

## **Bible Book of the Month**

The Old Covenant was established by blood, and so was the New Covenant. But the New Covenant was established on the basis of a better sacrifice, applied in a better place! The patterns (types) were purified by the bloods of animals, but the original sanctuary was purified by the blood of the Son of God. This was a far more costly sacrifice.

4) The new sanctuary's ministry represents fulfillment (9:24). The old sanctuary was but "type" and "shadow;" the new, however, is "reality" and "fulfillment." Christ represents us before God, and He always will!

5) The new sanctuary's ministry is final and complete (9:25-28). The sacrifices under the Old Covenant had to be repeated (v. 25) and not with the New. The "end of the world" phrase in v.26 is reference to the end of the Jewish age, or Jewish dispensation. The "last days" of Judaism were the days of Christ's ministry and death, for He fulfilled it and ushered in the "new" age (or a new world).

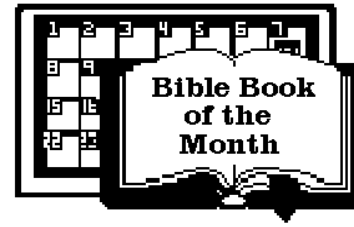
Inasmuch as man dies "once" it was only necessary for Christ to be offered "once" (v.27-28).

It is interesting to notice that the word "appear" is used three times in 9:24-28. These three uses give us a summary of the Lord's work. (1) He has appeared to put away sin by dying on the cross (v.26). (2) He is appearing now in heaven for us (v.24). (3) One day He shall appear to take Christians home (v.28).

### **SUMMARY**

Christians should not want to return to some "earthly" system that is incapable of obtaining real forgiveness, for our sanctuary is in heaven. Our Father and Savior are in heaven, and our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Our treasures are all laid up there (Matthew 6:19ff).

No matter what happens on earth, we can be confident, settled and grounded, because our attention is toward heaven.



# **Hebrews**

## **Lesson #3**

## *The "Better" Sanctuary*

*Text: Hebrews 9:1-28*

### **Introduction**

Hebrews is the "BETTER" book of the New Testament. The writer is demonstrating to Jewish Christians who were in danger of turning back to Judaism the superiority of the New Covenant over that given through Moses at Mt. Sinai.

It is demonstrated how Christ is superior to the prophets, to the angels, to Moses and Aaron; and how the New Covenant is so much *better* than the Old Covenant. Chapter 9 of Hebrews continues this theme. In this chapter the writer presents a detailed contrast between the Old Covenant sanctuary (the tabernacle) and the New Covenant heavenly sanctuary where Jesus Christ now ministers as High Priest.

We realize that God is not worshipped today in temples made with hands (Acts 7:46-50). There is no one special place on earth where God exclusively dwells (John 4:19-24). We may call a church building a "house of God" but we know that God does not live there exclusively. The building is dedicated to God and His service, but it is not His dwelling place.

### **I. The Inferior Old Covenant Sanctuary 9:1-10**

We are reminded in the first part of the chapter that the regulations and practices of the tabernacle were ordained of God. That tabernacle worship was not set aside because it lack Divine-approval; but because it was in anticipation of and pictured the "real" thing which has come to fulfillment in Christ.

## Sanctuary

1) The first was an earthly sanctuary (9:1). This meant it was made by man (v.11) and pitched by man (8:2). Being an earthly building it had several weaknesses. For one thing, it would need a certain amount of repair. Also it was limited geographically, while at one place, it could not be at another. When moved, it had to be dismantled and the various parts carried from place to place. Men had to travel to come to it. Too, it belonged to the nation of Israel and not the whole world.

2) It was a type of something greater (9:2-5). Each of the various parts and furnishings carried a spiritual meaning. They were "*patterns of things in the heavens*" (v.23). The items and practices of the Old Covenant were mere "shadows" or sketches of the "real" things.

3) The first tabernacle was inaccessible to the people (9:6-7). We shouldn't get the idea that the Jews assembled in the tabernacle to worship. They didn't. Only priests from the tribe of Levi could enter the temple. They entered and stood before the veil of the Ark and offered incense and prayers for the people who waited outside. And only the High Priest entered into the Holy of Hollies and only on the Day of Atonement. When he did he had to make sacrifices for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people.

Under the new Covenant every Christian is priest before God (1 Peter 2:5) and can offer his own prayers and gifts before God. The sacrifice we bring is the living sacrifice of our bodies (Rom. 12:1).

4) The tabernacle was temporary (9:8). When Jesus died on the cross the veil in the sanctuary was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:50-51) and the way for man was opened into the presence of God.

5) The tabernacle's ministry was external (9:9-10). It could not really deal with the sin problem inasmuch as it had no sacrifice that could really bring about the forgiveness of sins. It dealt instead with ceremonial purity and "*carnal ordinances*" and didn't reach to the soul of man.

## 2. The Superior Heavenly Sanctuary 9:11-28.

The deficiencies that are pointed out as existing with the Old Covenant are now contrasted by the superiorities of the New Covenant. In every way the present sanctuary is superior:

1) It is heavenly (9:11). While the Old Covenant tabernacle was made by the hands of men (Exodus 35) the New Covenant sanctuary was not made with hands, and was "*not of this building,*" e.i. "*not of this creation*" (ASV). Since the new sanctuary is not material, it is free from the ravages of time.

2) It's ministry is capable of dealing with sin (9:12-15). We here have a series of contrasts that show again the superiority of the heavenly ministry of Christ.

a. Animal sacrifices vs Christ's sacrifice -- v.12 (The writer further discusses this in ch. 10, but here he lays the foundation for the later discussion.) How can the blood of *animals* ever solve the problem of *human* sins? Jesus became a "man" that he might die for the sins of "man."

b. Sacrifices for atonement had to be made repeatedly under the Old Covenant, but Christ entered "**once**" and made "*eternal*" redemption for us (v.12).

c. The blood of animals might deal with ceremonial defilement (v.13) but only the blood of Christ can deal with an inner cleaning of sin (v.14).

d. There was no final and complete redemption under the Old Covenant. Those transgressions were **covered** by the blood of many sacrifices, but not **cleansed** until the sacrifice of Christ on the cross (Romans 3:24-26).

3) The ministry of the heavenly sanctuary is based on a costly sacrifice (9:16-23).

The word "covenant" means "an agreement" and the word also carries the idea of a "last will and testament." If a man writes a will, it doesn't come into force until after he is dead. It was necessary that Christ die so that the terms of the new Covenant might be enforced. "*This cup is the new testament [covenant, will] in my blood, which is shed for you*" (Luke 22:20).

Even the Old Covenant was established on the basis of blood. Hebrews 9:19-21 is based on Exodus 24:3-8 and the account of the ratifying of the Old Covenant by Moses and the people of Israel.