

Hebrews 9:6-7 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
 Click chart to enlarge
 Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Swindoll's Chart](#), [Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews](#), [Another Chart](#)

The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST

DOCTRINE	DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD	

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#)

THE FIVE WARNING PASSAGES IN HEBREWS
Heb 2:1-4 (notes)
Heb 3:7-4:13 (notes)
Heb 5:11-6:12 (notes)
Heb 10:19-39 (notes)
Heb 12:14-29 (notes)

Hebrews 9:6 Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually * entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [Touton de houtos kateskeuasmenon. \(RPPNPG\) eis men ten proten skenen dia pantos eiasin \(3PPAI\) oi hierois tas latreias epitelountes. \(PAPMPN\)](#)

Amplified: These arrangements having thus been made, the priests enter [habitually] into the outer division of the tabernacle in performance of their ritual acts of worship. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: Since these preparations have been made, the priests continually enter into the first tabernacle as they perform the various acts of worship. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

NLT: When these things were all in place, the priests went in and out of the first room regularly as they performed their religious duties. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Under this arrangement the outer tent was habitually used by the priests in the regular discharge of their religious duties. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: But these things having been thus arranged, into the first tent the priests enter continually, fulfilling the sacred service.

Young's Literal: And these things having been thus prepared, into the first tabernacle, indeed, at all times the priests do go in, performing the services

NOW WHEN THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN THUS PREPARED THE PRIESTS ARE CONTINUALLY ENTERING THE OUTER TABERNACLE PERFORMING THE DIVINE WORSHIP: touton de houtes kateskeuasmenon (RPPNPG) eis men ten proten skenen diapantos eiasin (3PPAI) hoi hierois tas latreias epitelountes (PAPMPN):

- Exodus 27:21; 30:7,8; Numbers 28:3; 2 Chronicles 26:16-19; Daniel 8:11; Luke 1:8-11
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

These things - When the tabernacle was erected the first time and after moving set up again... then it was back to work for the priests as discussed below.

Spurgeon comments that...It is from this sentence (Hebrews 9:6-8) that I am sure that the Holy Ghost had a signification, a meaning; a teaching, for every item of the ancient tabernacle and temple; and we are not spinning fancies out of idle brains when we interpret these types, and learn from them important gospel lessons.

Prepared (perfect tense)(2680)(**kataskeuazo** from **kata** = intensifies the meaning of + **skeuazo** = prepare, make ready <> from **skeuos** = implement, vessel) means to means to cause to be thoroughly prepared, to make ready, to put in a state of readiness (Mk 1:2+). It is used of persons who are mentally and spiritually prepared - "make ready a people**prepared** for the Lord." (Lk 1:17+). To build, construct, erect, create (Heb 3:3-4+, Heb 11:7+, 1 Pe 3:20+). To furnish or equip (Heb 9:2, 6+) . **Kataskeuazo** means to make, construct or erect with idea of adorning and equipping with all things necessary. **Kataskeuazo** was the word used to describe the preparing of a way before oriental monarch (see use in Mk 1:2+; from Malachi 3:1+).

Spurgeon - But the high priest could not go within the veil, because he was not perfect. He had to be sprinkled with the blood, and that made him officially perfect. It would not make him perfect merely to put on the breastplate, or to wear the ephod; he was not perfect till the blood had been sprinkled upon him, and then he went within the veil. But when next year came around he was not fit to go within the veil till blood was sprinkled on him again. And the next year, though he was always a sanctified man, he was not always, officially, a perfect man. He had to be sprinkled with blood again. And so, year after year, the high priest who went within the veil needed afresh to be made perfect in order that he might obtain access to God. We who are the priests of God have a right as priests to go to God's mercy seat that is within the veil, but it would be to our death to go there unless we were perfect. But we are perfect, for the blood of Christ has been sprinkled on us, and, therefore, our standing before God is the standing of perfection. Our standing, in our own conscience, is imperfection, just as the character of the priest might be imperfect. But that has nothing to do with it. Our standing in the sight of God is a standing of perfection. When He sees the blood, as of old the destroying angel passed over Israel, so this day, when He sees the blood, God passes over our sins and accepts us at the throne of His mercy as if we were perfect.

Priests (2409) (**hiereus** from **hieros** = sacred, holy, consecrated to God, used as a noun to mean a sacred place or temple, cp Mark 11:11; cp English derivative "hierarchy" = leadership) is a sacred or consecrated person who serves deity. **Priests** in the NT refer primarily to the ceremonial officials of Jesus' day, that group of men who offered Temple sacrifices and carried out the other sacred rites associated with the Jewish Temple and Jewish people (cp Heb 8:4) . Most of the uses of **hiereus** refer to Jewish priests, but Acts 14:13 refers to a priest of the pagan cult of Zeus (patron little g god of the city of Lystra). Jesus is our Great High Priest, which describes His primary ministry in our behalf today (Heb 7:1, 3, 11, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23), one aspect of that ministry being His continual intercession for us (Heb 7:25, Ro 8:34). **Hiereus** describes the specific position and not necessarily a priest's character (e.g., see Lk 10:31 where a priest was a "bad Samaritan" so to speak). In Revelation **hiereus** describes believers who will rule and reign as **priests** with Christ the **Great Priest** (Jesus - Heb 10:21 = See **Christ as Priest**, Rev 1:6, Rev 5:10, Rev 20:6). Even though the **hiereus** described religious men, it did not signify necessarily that they were saved (cp Acts 6:7).

Related Resources:

- [Did the high priest have a rope tied to him when he entered the Holy of Holies?](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus is our High Priest?](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Priests](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Priest](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Priest](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Priest](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Priest](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Priest](#)

W. G. Moorehead defines a priest as "One who is duly qualified to minister in sacred things, particularly to offer sacrifices at the altar, and to act as mediator between men and God." (ISBE)

Priest in Latin is **pontifex** (from **pont-**, **pons** = bridge + **facere/facio** = to make) which literally means a bridge maker, and is word used even today to describe the Pope as "**Pontifex Maximus**" (maximus = greatest, highest), which literally means the "greatest bridge builder" and in modern parlance "the Highest Priest".

Spurgeon talks about pagan superstitious reverence of **priests** - A writer on the manners and customs of India, says:: 'I was informed that vast numbers of Shoodras drink the water in which a Brahmin has dipped his foot, and abstain from food in the morning till this ceremony be over. Some persons do this every day, and others vow to attend to it for such a time, in order to obtain the removal of disease. Persons may be seen carrying a small quantity of water in a cup, and intreating the first Brahmin they see to put his toe in it. This person then drinks the water, and bows or prostrates to the Brahmin, who gives him a blessing. Some persons keep water thus sanctified in their houses.' How few steps would land Tractarians in the same degradation! Their priests are the

channels of grace to them, from them they receive regeneration and absolution, and from their hands they receive the god of bread whom they adore and eat. Believing all this of their sacerdotal fathers, to drink the water in which they wash their feet would be no humiliation; their minds have stooped to drink far fouler puddle, they may well put their bodies on the same level.

Hiereus- 31x in 31v (and almost 800x in the Septuagint)...

Matthew 8:4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the **priest** and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Matthew 12:4 how he entered the house of God, and they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the **priests** alone? 5 "Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the **priests** in the temple break the Sabbath and are innocent?"

Mark 1:44 and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the **priest** and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Mark 2:26 how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the **priests**, and he also gave it to those who were with him?"

Luke 1:5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a **priest** named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

Luke 5:14 And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the **priest** and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Luke 6:4 how he entered the house of God, and took and ate the consecrated bread which is not lawful for any to eat except the **priests** alone, and gave it to his companions?"

Luke 10:31 "And by chance a **priest** was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

Luke 17:14 When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the **priests**." And as they were going, they were cleansed.

John 1:19 This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him **priests** and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

Acts 4:1 As they were speaking to the people, the **priests** and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them,

Acts 6:7 The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the **priests** were becoming obedient to the faith.

Acts 14:13 The **priest** of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

Hebrews 5:6 just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A **PRIEST** FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

Hebrews 7:1-note For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, **priest** of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,

3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a **priest** perpetually.

11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another **priest** to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?

14 For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning **priests**.

15 And this is clearer still, if another **priest** arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek,

17 For it is attested of Him, "YOU ARE A **PRIEST** FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

21 (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him,

"THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, 'YOU ARE A **PRIEST** FOREVER '");

23 The former **priests**, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing,

Hebrews 8:4-note Now if He were on earth, He would not be a **priest** at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law;

Hebrews 9:6 Now when these things have been so prepared, the **priests** are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship,

Hebrews 10:11-note Every **priest** stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

21-note and since we have a great **priest** over the house of God,

Revelation 1:6-note and He has made us to be a kingdom, **priests** to His God and Father-- to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 5:10-note "You have made them to be a kingdom and **priests** to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

Revelation 20:6-note Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be **priests** of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

Wayne A Detzler on Priest -

MEANING The Greek word for priest is hierous. This root is seen in many English words, such as "hierarchy" (ruling body of clergymen), "hieroglyphics" (priestly engravings), and "hierolatry" (the worship of saints). The basic meaning of the word hieros is "one consecrated or filled with divine power."

Early Greek writers used this word to describe things pertaining to their pagan gods. The head of Zeus was described as being hieros, consecrated, or holy. The same term was used to describe an expert in the sacrificial system of religion. Men who were especially wise were set apart as priests and entitled hierous.

In the Septuagint Greek Old Testament the priests were occupied with three duties. First, they served regularly in the sanctuary, whether the tent tabernacle or the temple at Jerusalem. Second, they brought sacrifices on a regular basis. Third, they discerned divine guidance through waiting on the Lord.

BIBLE USAGE The Greek word for priest occurs 31 times in the New Testament. Almost half of these appearances are in the Book of Hebrews, where it usually refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. (A related word is archiereus, which means "chief priest.")

Though the priests uniformly opposed Jesus, He still showed respect to them. For instance, when He healed lepers, Jesus sent the restored men to the priests for sacramental confirmation of their healing (Matt. 8:4). This was a fulfillment of the Levitical Law (Lev. 14:1-12).

Jesus also referred to priests in His parabolic teaching. In the story of the Good Samaritan, it was a priest who walked past the ambushed traveler without lifting a finger to help (Luke 10:31). No one seemed to be surprised at this callous action by the priest. Perhaps this reveals the low opinion which most people held concerning the priesthood. But despite this low opinion, many priests did come to believe in the Lord (Acts 6:7).

In speaking of the Sabbath, Jesus said that priests "break the Sabbath" by working on that day (Matt. 12:5). Jesus used this to justify His own ministry on the Sabbath. Since the Jews accepted the priests' activity on the Sabbath, they should also accept Christ's healing work on the holy day. Incidentally, Christ here seems to emphasize His role as a priest.

The Book of Hebrews makes the point that the Levitical priesthood had failed to make people right with God. Those priests were only "a copy" of the perfect priesthood of Christ (Heb. 8:4-5). Despite their faithfulness in keeping the forms of Judaism, they were only a pale picture of Christ, the true Priest (Heb 9:1-9). The point is this: Human priests cannot provide a perfect sacrifice for sin (Heb 10:11).

The New Testament portrays Christ as the perfect Priest. He entered into intercession for us during the last hours before His crucifixion (John 17). Since His ascension into heaven, Christ has ceaselessly interceded for

us, His people (Heb. 7:24-25). He is a Priest according to the ancient order of Melchizedek (Heb 5:6; 7:1-3, 11-15). No human frailty mars the priesthood of Christ.

In the Scriptures, however, there is another class of priests. The Bible teaches that every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:9; Ex. 19:5-6). This means that every believer is capable of interpreting the Scriptures. It also implies that every believer is capable of an intercessory ministry. Further, it teaches that every believer can bring the offering of worship to the Lord (Rom. 15:16). This priesthood will be fulfilled ultimately in heaven (Rev. 1:6; 5:10).

In other words, there are only two classes of true priests in the world today. The first is the Lord Jesus Christ who is the perfect Priest and the Intercessor for His people. The second class of priests are Christians who engage in all the functions of priesthood here on earth.

ILLUSTRATIONS An elderly retired missionary once joined a church which I pastored. He laid down one requirement when he joined: "Pastor," he said, "don't let me become a dumb priest." He was keenly aware that God had given him a priestly ministry of intercession and mediation, and he was eager to not let that ministry lapse into disuse. Despite severe illness, he continued to function as a priest in our midst.

There are four reasons why Christians should be encouraged to exercise a priestly ministry in the church. First, they are all equal before the Lord, and no one is excluded from this ministry (Gal. 3:28). Second, the unity of the body of Christ makes us all dependent on each other (1 Cor. 12:7). Third, no church can function well without the use of the gifts present in its priests (1Cor 12:24-26). Fourth, the priesthood of believers emphasizes the glorious diversity implicit in the plan of God (1Cor 12:11).

In his helpful book on the church, Professor Robert Saucy of Talbot Theological Seminary emphasizes the importance of this doctrine. According to the priest-hood of believers, "All members of the church have the same direct access to God and His grace." In another place, Professor Saucy says: "The humblest believer has direct access into the throne room of God along with the minister." Referring to the work of Martin Luther, Professor Saucy claims: "One of the foundations of Reformation truth was the concept of the priesthood of all believers" (The Church in God's Program [Chicago: Moody Press, 1972], pp. 111, 117, 127).

Even though he was a Bishop of the Church of England, Professor J.B. Lightfoot (1828-89) insisted: "As individuals, all Christians are priests alike... There is an entire silence about priestly functions [in the New Testament]: for the most exalted office in the church, the highest gift of the Spirit, conveyed no sacerdotal [sacramental] right which was not enjoyed by the humblest member of the Christian community."

Though few people know about it, there was in the 17th century a revival in Germany. One of the leading lights of that awakening was Jacob Spener (1635-1705), who wrote the book *Pia Desideria* or *Pious Desires* (1675). Part of that great revival movement, called Pietism, was a return to the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, about which Spener wrote: "Not only ministers but all Christians are made priests by their Saviour, [they] are anointed by the Holy Spirit, and are dedicated to perform spiritual-priestly acts... Indeed, it was by a special trick of the cursed devil ... that all these functions were assigned solely to the clergy" (*Pia Desideria* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964], pp. 92-93). (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

Continually entering -- In the tent of meeting (the holy place), outside the veil (that separated the inner holy of holies) which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel. (Exodus 27:21)

The outer (4413) (protos) refers to the former or first in a series or set, in this case the first of two inner "rooms".

Tabernacle (ISBE Article) (4633) (skene) means tent, booth, cloth hut and here specifically the tabernacle which was made largely of skins and was designed to be portable, which emphasizes the essence of impermanence. The tabernacle gave every impression of being a temporary structure. It is fascinating that while there are only two chapters devoted to the creation, there are some fifty chapters that deal with the Tabernacle (esp Ex 25-40). As so many expositors over the years have noted, the Tabernacle was essentially a "giant portrait of Jesus Christ" (See related study on **Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic**). Everywhere you look in the Tabernacle you can see the Messiah.

Performing (2005)(epiteleo from **epi** = "up," intensive + **teleo** = goal, end) is a strengthened form of **teleo** meaning to accomplish perfectly. The idea is to complete something, not by merely bringing to an end but by bringing it to perfection or its intended goal.

Divine worship (2999) (latreia from **latris** = one hired or **latron** = reward, wages - see an in depth study of the related word **latreuo**) in secular Greek referred to service rendered for hire and then to any service, by extension including service to God.

In classical Greek it was used for the service of the gods. In modern Greek it means "adoration, worship." In the NT it is used only for service to God.

In the Septuagint, **latreia** was used to describe the service of God according to the requirements of the Levitical law (think of "liturgical") and included the regulations of divine worship such as the rituals and ceremonies which composed part of the priestly duties.

As an aside, recall that these OT rituals and ceremonies were instituted by God not as an end in themselves, but as sort of a "picture book" that pointed toward the Messiah. These OT services were divine services, but they were also temporary services, performed in a temporary sanctuary.

Vine adds the noun **latreia**,

originally signified the work of a hired servant, as distinguished from the compulsory service of the slave, but in the course of time it largely lost that significance, and in its usage in Scripture the thought of adoration was added to that of free obedience. Used of the service of God, the word gained the idea of a service characterized by worship. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

Barclay - Originally (the verb *latreuo*) meant to work for hire or pay. It was the word used of the labouring man who gave his strength to an employer in return for the pay the employer would give him. It denotes, not slavery, but the voluntary undertaking of work. It then came to mean quite generally to serve; but it also came to mean that to which a man gives his whole life. For instance, a man could be said *latreuein kallei*, which means to give his life to the service of beauty. In that sense, it came very near meaning to dedicate one's life to. Finally, it came to be the word distinctively used of the service of the gods. In the Bible it never means human service; it is always used of service to and worship of God. Here we have a most significant thing. True worship is the offering to God of one's body, and all that one does every day with it. Real worship is not the offering to God of a liturgy, however noble, and a ritual, however magnificent. Real worship is the offering of everyday life to him, not something transacted in a church, but something which sees the whole world as the temple of the living God. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press](#))

In sum, **latreia** is normal word for the service that a priest rendered at the altar in the Temple of God and is the standard word for religious service.

In its sanctuary the Old Covenant had divine services. The priests entered the Holy Place daily to perform their tasks. Morning and evening the **lamps** were trimmed, and the coals with incense were placed upon the golden altar.

David suggests that the **incense** is a picture of prayer ascending to God (Ps 141:2) and it reminds us that Jesus Christ intercedes for us (see **notes** Romans 8:33; 34).

The **Showbread** was replaced weekly. **Every Sabbath** they had to change 12 loaves of bread.

They were continually in and out of the Holy Place, ministering in behalf of the people. Burnt offerings were daily Nu 28:3. ("two male lambs one year old without defect as a continual burnt offering every day"--see Ex 29:38-42 for more detail.

The first responsibility of priests each morning was to remove the old ashes from the altar, get the fire burning, and then offer a lamb to the Lord, a symbol of total devotion to God.

The duty was a never-ceasing. In this sense they symbolize the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose work is today and continually without end. How wonderful that our Lord never stops His priestly work for us. He is forever our High Priest.

THE TABERNACLE ON EARTH

Related Resources:

- [The Tabernacle: A Picture of Jesus \(Exodus 25-30\)](#)
- [The Tabernacle of Moses – God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation - Part I: The Outer Court](#) - excellent graphics
- [The Tabernacle of Moses – God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation - Part II: The Holy Place](#)

- [The Tabernacle of Moses – God’s Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation - Part III: The Holy Place](#)
- [The Tabernacle of Moses – God’s Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation - Part IV: The Holy Place](#)
- [The Tabernacle of Moses – God’s Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation - Part V: The Most Holy Place](#)
- [The Tabernacle, the Dwelling Place of God](#)
- [What was the tabernacle of Moses?](#)
- [What was the tent of meeting?](#)
- [What was the significance of the bronze laver?](#)
- [What is the mercy seat?](#)
- [What is the Shekinah glory?](#)

Today in the Word - Dr. G. Campbell Morgan said this about believers who are reluctant to commit themselves wholeheartedly to Christ:

"When our convictions are yielded to Him completely, He is able to give Himself to us in all His fullness. Until that is so, He cannot trust us. How true it is that we often miss the joy and strength of our Christianity because, by withholding ourselves from Christ, we make it impossible for Him to give Himself to us in all the fullness of His grace and truth."

What an accurate description of the spiritual loss the recipients of Hebrews were in danger of bringing upon themselves! By pulling back from their commitment to Christ--perhaps under persecution from certain Jewish elements or the threat of it--they were risking the loss of unspeakable blessings.

The first half of Hebrews 9 spells out clearly the two choices facing these believers in terms of their commitment. They could go back to the familiar--the **old covenant** with its repeated sacrifices offered by imperfect priests. Or they could go on with Christ to enjoy the blessings of the **new covenant**.

We have hinted at this several times, but it becomes very obvious in today's text: if you ever have reason to doubt the advantages we enjoy in Christ, turn to these verses immediately. The contrast could not be greater.

Notice, for example, the difference between the ""earthly sanctuary"" of the old covenant and heaven's ""greater and more perfect tabernacle,"" in which Christ offered His sacrifice (Hebrews 9:1, 11). And this is just the beginning.

The priests under the first covenant had to offer sacrifices ""regularly,"" while the high priest had to go into the ""inner room,"" the Holy Place, every year (Hebrews 9:6-7). But Jesus entered the Most Holy Place in the heavenly tabernacle ""once for all"" (Hebrews 9:12), one of the key phrases in Hebrews. Also, the Old Testament priests brought the blood of animals (Hebrews 9:7, 12-13), while Jesus came into the Holy of Holies on the merit of His own sacrifice (Hebrews 9:12, 14).

And here's the best part. Although the blood of sacrificial animals could not make a final cleansing for sin, the blood of Christ has washed away sin's stain forever (Hebrews 9:10, 14)!

Notice that everything about the old system required human effort.

The tabernacle was built by human beings, someone had to raise the animals for sacrifice, and the blood was offered by human priests. But Christ's sacrifice and present priestly ministry are divine; the writer even says the heavenly tabernacle was ""not man-made.""

The point? The work of redemption has been done for us. We are free to ""serve the living God"" (Hebrews 9:14). Where has He called you to serve Him today, or this week? Serve Him with all your heart! ([Copyright Moody Bible Institute. Used by permission. All rights reserved](#))

F B Meyer comments that...

IN this marvelous paragraph (Hebrews 9:6-14) there are five striking and well-defined contrasts between the picture symbols of Leviticus, and the realities revealed in the New Testament Scriptures. And to their consideration we will at once proceed, thanking God as we do so that we live in the very midst of the heavenly things themselves, rather than in the shadows, which, though they doubtless helped and nourished the devout souls of an earlier age, were confessedly inadequate to supply the deeper demands of man's spiritual life.

THE FIRST TABERNACLE IS CONTRASTED WITH THE TRUE (Hebrews 9:6, 8, 11). It must have been a fair and lovely sight to behold, when first, on the plains of Sinai, the Tabernacle was reared, with its golden furniture and sumptuous drapery. The very

angels may have desired to look into it, and trace the outlines of thoughts, which perhaps were only beginning to unfold themselves to their intelligence. But fair though it was, it had in it all those traces of imperfection which necessarily attach to human workmanship, and make even a needle-point seem coarse beneath the microscope. It was "made with hands." Besides which it was destined to grow old, and perish beneath the gnawing tooth or fret of time. Already it must have shown signs of decay when it was carefully borne across the Jordan; and, in David's days, its venerable associations could not blind him to the necessity of replacing it as soon as possible.

How different to this is the true tabernacle, of which it was the type, which is so much "greater and more perfect." What is that tabernacle? and where? Sometimes it seems to pious musing as if the whole universe were one great temple; the mountains its altars; the seas and oceans, with their vast depths, its lavers; the heavens its blue curtains; the loftier spaces, with their stars and mystery of color, and fragrant incense-breath and angel worship, its holy place; whilst the very throne-room of God, where the Seer's eye beheld the rainbow-circled throne, corresponds to the most holy place in which the light of the Shekinah glistened over the blood-stained mercy seat.

But such poetic flights are forbidden by the sober prose which tells us that the true tabernacle is not "of this creation" (Hebrews 9:11). It is no part of this created world, whether earth or heaven; it would exist, though all the material universe should resolve itself into primeval chaos; it is a spiritual fabric, whose aisles are trodden by saintly spirits in their loftiest experiences, when, forgetting that they are creatures of time, they rise into communion with God, and enjoy rapturous moments, which seem ages in their wealth of blessed meaning. Such is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man (Hebrews 8:2).

Hebrews 9:7 but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [eis de ten deuteran](#) hapax [tou eniautou monos o archiereus, ou choris aimatos, o prosperei](#) (3SPA) [huper heautou kai ton tou laou agnoematon.](#)

Amplified: But into the second [division of the tabernacle] none but the high priest goes, and he only once a year, and never without taking a sacrifice of blood with him, which he offers for himself and for the errors and sins of ignorance and thoughtlessness which the people have committed. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: But into the second tabernacle the High Priest alone enters, and that once a year and not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

NLT: But only the high priest goes into the Most Holy Place, and only once a year, and always with blood, which he offers to God to cover his own sins and the sins the people have committed in ignorance. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: But into the second, once a year, alone, the high priest entered, not without blood which he offers in behalf of himself and in behalf of the sins of ignorance of the people,

Young's Literal: and into the second, once in the year, only the chief priest, not apart from blood, which he doth offer for himself and the errors of the people,

BUT INTO THE SECOND ONLY THE HIGH PRIEST ENTERS ONCE A YEAR: de eis de ten deuteran monos ho archiereus hapax tou eniautou:

- Heb 9:24,25; Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 16:2-20,34
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

But (term of contrast) - The writer is highlighting a vivid contrast for the professing Hebrew believers, reminding them of the infrequent access and mysterious closeness of the Holy of Holies as compared to the constant openness of the outer tent.

Spurgeon - The greatest of the Jewish high priests had to admit that they were sinners themselves, for they had to present sin-offerings on their own account, but our Lord Jesus has no sin of his own; hence in part his ability to bear our sin.

Into the second - The holy of holies, representing the very presence of the Holy One of Israel.

Only - This is "only" one word, but oh, how filled with meaning it is, for it emphasizes the limited access to the holiness of God under the Old Covenant. Not anyone, not everyone, but **only the high priest!** Dear saint, let us meditate on our present access through our Great High Priest to the holy of holies, the throne of grace. Do we really understand our high and holy privilege? Do we really believe we now have continual access? If so why do we so seldom draw nigh to the heavenly holy of holies, dearly beloved of the Father? Perhaps we are not broken and grieved over our sins against the Holy One, etc. For those of you reading these notes who are now continually drawing nigh, first, praise God for drawing you, and second, I beg of you to lift up a fragrant aroma to the throne pleading with our Father that all of His saints (present writer included) would be so seated at the foot of His throne as you are. Thank you.

Only the high priest - There is no "exception clause", no fine print, no asterisk, for regardless of who one was or how powerful they were, divine access was only granted to the high priest.

Witness the following violation of this regulation by King Uzziah, the writer recording that when...

"he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly (what was the heart of the problem?), and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God (what was the rotten result?), for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense (What should Uzziah have known? What did the king of Israel have to do when he sat on the throne according to Deut 17:18-20?) . 17 Then Azariah the priest entered after him and with him eighty priests of the LORD, valiant men. 18 And they opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful, and will have no honor from the LORD God." 19 But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the **leprosy broke out on his forehead** before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense. 20 And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and behold, he was leprous on his forehead; and they hurried him out of there, and he himself also hastened to get out because the LORD had smitten him. (2 Chronicles 16:16-20)

Christ is clearly pictured in the divine worship of the high priest in the presence of God in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).

Lev 16:2 And the LORD said to Moses, "Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter **any time** into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.

Lev 16:34 "Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins **once every year**." And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he did.

Note that on this most solemn of days to a Jew (then and even today), the only one who works is the **high priest**. Thus from beginning of this holy day to the end he carries out the divine worship and sacrifices with no help from the other priests (except that there is a person who takes the scapegoat into the wilderness). This serves as a picture of our Great High Priest because He alone was qualified to bring an acceptable sacrifice to a Holy Righteous God. In Lev 8:12 we see a foreshadowing of Christ in the anointing of the high priest (for Christ = anointed one!)

Then he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him. (Lev 8:12)

The Day of Atonement (Lev 16) intended to make sacrifice for all those sins that had not yet been covered (see Lev 16:30,33) and was a great day for liberation of the conscience, but as the writer explains even this great day could not make the worshiper **perfect in conscience!**

How much **better** is the New Covenant in our High Priest's BLOOD that allows all blood bought believers have bold continual access into the presence of the Shekinah, access that even the most pious and God-fearing Jew could only view from a distance (except the Aaronic high priests).

THOUGHT - Open our hearts O Great Jehovah to appreciate the magnitude of this incredible work of grace and how great is our privilege in the church age. Forgive us as your people for "squandering" opportunity after opportunity to commune with You, O Most High God. Amen.

We as NT believers are a kingdom of priests and can "burn incense" at all times in between (pray without ceasing). Lord, please show us what prayer means to you, how important it is for us, and how it is part of fulfilling our role as Your priests on earth, Your "go between" so to speak, interceding for sinful men and women. Amen.

NOT WITHOUT TAKING BLOOD WHICH HE OFFERS FOR HIMSELF: ou choris haimatos ho prosperei (3SPAI) huper heautou:

- Heb 5:3; 7:27; 10:19,20
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Not without taking blood - The Jewish high priest had to take **blood** into the Holy of holies on the Day of Atonement to atone for his own sins because he was a sinner.

Hebrews 5:3 (note) — and because of it he (the high priest) is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself.

Hebrews 7:27 (note) — (Jesus is a different kind of High Priest) Who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

Hebrews 10:19 — Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (see notes Hebrews 10:19; 20; 21; 22)

Matthew Poole writes...

Not without blood: when he first entered into the holiest of all, it was with the blood of a young bull, of a ram, Lev 16:3, 14, with the blood of the he-goat, Heb 9:15, 27. After he had offered the incense on his golden censer, Heb 9:4, he must sprinkle the blood upon the mercy-seat and before it, by which expiatory blood there was made an atonement, Heb 9:12-14.

For himself - The high priest placed his hands on the head of a bull selected as a sacrifice for his own sins and those of his family and according to one source Jewish prayed "O God, I have committed iniquity, transgressed and sinned before thee, I and my house, as it is written in the Law of thy servant Moses, "For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord." And they answered after him, 227 "Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever!" (Yoma, 3.8)

Spurgeon - No one entered the sacred precincts save one man, and he but once a year. The great teaching was, God is hidden from men; sin has made a division between man and God; the way of approach is not yet made manifest. Yet even then there was a hint given that an entrance would be made manifest, for the division was not a piece of brickwork, nor even an arrangement of cedar overlaid with gold. It was a veil that, once in the year, was solemnly lifted, that the high priest might pass beneath. This hinted that sinful men were yet to be permitted to draw nigh unto the Most Holy God through the Christ of God. Notice especially those words, "**Not without blood.**" There could be no approach to God under the old dispensation without the shedding of blood, and there is no access to the Lord now without the precious blood of Christ. Inasmuch as the new covenant was not the type, but the substance, a more precious sacrifice was needed, and nobler blood than any which is found in the veins of bulls or of goats. Jesus the Son of God must die, or the covenant would be unsealed, the testament without force. No covenant blessing comes to us apart from the death of our great sacrifice, for "apart from the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness," (9:22) and forgiveness is one of the earliest of the gifts of grace. If we cannot even begin the heavenly life by receiving forgiveness of sins without coming into connection with the blood, we may be sure that no further blessing can come to us apart from it. It seems to be absolutely necessary that when God comes into communication with guilty man it must be through an atonement, and that atonement must be made by blood, or by the sacrifice of a life. The greatest of the Jewish high priests had to admit that they were sinners themselves, for they had to present sin offerings on their own account. But our Lord Jesus has no sin of His own; hence in part His ability to bear our sin.

For (huper) is a preposition which in this context speaks of **substitution**. It could be translated "for the sake of" or "in behalf of". Clearly this single preposition pictures the substitutionary character of the atonement by the blood of the sacrificial animal that is carried in by the Levitical high priest. Clearly this ritual foreshadowed the once for all substitutionary and fully atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world (see Jn 11:50, see note Titus 2:14). The writer will go on to teach that under the **Old Covenant** the offering of the blood of animals pointed to and was perfectly and finally fulfilled in the offering of the precious blood of the Lamb, the suffering, crucified Messiah of Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22.

Spurgeon has the following sermons related to **blood**...

- [Exodus 12:13 The Blood](#)
- [Hebrews 12:24-25 The Blood Of Sprinkling](#)
- [Hebrews 12:24-25 The Blood Of Sprinkling](#)
- [Hebrews 13:20 The Blood Of The Everlasting Covenant](#)
- [Hebrews 9:19-20 The Blood Of The Testament](#)
- [Hebrews 9:22 Blood-Shedding](#)

This is a good point to stop for a moment and offer up a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Lamb Who has opened the gates of so great a salvation (click hymn to play and sing along)...

[NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD](#)

by Robert Lowery

What can wash away my sin?
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
 What can make me whole again?
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

***Oh! precious is the flow
 That makes me white as snow;
 No other fount I know,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.***

For my pardon, this I see,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
 For my cleansing this my plea,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

Nothing can for sin atone,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
 Naught of good that I have done,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

This is all my hope and peace,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
 This is all my righteousness,
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

Now by this I'll overcome—
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
 Now by this I'll reach my home—
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

Glory! Glory! This I sing—
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
 All my praise for this I bring—
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

- Leviticus 5:18; 2 Samuel 6:7; 2 Chronicles 33:9; Ps 19:12; 95:10; Isaiah 3:12; 9:16; 28:7; Isaiah 29:14; Hosea 4:12; Amos 2:14
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Lev 5:18 — "He is then to bring to the priest a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation, for a guilt offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his error in which he sinned unintentionally and did not know it, and it shall be forgiven him.

2Sa 6:7 — And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God.

Ps 19:12 — Who can discern his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults.

Spurgeon's comment - Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Thou canst mark in me faults entirely hidden from myself. It were hopeless to expect to see all my spots; therefore, O Lord, wash away in the atoning blood even those sins which my conscience has been unable to detect. Secret sins, like private conspirators, must be hunted out, or they may do deadly mischief; it is well to be much in prayer concerning them... if we could receive pardon for all our sins by telling every sin we have committed in one hour, there is not one of us who would be able to enter heaven, since, besides the sins that are known to us and that we may be able to confess, there are a vast mass of sins, which are as truly sins as those which we lament, but which are secret, and come not beneath our eye. If we had eyes like those of God, we should think very differently of ourselves. The transgressions which we see and confess are but like the farmer's small samples which he brings to market, when he has left his granary full at home. We have but a very few sins which we can observe and detect, compared with those which are hidden from ourselves and unseen by our fellow creatures.

Sins... Ignorance (one Greek word) (51) (**agnoema** from **agnoeo** = not to know, ignore) in context defines sin committed through ignorance or thoughtlessness. In other words it meant to sin without knowing that one has sinned

Guzik - 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.

Steven Cole commenting on **sins... in ignorance** writes that..

The author calls attention to the fact that old system provided a way for forgiveness for **the sins of the people committed in ignorance**" (9:7). The Law stipulated that there was no sacrifice for sins of defiance (Num. 15:30-31). There is a sense, of course, in which virtually all of our sins stem from defiance toward God, but the reference in Numbers seems to refer to outrageous, blasphemous behavior that represented revolt or treason against God (Ronald Allen, Expositor's Bible Commentary [Zondervan], ed. by Frank Gaebelin, 2:830). In this sense, there is a parallel in Hebrews 10:26-31, where the author strongly warns his readers against apostasy for which there is no sacrifice.

The annual Day of Atonement ritual would have underscored to Israel a number of vital spiritual truths. It portrayed the absolute holiness of God and how our sin separates us from entering His presence. It showed the sin and defilement of all of the people, including the high priest. It showed that no one dared to enter God's holy presence without the blood of an acceptable sacrifice. It showed that the people must approach God through the proper mediator, the high priest. It showed that if the proper sacrifice was offered, God would be propitiated or satisfied, so that He would not judge their sins. But, as glorious as all of this ritual was, it was inadequate, for two main reasons: (1) The old system provided limited access to God... (2) The old system provided limited efficacy of the sacrifices. ([Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#))

Adam Clarke explains **sins... in ignorance** - For transgressions of which they were not conscious: there were so many niceties in the ritual worship of the Jews, and so many ways in which they might offend against the law and incur guilt, that it was found necessary to institute sacrifices to atone for these sins of ignorance. And as the high priest was also clothed with infirmity, he required to have an interest in the same sacrifice, on the same account. This was a national sacrifice; and by it the people understood that they were absolved from all the errors of the past year, and that they now had a renewed right of access to the mercy-seat.

Barnes - The blood of the goat was offered for them, Leviticus 16:15. The word rendered errors—agnoema—denotes, properly, ignorance, involuntary error; and then error or fault in general—the same as the Hebrew מִשְׁפָּט from שָׁטָא—to err. The object was to make expiation for all the error and sins of the people, and this occurred once in the year. The repetition of these sacrifices was a

constant remembrance of sin; and the design was, that neither the priests nor the people should lose sight of the fact that they were violators of the law of God.

See Nu 15:22-31, 30 for contrast of "unintentional" vs "defiant" sins (see Nu 15:32-36 for specific example of "defiant" sin) and compare to writer's warning in Heb 10:26ff.

The offering of the blood of the goat and the carrying away of the scapegoat provided forgiveness only in that they typified the final sacrifice of Christ.

Andrew Murray (Holiest of All) writes...

Let us see and grasp this. Aaron's work was the shadow of Christ's work upon earth, of sacrifice and blood-shedding, of atonement and reconciliation with God. Aaron entered indeed within the veil with the blood, in token of God's acceptance of the atonement and the people. But he might not tarry there; he had to come out again at once. His entering only once a year, and that only for a few moments, served mostly, as we see in chap. 9:7, 8, to teach the people that the way into the Holiest was not yet opened; that for this they would have to wait till another dispensation came. Of a life in the Holiest of All, of a dwelling in God's presence, and fellowship with Him there, of a communication to the people of the power of a life within the veil,—of all this there was no thought. The glory of Christ's priesthood consists in His rending the veil and entering in for us: of His sitting at the right hand of God to receive and impart the Spirit of God and the powers of the heavenly life; of His being able to bring us in, that we too may draw nigh to God; of His maintenance in us of the life of heaven by His unceasing intercession and ministry in the power of an endless life; of all this the ministry of Aaron could afford no promise. ([Hebrews 9 Commentary from his book Holiest of All](#))

POSSIBLE CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE ON DAY OF ATONEMENT

Lev 16:4: early on the Day of Atonement, high priest cleansed himself ritually and "He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash, and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). (??) Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on.

Lev 16:6,11: Then he began his daily sacrificing. Unlike Christ, he had to sacrifice for his own sin.

Very likely he would have already slaughtered 22 different animals by the time he reached the event known as the atonement. It was an exceptionally busy and bloody thing that he did on this day.

Lev 16:23: After finishing all these sacrifices, he took off the robes of glory and beauty and went and bathed himself again completely. He then put on a white linen garment, with no decoration or ornament at all, and performed the sacrifice of atonement.

In this ritual, the high priest symbolized Jesus Christ, who, in His true and perfect work of atonement, stripped off all His glory and beauty and became the humblest of the humble. (Phil2:6-7) He dressed Himself in human flesh, pure but plain and unadorned. In all of His humility He never lost His holiness.

When the high priest was done with the sacrifice of atonement, he put the robes of glory and beauty back on, picturing still further the work of our Lord.

In His high priestly prayer, anticipating what would happen after the crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus said, "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (Jn17:5). He was saying in effect, "Give Me back My robes. I've done the job of atonement. My work of humility is Over."

Lev 16:12,13: In the garment of white linen, the high priest took coals off the bronze altar, where sacrifice was going to be made. He put them in a gold censer with incense and carried it into the Holy of Holies.

Here again is a beautiful picture of Christ, interceding for His own before God's presence.

Lev 16:14: Then the high priest went out and took a bullock purchased with his own money, because it was to be offered for his own sin. After slaughtering the bullock and offering the sacrifice, he had another priest assist him in catching the blood as it drained off. He swirled some of it in a small bowl and carried it into the Holy of Holies, where he sprinkled it on the mercy seat. The people could hear the bells on his robe as he moved about. He hurried out, and the people breathed a sigh of relief at seeing him. Had he entered the Holy of Holies ceremonially unclean, he would have been struck dead.

Lev 16:15, 8, 9, 16,17: When he came out, two goats were waiting for him by the bronze altar. In a small urn were two lots to determine which goat would be used for which purpose. One lot was marked for the Lord and the other for Azazel, for the

scapegoat. As each lot was drawn it was tied to the horn of one of the goats. The goat designated for Jehovah was then killed on the altar. Its blood was caught in the same way as that of the bullock and was swirled in the bowl as it was carried into the Holy of Holies. This blood, too, was sprinkled on the mercy seat, but this time for the sins of the people. Again he hurried back out.

Lev 16:21,22: He then placed his hands on the goat that remained, the scapegoat, symbolically placing the sins of the people on the goat's head. That goat was taken far out into the wilderness and turned loose, to be lost and never to return.

The first goat represented satisfaction of God's justice, in that sin had been paid for. The second represented satisfaction of man's conscience, because he knew he was freed of the penalty of sin. Still again we see Christ. In His own death he paid for man's sin, thereby satisfying God's justice, and He also carried our sins far from us, giving us peace of conscience and mind. He satisfied both God and man. The two goats actually are two parts of one offering. "And he shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering" (Lv 16:5). They represented propitiation and pardon, two aspects of the one atoning sacrifice.

Here is **Spurgeon's exposition** of Leviticus 16, the Day of Atonement... (See also commentary on Leviticus 16)

Leviticus 16:1, 2. And the Lord spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord, and died, and the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.

The way into the heavenly places was not yet made manifest; the inner shrine, called the holy of holies, was specially guarded from human access. No one could have said in those days, "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace," for only the high priest could approach the mercy seat at all, and he must go within the veil strictly in accordance with the instructions given to Moses by the Lord. Nadab and Abihu appear to have entered into the presence of God wrongfully, they had probably been drinking, for there was a command afterwards given that no priest should drink wine or strong drink when he went into the house of the Lord. God in his righteous anger slew these young men at once, and now, lest any others should intrude into the secret place of communion, a law was given to tell when and how man might approach his God.

Leviticus 16:3. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

There is no access to God except by sacrifice; there never was, and there never can be, any way to God for sinful man except by sacrifice.

Leviticus 16:4. He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

Our great High Priest offered himself without spot to God, and he is himself without sin; but the Jewish high priest must make himself typically pure by putting on the snow-white garments of holy service, and before doing so he must wash himself with water, that he might come before God acceptably. None might approach the Holy God with impurities upon them.

Leviticus 16:5, 6. And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

These priests were sinful, and therefore they must first themselves be purged from guilt before they could come nigh to God; but the true High Priest of God, our Lord Jesus, needed to offer no sacrifice for himself, for he was pure and without blemish or stain of sin.

Leviticus 16:7. And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

These two goats were not for himself, but for the people. You must regard them as if they were but one offering, for it needed both of them to set forth the divine plan by which sin is put away; one was to die, and the other was typically to bear away the sin of the people.

Leviticus 16:8. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

One goat was to show how sin is put away in reference to God by sacrifice, and the other goat was to show how it is put away in reference to us, God's people, by being carried into oblivion.

Leviticus 16:9-14. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness. And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: and he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: and he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

This was his first entrance within the veil, with holy incense to denote the acceptance which Christ has with God, though he is always well-beloved, and dear, and precious to his Father. This incense sent up a cloud that veiled the glory of the Shekinah which shone between the two wings of the cherubim, and so the high priest was better able to bear the wondrous brilliance by which God revealed his presence. When Aaron had thus filled the place with the sweetly-perfumed smoke, he took the blood of the bullock of the sin-offering, and carefully sprinkled it seven times on the mercy seat, and on the ground around the mercy seat. What a mercy it is for you and me that the spot where we meet with God is a place where the blood of the great sacrifice has been sprinkled, ay, and that the ground of our meeting with God, the place on which the mercy seat rests, has also the blood mark upon it!

Leviticus 16:15. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

Twice, you see, is the holy place thus besprinkled, first with the blood of the bullock, and then with that of the goat.

Leviticus 16:16. And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

If God is to dwell in the midst of sinful men, it can only be through the blood of the atonement. Twice seven times were the holy place and the tabernacle to be sprinkled with blood, as though to indicate a double perfectness of efficacy of the preparation for God's dwelling among sinful men.

Leviticus 16:17-19 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

Even this altar, to which we bring our prayers and our thankofferings, has sin upon it. There is some defilement even in the saltwater of our penitent tears; there is some unbelief even in our most acceptable faith; there is some want of holiness about our holiest things. We are unclean by nature, and by practice, too, what could we do without the sprinkling of the blood? See how the Lord insisted upon it in the case of his ancient people, yet there are some in these modern times who deride it. God forgive their blasphemy!

Leviticus 16:20, 21. And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

Notice the "all" in verse 21, "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness." This was the second part of the atonement showing, not sacrifice, but the effect of sacrifice, and explaining what becomes of sin after the sacrifice has been accepted, and the blood has been presented within the veil.

Leviticus 16:22-25. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: and he shall wash his flesh with water in the

holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar.

Only the fat of it, the best of it, was burnt upon the altar, for sin offerings were not acceptable to God. They were regarded as being filled with impurity by reason of the sin which they brought to mind; for this reason the bullock and the goat of the sin offering had to be burnt without the camp: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate," as our sin offering. Yet, inasmuch as the fat was accepted upon the altar, so is Christ, even as our sin offering, acceptable before God.

Leviticus 16:26, 27. And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp. And the bullock for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.

All must be burnt; and the last is mentioned because it more strikingly sets forth the impurity of the sin connected with the sin offering. All must be burnt right up; there must not be a particle of the sin offering left unconsumed.

Leviticus 16:28. And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

Everything that has to do with God's service must be clean and pure purified by fire, and purified by water. An atonement cannot be made by that which is itself defiled; it must be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing before it can put sin away; this is the virtue of Christ's atonement, for he was altogether without sin of any kind.

Leviticus 16:29-31 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: for on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

This shows what sacredness the Lord attached to the great day of atonement, and gives us more than a hint of the preciousness of our Lord's atoning work for us. Now let us turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and see how the apostle spiritualizes the services of the Mosaic dispensation.

F B Meyer comments that...

THE HIGH-PRIESTS ARE CONTRASTED WITH CHRIST (vv.7,11). The outer court of the sanctuary might be trodden, under certain conditions, by ordinary Israelites; but for the most part they were excluded, and service was rendered by Levites and priests, at the head of whom stood the high-priest, radiant in his garments of glory and beauty. The garment of fine white linen worn next his person; the linen girdle girt about his loins fitting him for ministry (John xiii. 4); the robe of the ephod, woven all of blue, and fringed with scarlet tassels in the form of pomegranates; the ephod itself, composed of the same materials as constituted the veil; and on his breast the twelve precious stones, engraven with the names of Israel. How grand a spectacle was there!

And yet there were two fatal flaws. He was not suffered to continue by reason of death (Heb 7:23); and he was a sinful man, who needed to offer sacrifice for himself (Heb 9:7). On the great day of atonement, it was expressly stated that he was not to go within the veil to plead for the people, until he had made an atonement for himself and his house by the blood of the young bullock, which he had previously killed (Lev. 16:11, 12, 13).

In these respects, how different is our High-Priest, after the order of Melchizedek! Death tried to master him; but he could not be holden of it; and by death he destroyed him that hath the power of death. "He continueth ever." "He ever liveth." His priesthood is unchangeable. "He is a priest forever." All this was clearly proved in the seventh chapter. But now it is asserted that he was "without spot" (ver. 14). He was well searched; but none could convince him of sin. Judas tried to find some warrant for his treachery, but was compelled to confess that it was innocent blood. Caiaphas and Annas called in false witnesses in vain; and at last condemned him on words uttered by his own lips, claiming divine authority and power. Pilate repeatedly asseverated, even washing his hands in proof, that he could find in him no fault at all.

Nay, the Lord himself bared his breast to the Father in conscious innocence; unlike the saintliest of men, who, in proportion to their goodness, confess their sinnership. "Such a High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, who needeth not daily to offer up sacrifice for his own sins.