



UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 10 – HEBREWS 9:1-10:18 – OCTOBER 14-20

LEADER NOTES

While there is much to unpack, be mindful that the flow and context of this passage are built upon the fact that Jesus is a better priest. Simply put, Christ's priesthood is better. His priesthood is better because He is the Great High Priest, He comes from a better priestly order, and He offers a better covenant. Chapters 9 and 10 explain that the priesthood of Jesus is also better because He offers a better sacrifice in a better sanctuary.

Hopefully, the original audience received this truth instead of returning to a man-made temple to offer insufficient sacrifices. Many people today face a similar temptation. While we don't offer animal sacrifices, some people still believe having a relationship with God hinges on what we do. In other words, some people believe they must earn their way into a relationship with God. This passage reminds us that it's not about what we do, it's all about what Jesus has done.

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COMMUNITY

OPEN THE GROUP BY CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER AND ALLOWING A MOMENT FOR EVERYONE TO HAVE A PLACE TO BELONG.

START THE GROUP BY TAKING PRAYER REQUESTS, FINDING OUT ABOUT PEOPLE'S WEEK, AND PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER.

OPENING QUESTIONS:

IF YOU GREW UP IN CHURCH, TRY TO RECALL YOUR EARLIEST MEMORIES OF THE CHURCH YOU GREW UP IN. WHAT DID THE FOYER (SOME CALL IT A "VESTIBULE") LOOK LIKE? WHAT COLORS WERE THE CARPET, PEWS, AND HYMNALS? THIS PASSAGE HIGHLIGHTS SOME ASPECTS OF THE SETUP OF THE TABERNACLE/SANCTUARY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. WITHOUT LOOKING, DESCRIBE WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT THE TABERNACLE/SANCTUARY. HOW DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD'VE FELT GOING INTO THE TABERNACLE OR TEMPLE TO OFFER ANIMAL SACRIFICES TO ATONE FOR YOUR SINS?

SCRIPTURE

TAKE THIS TIME TO STUDY THE BIBLE TOGETHER. REMEMBER, THE GOAL IS NOT JUST TO CONVEY INFORMATION, BUT TO HELP PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP LEARN TO READ THE BIBLE FOR THEMSELVES.

THE POINT

JESUS IS THE PERFECT SACRIFICE

Hebrews 9:1-10:18

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. 2 For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place. 3 Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place, 4 having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. 5 Above it were the

cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

6 These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties, 7 but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people. 8 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 9 (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, 10 but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

11 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) 12 he entered once for all 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. 13 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, 14 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.

15 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 occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. 16 For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. 17 For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. 18 Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. 19 For when every commandment of the law 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, 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." 21 And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. 22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 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. 25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the

world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? 3 But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;

6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

8 When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), 9 then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. 10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, declares the Lord:

I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds,”

17 then he adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

18 Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 9:1-10:18.

STUDY NOTES

WEEK 10 NOTES : Hebrews 9:1-10:18

One commentator has said, “The book of Hebrews was written by a Hebrew to other Hebrews telling the Hebrews to stop acting like Hebrews.” This statement is clever and fitting for the passage we’re discussing this week. Dealing with despair and discouragement, many of these converted Christians are considering a return to the old covenant that’s been made obsolete by Jesus. The writer of Hebrews is zooming in a little further into the old sacrifices and how Jesus is better than the sacrificial system. Essentially, he’s calling the audience to forget about running back to the Temple to offer sacrifices for themselves, because the Great High Priest offered Himself as the sufficient sacrifice for our sins.

Because the audience is considering leaving the faith, the writer of Hebrews is going to remind them that in Jesus, there’s a better sanctuary, sacrifice, and sanctification. Let’s lean into what this means for both the original audience and what it means for us today.

A Better Sanctuary

The first few verses in Hebrews 9 describe the “regulations for worship and the earthly place of holiness.” Inside the sanctuary, God commanded His people to keep certain things inside this place of worship. These things include a lampstand, bread of the Presence, manna, Aaron’s budded staff, and the ten commandment tablets. These artifacts were kept for the Israelites to remember what God had done in the past. What’s important to note is Jesus is responsible for all of the things inside the sanctuary, and these things all point to Him.

But what makes the sanctuary of Jesus better? First, His sanctuary isn’t made by human hands but is in heaven. His sanctuary is eternal. Another reason His sanctuary is better is believers have access to the presence of God. Only the high priest in Israel could enter into the Holy of Holies, but because Jesus passed

Hebrews 6 also reminded us Jesus is our forerunner. This means that where He has gone, we will one day be able to go, too.

A Better Sacrifice

Not only does the writer of Hebrews teach us Jesus' sanctuary was better, but he also claims Jesus' sacrifice was better. Remember, the high priests in the Old Testament would bring two goats into the sanctuary, and one of those goats would act as the "scapegoat." The priest would sacrifice one of the goats, and sprinkle its blood on the mercy seat, thus atoning for the sins of Israel. The second goat, however, symbolizes the sins of Israel leaving the camp. The Great High Priest is a better mediator. Instead of shedding the blood of goats and bulls, Jesus shed the blood of the Lamb of God. His blood paid the sin debt in full. This means our sins are forgotten, paid for, and as it says in Hebrews 10:17, our sins are remembered no more.

Jesus understands better than anyone "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." He also understood the blood of animals would never be sufficient to completely cleanse us of our sins. Knowing this, and knowing because of sin man is separated from God, Jesus gave His life so we could receive forgiveness and grace. How could we ever run back to a system that is insufficient to save? Run to the One who gave His life for you.

A Better Sanctification

He's a better sacrifice because He completely atones for our sins, but also because His blood still sanctifies. Verse 10 tells us through His blood we're sanctified once and for all. Verse 14 says we're being sanctified each day. These two references of sanctification speak of, as one commentator says, positional sanctification and progressive sanctification. The blood of Jesus gives us a position that's now right with God. The blood of Jesus also continues to make us more devoted to God, and Christlike. The blood of bulls and goats cannot do that in the hearts of people.

For more resources, click [HERE](#).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- *Why do you think the original audience would want to return to the old covenant's sacrificial system?*
- *What does "sanctified" mean in Hebrews 10:10?*
- *How does the writer of Hebrews describe the amount of sacrifices the priests had to make? How does this compare to how Jesus' sacrifice is described?*
- *How does the new covenant offer a better hope? How does this impact your relationship with God right now?*
- *What passage of Scripture does the writer of Hebrews quote in Hebrews 10:15-17? Why do you think he repeats this quotation?*
- *How does Jesus' sufficient sacrifice help you when you deal with fear or doubt?*

COMMISSION

AS YOU WRAP UP YOUR GROUP, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WE GO INTO THE WORLD ON MISSION FOR JESUS. USE THIS TIME TO FOCUS EVERYONE TO LIVE ON MISSION AS YOU LEAVE.

THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING. BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE GROUP THIS WEEK, PRAY FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED TO EXPERIENCE THE SAVING POWER OF JESUS' BLOOD. WHO CAN YOU SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH THIS WEEK?

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