

## Hebrews 9:1-14: What Do You Desire Most in Life?

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### I. Introduction

Some might say, "If I only had the perfect job." Others, "If I only had the perfect partner in life, someone to love me for me." Whether we're chasing career or love, we're all looking for acceptance. We all want to feel like we're not being judged, like who and what we are is good enough. Whether it's in the playground, in the boardroom, or in relationships, we all want to be loved and accepted. What if your conscience was clear, what if you always felt accepted?

### II. Hebrews 9:1-14: Jesus Will Give You the Peace of Mind and Freedom You've been Searching For

**9:1-10**, the author has clearly stated that the Old Covenant was made obsolete by the New, including the tabernacle where the Levitical priests served. Jesus is the new High Priest and He's Mediator of a better Covenant, established on better promises. He now tells us why it's better. The Old Covenant had a way to approach God and an earthly sanctuary (opposed to a heavenly one) where it all took place (Exodus 25:31; 35-40). This tabernacle had a room called the Holy Place wherein was the Menorah, a seven-branched Lampstand (Exodus 25:31-39; 37:7-14), and the table of showbread (Exodus 25:23-30; 37:10-16). There was a second room called the Holy of Holies which was separated from the first room (Holy Place) by a veil (Exodus 26:36-37; 36:37—the same veil that tore from top to bottom when Jesus died, Matthew 27:51). Right outside the Holy of Holies before the veil was the golden altar of incense (Exodus 30:6; 40:5). Inside was the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10-18; 26:33) which contained the golden pot that had the manna (Exodus 16:33-34), Aaron's rod that budded (Numbers 17:8-11), and the tablets of the Covenant (Exodus 25:16-21; 40:20). Above the Ark were two cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat (Exodus 25:18-22). This is not a detailed account of the tabernacle but an overview which is focused on how one was allowed to approach God.

The author then describes what went on inside these two rooms: in the first room, every day, twice a day the Levitical priests had to burn incense and tend to the Menorah (Exodus 27:20-21; 30:7-8). Weekly they had to replace the showbread (Leviticus 24:5-8). In the second room, the Holy of Holies, only one man could enter, the high priest and only once a year and only if he brought blood with him as an offering first for himself then for the people's sins (the wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23: if you want to see God, you first have to pay for your sin, cf. Genesis 3:24). The point of all this is that it was continual: over and over, daily, weekly, yearly they had to do this; the priests' work was never done. What lesson was God teaching Israel and us with the tabernacle and all its duties? The Holy Spirit tells us: it was to show us how difficult it was to step into God's presence, in fact, it was impossible while the first tabernacle was still standing. First, only one man out of the entire human race could enter but only once a year, and not for fellowship or to get help from God, but to pay for his and the people's sins. Second, the entire system showed us that all it could do is cleanse the outside not the inside. The individual walked away knowing that his sin was covered but not removed. The stain of sin was still on his conscience. In fact, the entire Temple compound revealed the many barriers between the worshipper and God: there were barriers between Gentiles and God, Women and God, Jewish males and God, even priests and God. Only one priest, the high priest could enter but only once a year. Thus, this system provided very limited access to God and very limited cleansing. It was wholly inadequate which is why it was temporary until God established a new order that was superior: it would cleanse us completely and grant us complete access to God.

**9:11-14**, deep down we all sense that there's something wrong with us; we've fallen short somehow. That's why our conscience won't give us peace. How can we get rid of this feeling, how can we stand before God and truly know that we're OK? Someone might say, "Why do I need to stand before God? I don't need God, in fact, He doesn't exist." Whether you believe in God or not, you need His help. This universe did not create itself. Your moral conscience was not the creation of biology; it was put there by God (Romans 2:15). This world and everything in it, love, relationships, work, all of it was created by God and His rules apply. You don't have to believe in His rules, but like gravity, they exist whether you believe in them or not. So you need Him, especially to get rid of that nagging feeling that you're not good enough.

Jesus came for that very purpose, to grant us peace about who we are. He came as High Priest, a priest who would do away with our sins and make us presentable before God, permanently. He did this through another tabernacle, the heavenly one not made by human hands. And the sacrifice He brought to this tabernacle was not the blood of animals (not of goats which was to purify the people, Leviticus 16:15, or of bulls which was to purify the priests, Leviticus 16:11). He brought His own blood and not repeatedly but once for all which is why He obtained for us eternal redemption (His forgiveness is continual and everlasting. His cleansing is completely thorough; it even cleanses our conscience).

Thus, if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer (which were used to cleanse those who came in contact in any way with a corpse, Numbers 19) could cleanse our flesh outwardly from sin, how much more shall the blood of Messiah, who offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice cleanse our conscience, even from dead works, i.e., the good works we try to do to make ourselves presentable before the living God?

**Jesus can free you from all the guilt, shame, anxiety, depression, and torment.** Jesus came to give you a brand new life (2 Corinthians 5:17), to free you from everything that is weighing you down so that you can live life to the fullest at home, at work, in any and every situation. Because He doesn't just pay for your sins, He clears your conscience of every guilty feeling, every sense of inadequacy, every anxiety, from all your striving to prove yourself. He gives you absolute peace and freedom to live without worry or concern that there's something wrong with you.

### III. Conclusion

*The Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience..... But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*