

Hebrews 9:23-10:4 – A Better Sacrifice

Jesus is a better priest than the Aaronic priests. Jesus' priesthood remains forever. The Aaronic priests were only priest for a few years at most and then they were replaced. Jesus' priesthood is permanent while the Aaronic priests were temporary. Jesus has continuous access to God in heaven. The Aaronic high priest only had access once a year to enter the earthly Holy of Holies. Jesus offered himself as the unblemished sacrifice to remove sin once and for all. The Aaronic priests continually offered sacrifices. The sacrifices of bulls and goats were not able to perfect sinners. Jesus' once for all sacrifice saves believers for all time.

Read Hebrews 9:23-28.

The "copies of the heavenly things" refers to the earthly tabernacle and its furnishings. It was necessary for these things to be purified (with the blood of calves and goats) because verse 22 said that "under the law almost everything is purified with blood". What are the "heavenly things"? How were the heavenly things purified? (9:23)

Christ is not an Aaronic priest. He did not offer sacrifices in the earthly temple. How were the holy places, made with hands, referred to in verse 24? Where did Christ enter to appear before God the Father? In his priestly service, what does Christ do for us in God's presence? (9:24)

How often did the high priest enter the Holy of Holies? What did he bring with him? Since Christ is not an Aaronic priest, he is not required to offer sacrifices year after year. What sacrifice did Christ offer as high priest? (9:25)

Based on verse 26, if Christ was like an Aaronic priest, what would he need to do? Christ is a different kind of priest. How many sacrifices did Christ offer? When did Christ make this sacrifice? Christ offered himself as a sacrifice. What did his sacrifice accomplish? (9:26)

My father did a lot of wills as an attorney. People would say "if I die". My father would correct them saying "when you die". What is appointed for everyone? BDAG says that "appointed" means "it is certain, one is destined". What follows this appointment? (9:27)

Christ also died once. An important question for everyone to answer is, why did Jesus die? BDAG says that the word “bear” means “take up as a burden, take up”. What will Jesus do at his second coming? Who receives salvation? (9:28)

Read Hebrews 10:1-4.

The law had a shadow of the good things to come. Are shadows permanent? What is the “true form of these realities”? See Colossians 2:17. One of the “shadows” of the law was the yearly offering of sacrifices. What was the law unable to do? (10:1)

If the sacrifices of the law were able to make worshipers perfect, what would be the result? Since these hypothetical results never happened we can conclude that the sacrifices of the law were not able to truly cleanse the worshipers of their sin. (10:2)

Based on verse 3, what did the continual offering of sacrifices do? (10:3)

In verse 4, what was declared to be impossible? What did the sacrifices of the law accomplish? What does this verse say to someone who thinks that Old Testament believers were saved through the blood of bulls and goats? (10:4)

The Bible does not tell us that Melchizedek ever offered a sacrifice. This is where the importance of the Mosaic law comes in. Through the law we understand that God requires a blood sacrifice for sin. That sacrifice must be without blemish. So from the law we learn that Christ needed to offer an unblemished, blood sacrifice for sins.

Although other New Testament books do not explicitly say that Jesus is a priest, what New Testament passages, outside of Hebrews, indicate that Jesus serves as a priest? See 1 Corinthians 5:7, Ephesians 5:2, Galatians 1:3-4, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 5:25, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Titus 2:13-14, 1 John 2:1-2, 3:16, John 1:29.