

How Much More:
The Superiority of Christ's Blood
(Hebrews 9:1-15)
(Lesson #16)

To download lesson guides or other study resources visit our webpage: http://truth-seekers.net

Last week we ended with the author writing:

> *13 In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. (Heb 8:13, ESV)*

How do we explain this? In 33 AD, the Lamb of God was slain for the sins of the world. The old system of approach and acceptance became obsolete and was destined for removal—though not instantly. God graciously provided a transition period, giving the Israelites time to see, accept, understand, and believe.

Think of it like a relay race. For a brief time, two runners share the lane, both running as the baton is handed from the old runner to the new one.

The book of Hebrews was written right as the second runner was securing their grip on the baton, bringing the old runner's leg of the race to a close. Having just absorbed the shocking news that the Old Covenant had grown old and was ready to vanish, we transition into Chapter 9. Although a chapter break appears on the page, the author's train of thought continues to unfold seamlessly.

9:1 Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness.

The author of Hebrews now takes this opportunity to discuss the first covenant—the Mosaic, old covenant—which, according to Hebrews 8:13, was already obsolete and growing old, ready to vanish away. To set up his grand contrast with the superior ministry of Christ, he makes two foundational observations:

1) The first covenant had regulations for worship.

This is undeniably true. There were rules upon rules governing how the worshipper was to approach God, and sacrifices upon sacrifices outlining the protocol for drawing near.

These regulations extended to every detail: the precise arrangement of the furnishings, the daily trimming of the lampstand, the weekly replacement of the showbread, and the exacting setup of the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat, and rule upon rule related to sacrifices and offerings.

There were countless rituals, washings, and purification rites—a heavy burden of external regulations. As the author develops his argument, his Jewish-Christian audience should hear this underlying truth: the Old Covenant was defined by an intricate, external system of rules, rites, and recurring sacrifices that **could never** atone for sins and could **never** truly clear the conscience.

2) The first covenant had an earthly sanctuary, a place of holiness.

The author now comes to his second foundational observation. The first covenant had an "earthly sanctuary." While this is a statement of historical fact, it highlights a profound limitation of the old system, it had a **(*hagion kosmikon*) an - earthly holy place).** Literally translated as a "worldly sanctuary."

Yahweh dwells in the unapproachable light of heaven, yet this sanctuary was merely earthly. The shadow-system operated down here on earth, bound by time, space, and physical decay, whereas the true reality—Yahweh Himself—resides in the heavenly realms.

The earthly nature of the sanctuary underscores the distance between a holy God and sinful humanity. Access was strictly regulated, rationed, and localized behind thick curtains.

Jewish Temple Theology: First-century Second Temple Judaism placed immense national pride in the physical Temple. To suggest that an earthly, handmade building was merely a temporary "shadow" destined to vanish was a radically paradigm-shifting theological argument—especially poignant given that the earthly Temple was standing when this letter was penned.

Vs 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.

The author of Hebrews reminds his audience that the earthly tent was deliberately divided into two sections. He begins with the **"first section",** the outer room, which he notes at the end of the verse is called the Holy Place.

This was the zone where the daily priestly ministry took place. However, it is vital to remember a sobering limitation: only the priests were permitted inside this section to perform their duties. You and I would have been barred from entering to worship God directly; the strict regulations of the Mosaic Covenant forbade it.

In describing this first section, the author highlights two key pieces of furniture placed by divine direction: the lampstand and the table with the bread of the Presence.

1. The Lampstand (Menorah)

The lampstand, better known by its Hebrew name, ***menorah* (מנורה)**, has its construction outlined in **Exodus 25:31–40** and **37:17–24.** It was located to the left (south) as one entered the Holy Place.

The menorah was crafted entirely of hammered work. This meant every single component—its base, central stem, cups, calyxes, and flower ornaments—was shaped by hand from a single, solid piece of pure gold. Nothing was cast separately and attached later; the entire structure was a unified, masterwork of craftsmanship.

God intentionally utilized rich botanical language, describing cups shaped like almond blossoms alongside calyxes (the protective leafy structures beneath a flower) and ornate blooms. The design incorporated:

- A solid base
- A main central stem
- Six branching arms
- Cups shaped like blossoms
- Flowers and calyxes

In short, the lampstand was designed to look like a seven branched, golden, radiant tree. This was no accident. It served as a stylized Tree of Life, providing perpetual light in the Holy Place.

The lamps were tended and trimmed every morning and evening.

2. The Table and the Bread of the Presence

Next, the author points us to the table and the bread of the Presence, commonly known as the table of showbread, whose construction is detailed in **Exodus 25:23–30.** This was located on the right side (north) as on entered the Holy Place.

Moses was instructed to build this table for the Holy Place using acacia wood (***shittah***), the same durable, rot-resistant wood utilized for furniture throughout the Tabernacle. God provided precise, compact dimensions:

- **Length:** 2 cubits (roughly 3 feet)
- **Width:** 1 cubit (roughly 1.5 feet)
- **Height:** 1.5 cubits (roughly 2 feet 3 inches)

Though modest in size, the table carried profound significance. It held the Bread of the Presence—twelve loaves symbolizing unbroken covenant fellowship between Yahweh and the twelve tribes of Israel. As Leviticus 24:5–9 instructs:

> *"You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the LORD. And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD. Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the LORD's food offerings, a perpetual due." (Leviticus 24:5–9 ESV)*

The table itself was overlaid with pure gold, reminding all who saw it that it belonged in the immediate presence of the King.

As a striking historical anchor, we have a vivid visual representation of both the menorah and the table of showbread carved into the **Arch of Titus** in Rome. Built in A.D. 81 by the Emperor Domitian to commemorate the military victories of his brother Titus—specifically the brutal destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in A.D. 70—the relief clearly depicts Roman soldiers carrying away the golden spoils of the Temple, providing an undeniable archaeological snapshot of these very sacred artifacts.

Reminder: Light and Sustenance: The menorah (light/truth/guidance) and the bread (sustenance/fellowship/communion) prefigure Christ, who declared Himself to be the "Light of the World" and the "Bread of Life" (John 8:12, 6:35).

APPLICATION: In the Old Testament economy, ordinary believers looked on from afar, knowing that only a select group of priests could enter the Holy Place to fellowship with God, tend the light, and present the bread. Today, however, because of the finished work of Jesus Christ, the New Testament declares that believers are part of a ***"royal priesthood"*** (1 Peter 2:9).

Vs 3 Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place,

Having discussed the ***"first section"*** (the Holy Place), the author now moves to outline what lay ***"behind the second curtain."***

This heavy curtain or veil is described in detail in **Exodus 26:31–37.** Though the biblical text of Hebrews does not elaborate on the texture and appearance of this curtain, several historical and traditional elements would have been common knowledge to the ancient Hebrew audience:

In Hebrew, it was called the ***Parokhet***, a word derived from a root meaning **"to shut off"** or **"to separate."** Unlike a standard door that opens easily, this was a massive, thickly woven barrier that served as an absolute **"Keep Out"** sign for everyone except the High Priest—and even he was permitted to enter only once a year on the solemn Day of Atonement.

Just like the inner ceiling of the sanctuary, this veil featured skillfully worked cherubim—the divine "guardians of the throne." To look at the veil was to be visually reminded that the way into the immediate presence of God was strictly barred by angelic sentinels (**Cherubim**) who took their posts following the Fall of man in Eden.

Behind this formidable curtain lay the ***"second section,"*** known as the **Most Holy Place**, or the **Holy of Holies** (***Hagia Hagion***).

APPLICATION: In the ancient Tabernacle, the second curtain was a terrifying boundary. It stood as a permanent, physical reminder that humanity was locked out of God's presence, separated by sin, and permitted to draw near only through a heavily mediated, yearly ritual.

Today, because of the blood of Christ you and I have access to the very presence of God anytime we desire.

Vs 4-5 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.

The author now transitions our focus inside the **"second section",** the Holy of Holies. He lists two major items: the **golden altar of incense** and the **ark of the covenant.**

1. The Golden Altar of Incense

The first item immediately catches our attention because Exodus **30:1–10** and **40:24–27** explicitly place the golden altar of incense in the outer room (the Holy Place) just outside the veil, where the priests burned incense every morning and evening.

So why does the author of Hebrews place it in the Holy of Holies?

Scholars have offered several explanations, but the best approach—championed by commentators like Gareth Cockerill—looks to its functional and liturgical role rather than its strict architectural blueprint.

While the altar physically sat just outside the veil, its sole purpose was to serve the Holy of Holies. The fragrant smoke drifted directly through the veil into the very presence of God.

Furthermore, on the solemn **Day of Atonement** (Yom Kippur), the blood of the sin offering was explicitly smeared on the horns of the incense altar (Exodus 30:10, Leviticus 16:18), and the High Priest took coals of fire from it to carry past the veil. Thus, I believe, the author associates the altar with the inner sanctuary because of its vital operational and ritual function on the Day of Atonement ceremonies.

Some have proposed a scribal error here, but I do not believe so, a writer so deeply schooled in the Old Testament is linking the altar to the operational space it functionally served.

I believe the best solution is the one that Cockerill espouses: *"The author draws on those OT passages cited above that connect this altar with the Most Holy Place. In making this connection he joins his contemporaries, also cited above, who made a like association. Note the difference between the way he locates furniture "in" the Holy Place but speaks of the Most Holy Place as "having" the Incense Altar and the Ark of the Covenant. He does not "relocate" this altar within the inner sanctuary but closely associates it with the Most Holy Place in accord with its function."*

Reminder: Prayer: The golden altar of incense reminds us of prayer. Both our prayers rising up like incense to the Father, and our Lord's prayers, the One who ever lives to make intercession for us.

2. The Ark of the Covenant

Next, the author directs our attention to the ark of the covenant, which was completely overlaid with pure gold inside and out.

The design of the ark is detailed in **Exodus 25:10–22**. It was constructed of acacia wood—a dense, rot-resistant hardwood native to the Sinai region, making it ideal for a portable wilderness sanctuary. Its dimensions were roughly 3.75 feet long, 2.25 feet wide, and 2.25 feet high.

It was about the size of a large wooden chest or small trunk—modest in physical size, yet of immense theological weight because it represented the footstool of God's throne. A decorative border or "crown" of gold was fashioned around its perimeter.

3. Contents of the Ark

The author lists **three items** deposited inside the ark:

1. **The golden urn holding the manna:** A memorial of God's miraculous provision during the wilderness wanderings, as commanded in **Exodus 16:32–33.**
2. **Aaron's staff that budded:** A miraculous token confirming the divine legitimacy of the Levitical priesthood against the rebellion of Korah, recorded in **Numbers 17.**
3. **The tablets of the covenant:** The stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments, representing the moral standard of God's covenant with Israel (**Exodus 25:21**). Just in passing, I would remind us that this was the second set, the first set Moses broke at the foot of Mt. Sinai (Exodus 32:19).

CONSIDER: In the ark were relics of rebellion and provision: The manna (testifying to Israel's grumbling), Aaron's staff (testifying to Israel's rebellion over leadership), and the stone tablets (testifying to Israel's breaking of the Law). Together, these formed a sobering museum of human failure placed directly beneath the mercy seat—reminding Israel that they survived only because judgment was covered by blood. Here we have a beautiful picture of the broken law covered by blood.

4. The Mercy Seat and the Cherubim

Above the ark sat the mercy seat, overshadowed by the ***"cherubim of glory."*** In Hebrew, the ***"mercy seat"*** is the ***kapporeth***, derived from the root ***kpr***, meaning to **cover**, **atone**, or **make propitiation**. Unlike the ark, the ***kapporeth*** was forged entirely of solid, refined gold. It matched the dimensions of the ark precisely, serving as its golden lid.

Theologically, it was the focal point of Israel's national atonement—the place where the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled on Yom Kippur (**Leviticus 16:14–15**) and where God promised to meet with His people. Standing over it were the golden cherubim with outstretched wings, guarding the holy space.

Kapporeth (Hebrew)/ Hilastērion (Greek) – both translated mercy seat, or the **place of propitiation):** The Greek term translates the Hebrew ***kapporeth***, denoting the place where propitiation is accomplished. Paul uses this exact same Greek term in Romans 3:25 to describe Christ:

> *25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. (Rom 3:25, ESV*)

Having mapped out the earthly sanctuary, its two sections, and its Yom Kippur alignment, the author abruptly halts. He notes: ***"Of these things we cannot now speak in detail."***

He has accomplished his purpose: he has briefly oriented his readers to the layout of the old system only to move past the shadows. He has no desire to linger on earthly temple furniture; his eyes—and ours—are fixed entirely on the **heavenly substance**.

By dismissing further detailed description of the physical furnishings, I believe the author signals that external religious artifacts have **served their purpose.** The physical architecture is giving way to the living reality of Christ's redemptive work.

SO YOU KNOW: Unlike the Temple furnishings captured by Titus and displayed in Rome, the Ark of the Covenant disappeared from history—likely during or immediately prior to the Babylonian destruction of Solomon's Temple in 586 B.C.

Vs 6 These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties,

Once the Tabernacle and its associated furnishings were completed and commissioned, the priests entered the first section (the Holy Place) on a daily and weekly basis to perform their routine ritual duties:

- They trimmed the golden lamps every morning and evening.
- They burned fragrant incense on the golden altar every morning and evening.
- They replaced the twelve loaves of the Bread of the Presence every Sabbath.

Thus, the priests were continually—in the present tense—performing their sacred responsibilities. But we must not miss the subtle, profound irony embedded here: **they are continually performing ritual duties that never quite get the job done!**

Day after day, week after week, year after year, the cycle repeats without permanent resolution. Once again, the author highlights the **ultimate ineffectiveness** of the old system. It was a treadmill of **endless repetition** that could never **achieve final perfection** or **clear a guilty conscience**.

Also, keep in mind, the ***"ritual duties"*** mentioned here were non-negotiable statutes of the Mosaic Law. The priests could never rest because the work of maintaining the shadow-system was unending.

Oh, but what a contrast! As the author reminded his readers back in chapter 8, citing Jeremiah 31, Yahweh promised long ago that days were coming when He would establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah—a covenant built on final, once-for-all forgiveness rather than endless repetition.

CONSIDER: In the theology of Hebrews, *repetition is the ultimate proof of imperfection*. If a sacrifice or a ritual had ever completely solved the problem of sin, it would have stopped. The very fact that the priests went in day after day proved that the old system was **temporary** and **incomplete**.

The continuous labor of the priests stands in stark contrast to Christ, who—after offering for all time a single sacrifice for sins—sat down at the right hand of God (Hebrews 10:12), signifying that His work was finished.

APPLICATION: Hebrews 9:6 reminds us that the endless repetition of external ritual is a hallmark of an obsolete system. In Christ, our relationship with God is not maintained by a frantic cycle of human performance that must be repeated day after day. Because Jesus entered the true heavenly sanctuary with His own blood once for all time, our striving has ended. Today, we do not work to gain access; we rest in a finished redemption, serving God out of overflowing gratitude rather than the burden of uncompleted ritual.

Vs 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.

In sharp contrast to the daily access of the priests into the outer room, the second section—the Holy of Holies—tells a completely different story. Into this inner sanctuary, **only the High Priest goes, and he does so only once a year.**

Furthermore, he cannot enter without taking blood, which he must offer first for his own sins (because he, too, is a fallen sinner) and then for the unintentional sins of the people.

It is the **present tense**. The High Priest was still performing this ritual while the author of Hebrews was writing this letter. The old religious runner was still running his race. Once again, we see the tragic limitation of the system: the High Priest was continually offering blood that could never truly bridge the gap, could never permanently atone for human sin, and could never cleanse a man's conscience.

Notice how the author handles this. He does not dive into the exhaustive minutia of Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement); instead, he draws the audience's attention to the event on a macro, a grand scale, to highlight its most glaring feature: **it kept going year, after year, after year.**

The author is also here reminding his audience that even the highest religious official in Israel was locked out of God's presence 364 days a year.

Vs 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 9a (which is symbolic for the present age).

Here, the author makes a stunning and profound theological point. Notice that he is not merely declaring the inadequacy of the old system on his own authority; rather, he points out that the Holy Spirit Himself—embedded in the very design as recorded in divine Scriptures, **the inadequacy of the first system.**

However, the addition of the word **"section"** by the ESV translators can sometimes cause us to miss the deeper nuance.

The Greek word here is ***skēnē***, which is normally translated as "**tent**" or "**tabernacle**." When verse 8 says, ***"as long as the first [tabernacle/tent] is still standing,"*** it is pointing to the entire structural setup of the old covenant economy.

The two-chambered Tabernacle—and its historical successor, the Jerusalem Temple—proved one unmistakable reality above all else: **God is not easily or directly approachable.**

As long as those buildings stood with their dividing curtains and restricted zones, that was the **exact message** the **Holy Spirit** was conveying.

Let's be reminded at what happened at the cross when Jesus died:

> *"And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split." (Matthew 27:50–51 ESV)*

Do you see, even more clearly, why God the Father tore that veil from top to bottom at Calvary? The Tabernacle and the Temple were built to teach a living parable: *that the way into the true presence of God was not yet opened!*

God tearing the heavy Temple veil *from top to bottom* was **heaven's dramatic answer** to the architectural barrier of the Old Covenant. It signaled that God Himself was dismantling the partition, opening a ***"new and living way":***

> *19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, (Heb 10:19–20, ESV)*

The old building and the old system were shouting a restriction. But now, because of the blood of Jesus Christ, believers have open, free, and full access to the Father. **Hallelujah!**

The old system and the old building have served their purpose, run their race, and were ready to vanish away because the final reality had arrived.

Vs 9a – Notice the writer indicates that this whole design is symbolic for the present age. The Greek word used here is **parabolē**, it denotes something that is a parable or an illustrative type. The earthly Tabernacle was a living, 3D parable pointing beyond itself.

The structural layout of the Tabernacle was never just a random desert tent; it was a divinely orchestrated object lesson. The architecture itself preached a sermon on **human alienation and restricted access.**

CONSIDER: When Hebrews was written, the physical Temple in Jerusalem was still standing, dominating the religious consciousness of first-century Judea. To declare that the standing structure was merely a temporary "parable" destined to vanish was a radically counter-cultural declaration—one devastatingly vindicated historically when Roman legions destroyed the Temple in A.D. 70.

APPLICATION: Hebrews 8 and 9 remind us that God never intended for distance to be the permanent state of affairs. The old system of restricted access and heavy curtains was always a temporary teaching tool—a divine parable pointing forward to a day when the barrier would be shattered for good.

Today, because God tore the veil, we no longer stand outside trembling at a closed door. The system of exclusion is gone. Our modern application is to live out the radical privilege of unhindered, daily communion with God, stepping boldly past every man-made religious barrier straight into the throne room of grace.

Vs 9b 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.

Operating within this old structural arrangement, gifts and sacrifices were continually offered. Yet they suffered from a fatal, built-in limitation: they could never perfect the conscience of the worshipper.

The Greek word translated "**perfect**" is ***teleioō,*** it means *to* bring to a **goal**, to **complete**, to **finish**, or to **fully accomplish**. In Hebrews, the conscience can only be "***perfected***" (cleansed and set free from the guilt of sin) by the blood of Christ, something animal sacrifices could never achieve.

As Gareth Cockerill notes, *"They are external, ceremonial, temporal, and weak. They were devoid of divine power and thus unable to change the heart or transform the person."*

They were part of a temporary shadow system that had finally reached its terminal point. They consisted of external rules—dietary laws regarding food and drink, various ceremonial washings, and physical ordinances imposed merely for the body.

Jesus, by contrast, accomplished what the old system never could: through His once-for-all sacrifice, He cleanses the conscience of His people, fulfilling the New Covenant promise where God writes His laws directly on our hearts and in our minds.

All of those old regulations were meant to be temporary—imposed **until the time of reformation**.

Here, the author describes the New Covenant era as the ***"time of reformation."*** The Greek word used is ***diorthōsis*** is a *hapax legomenon*—meaning it appears **only here in the entire New Testament**. But, it literally means the time of straightening, the time of correction, the time of setting things right, the time of reformation.

- It is the dawn of setting the old and temporary aside to usher in the new and permanent.
- It is the time of replacing hollow rituals (outward washings) with living realities (inward cleansing).
- It is the time of absolute fulfillment!
- It is the moment when the second runner takes hold of the baton, and begins running the race headed for the finish line, a line the first runner could only point toward.

The Old Covenant regulated external behavior, but human beings had broken hearts. The prophetic promise of the New Covenant was always an ***internal*** transformation—putting the law in the mind and writing it on the heart.

APPLICATION: It is entirely possible to be outwardly busy with religious activity while inwardly starving. We can obsess over externals—what we eat, how we dress, which rituals we perform, and how well we manage our behavioral checklists—while our conscience remains burdened by unresolved guilt.

Hebrews 9:9–10 reminds us that external religion has an expiration date. Those rules were never designed to save us; they were training wheels meant to last *only until the time of reformation*. That reformation has arrived in Jesus Christ. Because of the finished work of our Savior, our conscience is fully cleansed, our record is wiped clean, and we are invited to live by the transforming power of an indwelling Savior.

Vs 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)

At long last, the great transition arrives. After setting up the temporary, earthly, shadow-system of the old covenant, the author introduces the ultimate reality: ***"But when Christ appeared as a high priest..."***

Notice, when Christ ***"appeared."*** The Greek word is **paraginomai**, it points to a decisive historical breakthrough. It denotes a sudden, glorious manifestation or epiphany—Christ stepping onto the stage of human history out of eternity.

He is the High Priest who has stepped onto the stage of human history of the ***"good things that have come"!***

The Arrival of the Promised Age: The ***"good things that have come"*** contrast sharply with the ***"shadows"*** of the law. The long-awaited blessings of the New Covenant—permanent forgiveness, a cleansed conscience, and direct access to God—have finally arrived with the incarnation and ascension of Christ.

Unlike the Levitical high priests who entered a fragile earthly tent built by human hands, Christ ministered through a **greater and more perfect tent**—one **not made with human hands**, meaning it does not belong to this created, physical universe.

Vs 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.

Rather than relying on the temporary, repeating sacrifices of the old system, the ultimate High Priest—the Lord Jesus—entered once and for all into the true Holy Places.

Notice the vital distinction: He did not enter the earthly, humanly constructed rooms, but rather the uncreated, heavenly sanctuary erected by God Himself.

He entered this ultimate holy place **not** by means of the blood of goats and calves (which could never permanently wash away sin), but instead by means of **His own blood**.

In doing so, He accomplished what no Levitical priest could ever achieve in a lifetime of ministry: **He secured an eternal redemption** for all who place their faith in Him.

What the Day of Atonement pointed to, Jesus accomplished, "once for all."

The Greek word translated ***"once for all"*** means just that, it is a unique, unrepeatable event of permanent and absolute efficacy.

Redemption (***lytrōsis***) literally means a ransom price paid to set captives free. The price was not silver or gold, but the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18–19), that sets His brothers and sisters free!

Vs 13-14 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, 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.

The author employs a classic rabbinic and logical argument from the lesser to the greater: ***"how much more"***. If the blood of goats and bulls, and the ritual sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, achieved external results—sanctifying the worshipper for the purification of the flesh—how much more will the blood of Christ achieve?

Christ, operating through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself unblemished to God. What He accomplishes goes **infinitely deeper** than external rituals.

Instead of merely cleansing the body, the blood of Christ **purifies our conscience from dead works**, freeing us from our own futile self-efforts at salvation so that we might truly serve the living God.

The Ritual of the Red Heifer (Numbers 19): The reference to the "ashes of a heifer" points directly to one of the most unique purification rites in the Mosaic Law. The ashes of a red heifer mixed with running water were used to

cleanse Israelites who had contracted ritual defilement by touching a dead body. It was powerful for *external* ceremonial cleansing, but completely powerless to cleanse the heart or conscience.

This is the old system in a nutshell and one of its limitations: The old system dealt with external contamination and physical ritual standing. The New Covenant deals with the root issue: the human conscience burdened by sin and futile self-reliance.

Verse 14 presents a stunning picture of the Trinity at work in the atonement: the **Son offers *Himself*** as the unblemished sacrifice, **energized and enabled through the *eternal Spirit***, presented to ***God* the Father.**

The ultimate goal of clearing the conscience is not just psychological relief, but functional transformation—moving from the paralyzing treadmill of "dead works" to actively serving the living God.

Vs 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.

Because of this superior, conscience-cleansing sacrifice, Jesus stands as the **mediator of a New Covenant**. His mediatorial work ensures a vital purpose: that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

A mediator is one who intervenes between two parties to reconcile them or ratify an agreement. Jesus is the ultimate Go-Between, bridging the infinite gap between a holy God and sinful humanity.

He is the mediator of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

And how is that inheritance unlocked? Through death. A death has occurred that fully redeems believers from the transgressions they committed under the first covenant—transgressions that the blood of bulls and goats could never truly cancel.

Here, the writer addresses an urgent question we might naturally wonder about: *What about the sins of believers who lived before Christ under the Old Covenant?*

The cross reached backward in time, paying the penalty for the sins committed under the first covenant and securing the eternal inheritance for all of God's elect.

The death of Christ serves as the definitive propitiation not only for present and future believers, but for the sins previously committed under the Old Covenant. The sacrificial system was a credit card system; Calvary was the ultimate payment that finally cleared the balance (Rom 3:21-25).

Theological Significance: In the ancient world, a covenant was ratified by blood and death (as the following verses will elaborate). The transition to a New Covenant required a literal, historical execution—the death of the Testator.

APPLICATION: It is easy to look at our past—our accumulated mistakes, our failures, and the times we fell short before coming to Christ—and feel as though those spiritual debts still hang over our heads.

Hebrews 9:15 assures us that Christ's death possesses retroactive and complete power. The ransom price has been fully paid, redeeming us from every transgression committed in our past, as well as the ones in our future. Because He is the mediator of the New Covenant, our inheritance is not staked on our ongoing performance, but sealed by His finished sacrifice.