

Riverview Baptist Church
 Sunday School Teaching Plan
 April 13, 2013
 Hebrews 9:1-14
 “From Old to New”

Memory Verse

“He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.” Heb 9:12, NIV

The Big Idea:

Sermon Topic: *Approach the Throne: Part 5 – Jesus Makes Us Spiritual Worshipers (Hebrews 8 – 10)*

Sunday School Scripture: Hebrews 9:1-14

Sunday School Title: “From Old to New”

ESS: The New Covenant established by the blood of Jesus makes us spiritual worshipers.

REVIEW: Last week, we talked about Hebrews 6:7-8 and learned how God blesses us so that we may bear spiritual fruit. In this passage, the author compares believers to two different types of land. What do you remember about these two different types of land? What was the key to bearing spiritual fruit? (*staying rooted in God’s Word*)

This week, we’ll discuss how Jesus initiated a New Covenant that revolutionized the way we worship God. Have you ever gotten a new gadget that had many new, cool features? Then, what happened when you upgraded and got an even newer, cooler gadget? Today, we’ll see how the New Covenant established by the blood of Jesus was an “upgrade” from the Old Covenant.

INTRO:

As we’ve already learned in our study of Hebrews, there were many limitations and inadequacies in the Old Testament system established by the law. But we know these gaps and shortfalls pointed the way to a new covenant that would be established, fulfilled, and mediated by the Son of God himself.

READ Hebrews 8:8-12

The first covenant focused on obedience to the law and fulfillment of prescribed rituals and sacrifices. But God promised a new covenant was coming! In Hebrews 8:8-12, we see the new covenant described. Instead of focusing on laws and rituals, the new covenant focuses on an individual, intimate relationship with Jesus where everyone can have forgiveness and know God personally. Before we look more at this new covenant, let’s review the Old Covenant system.

The Old Covenant: Hebrews 9:1-10	The New Covenant: Hebrews 9:11-14
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Earthly, man-made sanctuary (v. 1) 2. Priests went before God on people’s behalf (v.6) 3. Blood sacrifice of animals required (v.7) 4. Sacrifices only achieved temporary forgiveness (v.9-10) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater, more perfect Heavenly sanctuary (v.11) 2. The Son of God enters God’s throne room on our behalf (v. 12) 3. Jesus’ own blood offered as sacrifice (v.12) 4. Jesus’ sacrifice achieves absolute & eternal forgiveness (v. 12)

THE OLD COVENANT

READ Hebrews 9:1-10

As a review, let’s look at the limitations of the Old Covenant. (*These match the left column in the chart above.*)

1. **Earthly, Man-made Sanctuary** (Heb 9:1)
 The Old Covenant focused on a physical location for worship – the tabernacle. All sacrifices and worship took place here and only here.
2. **Priests went before God on people’s behalf** (Heb. 9:6)

Priests were the ones who went before God on the people's behalf. If you wanted forgiveness under the Old Covenant, you must rely on a priest to go before God for you.

3. **Blood sacrifices required** (Heb 9:7)
According to the old system, the blood of animal sacrifices was a necessary part of seeking forgiveness. An animal's life was offered in the place of the man's life. This demonstrated the seriousness of sin and the cost of forgiveness.
4. **Sacrifices only achieved temporary forgiveness** (Heb 9:9-10)
Hebrews 9:9 tells us that these animal sacrifices were only temporary, had to be offered repeatedly, and could not clear the conscience of the worshiper. They were only outward, physical rituals.

In contrast, let's look at the New Covenant established through the sacrificial blood of Jesus.

THE NEW COVENANT

READ Hebrews 9:11-14

(These match the right column in the chart above.)

1. **Greater, more perfect Heavenly Sanctuary** (Heb 9:11)
The Old Covenant sanctuary or tabernacle was just an image of the Heavenly throne room of God. In the New Covenant, Jesus does not stand in a temporary, earthly, man-made sanctuary. Instead, he dwells in the real throne room of God in Heaven – in the sanctuary made by God, not by human hands. This Heavenly sanctuary is not in one physical location like the earthly tabernacle was. Instead, this Heavenly tabernacle is accessible to anyone at all times through faith in Jesus.
2. **The Son of God enters God's throne room on our behalf** (Heb. 9:12)
In the Old Testament, a priest went before God on behalf of the people. In the New Covenant, Jesus sits in the throne room of God constantly and eternally, giving us constant and direct contact with God the father. We don't need a priest to be our mediator. Jesus, the Son of God himself, sits at the right hand of God, interceding for us and providing an intimate relationship with the Father.
3. **Jesus' own blood offered as a sacrifice** (Heb 9:12)
Unlike the Old Covenant which required repeated animal sacrifices, the New Covenant is established through the once and for all sacrifice of Jesus' perfect blood. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, no other sacrifices are necessary. His blood is sufficient for eternity.
4. **Jesus' sacrifice achieves absolute and eternal forgiveness** (Heb 9:12 & 14)
Whereas the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant could not clear the conscience of the worshiper, the once and for all sacrifice of Jesus achieves eternal redemption and forgiveness for believers. Hebrews 9:14 tells us that Jesus' sacrifice can cleanse our consciences from the guilt and stain of sin, enabling us to have a relationship with and serve God confidently.

CONTRASTING THE 2 COVENANTS:

From our study of Hebrews 9 and the chart contrasting the Old and New Covenants, we can see a shift in focus.

1. **The emphasis moves from OUTWARD ACTION to INNER BEING.**
The Old Covenant focused on one's outward actions - obeying the laws and following the rituals like animal sacrifice, feasts, and circumcision. The New Covenant focuses on the heart – having faith in Jesus and loving him with all your heart. In addition, the Old Covenant was written on stone and practiced in a physical place – the tabernacle. The New Covenant is written on the hearts of men, and God can be worshiped at any time or place.
2. **The focus moves from RITUAL to PERSON.**
Instead of focusing on physical, outward rituals and practices, the New Covenant focuses on the person of Jesus Christ. Instead of being temporary, He is eternal.
3. **The access to God moves from INDIRECT to DIRECT.**

The Old Covenant required a priest to be the mediator between God and men, only giving people indirect access to God. In contrast, the New Covenant provides Jesus as our mediator between God and men. This enables all men to approach the throne of God directly and confidently without a human priest serving as a go-between.

SO WHAT?

All of this study and contrast of the two covenants brings us to one major point:

WE ARE NOW SPIRITUAL WORSHIPERS.

Our worship is not limited to a specific location, it doesn't require certain rituals, and it doesn't need a priest. Instead, we worship God in spirit, for His word is written in our hearts, His spirit dwells within us, and we are free to worship Him with all of our being whenever and wherever.

CONCLUSION: The New Covenant established by the blood of Jesus makes us spiritual worshipers.

APPLY

This week, consider praying or worshiping in a place and time that is out-of-the-norm for you. Celebrate your freedom by worshiping God in spirit in the course of your daily routine.

STUDY NOTES:

(These are for your personal study. This is NOT the lesson.)

Study Guide by David Guzik, 2001. Available online: www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david

HEBREWS 9:1-14

The earthly sanctuary: The tabernacle ordained by the Old Covenant was planned by God, but planned for an **earthly** service.

For a tabernacle was prepared: The **tabernacle** was a tent 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high, divided into two rooms. The larger room (**the first part**) was a 15 foot by 30 foot "holy place." **Behind the second veil** was the smaller room was a 15 foot by 15 foot, called **the Holiest of All**.

The **lampstand** with a middle stem and six branches stood in **the first part** and was of an unspecified size, made of pure gold; it provided the only *light* for the tabernacle (Exodus 25:31-40).

The **table** sat in **the first part** and was made of acacia wood covered with gold, 3 feet long, 1½ feet wide, and 2 feet 3 inches high. It held twelve loaves of **showbread**, each representing God's fellowship with the twelve tribes of Israel (Exodus 25:23-30).

The **sanctuary** refers to **the first part**, known as the "holy place." A **veil** (a thick curtain) separated **the first part** from the **Holiest of All**, also known as the "holy of holies" (Exodus 26:31-33).

The **golden altar of incense** was made of acacia wood covered with gold, 1½ feet square, and 3 feet high. It stood at the veil before the "holy of holies," and was used to burn incense (Exodus 30:1-8).

The **ark of the covenant** stood inside the **Holiest of All**, and was a chest made of acacia wood covered with gold, 3¾ feet long, 2¼ feet wide, and 2¼ feet high, with rings for polls along it's side by which it would be carried (Exodus 25:10-22).

Inside the ark was **the golden pot that had the manna** (Exodus 16:33), **Aaron's rod that budded** (Numbers 17:6-11), and **the tablets of the covenant** (Exodus 25:16). The manna reminded Israel of God's provision and their ungratefulness. Aaron's rod reminded them of their rebellion against God's authority. The tablets of the covenant reminded them of their failure to keep the Ten Commandments and rest of the law.

The **mercy seat** was the ornate "lid" for the ark of the covenant, made with the designs of cherubim upon it; the blood of sacrifice was sprinkled upon it for the forgiveness of Israel's sin on the Day of Atonement (Exodus 25:17-22). 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, His sight of the sin of Israel was covered by the blood of sacrifice.

The priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services: The **priests**, as appointed, went daily into the "holy place" to perform priestly functions such as tending the lampstand and replacing the showbread.

But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year: The "holy of holies" was entered only **once a year** by the high priest **alone**, on the Day of Atonement.

The high priest went alone once a year, not without blood: His entrance into the **second part** was not for fellowship, but only for atonement, first for his own sin, then for the sins of his people. Access into the *Holiest of All* was thus severely restricted, and even when someone could enter, it wasn't for real fellowship with God. The ancient Jewish Rabbis wrote of how the high priest would not prolong his prayer in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, because it might make the people think he had been killed. When he came out, he threw a party for all his friends, because he had emerged safely from the presence of God.

The people's sins committed in ignorance: Sins of **ignorance** were the specific aim of the Day of Atonement. It was assumed that *known* sin would be taken care of through the regular sin offerings and the daily sacrifices. In this respect, Jesus' work is far greater than the work done on the Day of Atonement. Jesus' work on the cross is sufficient to atone for both the sins we do in ignorance and sins that we know.

The way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing: The old had to pass away before God's new way could be revealed.

It was symbolic for the present time: **Symbolic** is the ancient Greek word *parabole*. The tabernacle itself and all that the Old Covenant represented were suggestive of deeper truths, *parables* of the New Covenant.

Cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience: The priestly service performed now (current at the writer's time) does not make even the priests offering those sacrifices perfect and clean in **regard to the conscience**. If the cleansing is incomplete for the priest, how much more for the person the priest worked on behalf of!

Fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation: The weakness of the priestly service under the Old Covenant was its inability to address the need for inner transformation in man; therefore it was only **imposed until the time of reformation**.

The greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands: Jesus, as our High Priest, ministers in a superior sanctuary - the very throne room of God, a place greater than anything human **hands** could make.

The blood of goats and calves was sufficient for a temporary covering of sin; but only a perfect sacrifice could obtain **eternal redemption**. Jesus' sacrifice was superior in that it was *perfect, voluntary, rational, and motivated by love*.

For if the blood of bulls and goats ... sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ: If these imperfect sacrifices were received as sufficient by Israel, how much more should they regard the ultimate sufficiency of the perfect sacrifice? The **ashes of a heifer** refer to the remains of a burnt offering that was preserved, and sprinkled in the laver of washing to provide water suitable for ceremonial cleansing (Numbers 19:1-10). This was a shadow, fulfilled and done away with when Jesus offered a perfect cleansing; there is no value in "holy water" used by the Roman Catholic Church.

How much more shall the blood of Christ ... cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? The sacrifice of Jesus is sufficient to even restore our damaged **conscience**. Our **conscience** is a wonderful tool from God. But it isn't perfect. Our conscience can be *seared* (1 Timothy 4:2). Our conscience can be *defiled* (Titus 1:15). Our conscience can be *evil* (Hebrews 10:22).

Cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God: **Dead works** probably has the thought of sin in general, in the sense of "works that bring death." But it must also speak to the vain continuation of Old Covenant sacrifice, which is certainly a **dead work** - and the very type of thing these discouraged Jewish Christians were tempted to go back to.