, but also to die. Hebrews 10:10 indicates that He gave His body as the sacrificial offering. Without His death, His blood had no saving value.*

**Read Hebrews Chapter 9: 1-14**

Why does the writer take time to describe the tabernacle in v. 1-7?

What is necessary to understand from v.8; that “the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed” (NIV) (some translations wording may be different).

What is the “greater and more perfect tent” that Christ dwells in (v.11)?

Why is the blood of Christ so necessary and significant?

How was Christ’s sacrifice for sin different then all the other sacrifices for sin (v. 14)? What is different beteen the outward and inward cleansing?

(Read Leviticus 16: 1-34 for a better understanding of the Old Covenant system of sacrifice. From the context of the Levitical passage how would you define “atonement?”)

What does this passage say about God? About Jesus? About man? About sin?

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 – 21**

What kind of lasting change did Christ’s death on the cross make possible for you?

What does it mean to you in Christ you are a new creation?

What does this passage have to say to a Christian who struggles with a guilty conscience, and is therefore afraid to approach God?

In what ways can your life reflect a greater sense of thankfulness for the superior sacrifice of Christ?

See attached document below for more key words and ideas:



Definitions from "Hebrews" by John MacArthur

References: Hebrews by John MacArthur