



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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## Hebrews 9:11-22 New Revised Standard Version June 16, 2019

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, June 16, 2019**, is from **Hebrews 9:11-22**.

**Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Hebrews 9:11) But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation),**

Jesus Christ serves as High Priest for all who entrust their lives to him as their Lord and Savior. Seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father, Jesus prays (intercedes) for all who follow him. "The greater and more perfect tent" probably means the throne room of God in heaven that we find described in the Book of Revelation, that was represented by the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle (tent of meeting) and later in the temple as the meeting place for God and Moses, and later for God and the Levitical high priest. The tabernacle and Holy of Holies designed by the LORD and built by Moses and the Levites was made by human hands and of "this creation." Today, we go to Jesus in prayer to meet with God in heaven. As fully human and fully God, Jesus is Mediator in heaven between God the Father and us.

**(Hebrews 9:12) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.**

Because Jesus entered once for all into the holy throne room of God in heaven, He does not need to leave heaven and come back to earth to offer more sacrifices for us to enjoy eternal life. Jesus secured an eternal redemption for all who believe in him as their Lord and Savior. Before the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, temple sacrifices were made everyday by the Levitical priests, and once a year on the Day of Atonement the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies to offer sacrifices for himself and the people. Through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ, by Jesus shedding of His own blood on the cross in our behalf, all who believe in Jesus are redeemed forever. Believers in Jesus do not need the sacrifices of mere human priests for the forgiveness of sins or to gain access to God or entry into heaven. Read 1 Peter 1:18-19, and listen to Peter as he explains how precious the death of Christ is for us: “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”

**(Hebrews 9:13) For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified,**

The blood of goats and bulls (along with a scapegoat) were offered on the Day of Atonement, on the day the Levitical high priest entered the Holy of Holies. Though breaking any of God’s laws defiles the law breaker, “defiled persons” under the old covenant were those who were ritually defiled, perhaps by having touched a dead body or in other ways, and they needed to be sprinkled with the ashes of a heifer in water to be ritually cleansed. It would have been impossible to offer a blood sacrifice for all the ritually defiled people who went to the temple seeking ritual cleansing (ashes in water were more practical). In this way, their external flesh (bodies) were ritually purified or set apart (sanctified) so they could enter the temple (but not the Holy of Holies where the LORD on the Mercy Seat above the Ark of the Covenant would meet with the high priest and receive his sacrifices).

**(Hebrews 9:14) 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 worship the living God!**

The sacrifices of the Levitical priests could not cleanse or purify a sinner's conscience or remove the guilt of sin or change a person's relationship with God from fear of punishment to loving and serving God out of appreciation for God's forgiveness. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross could achieve all these things for those who believed in him. When Jesus' body died in sacrificial death, His eternal Spirit did not die; therefore, Jesus could present himself before God the Father in our behalf and set us apart (sanctify us) for God's holy, loving service and worship. Because Jesus has died and risen from the dead, He gives the Holy Spirit to indwell those who trust him as their Lord and Savior. Therefore, believers in Christ no longer do "dead works" or "perform rituals" or "offer sacrifices" to appease an angry God they have come to fear because of their sins; instead, they love God and love to obey and serve God because God first loved them and showed that love by forgiving all their sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

**(Hebrews 9:15) For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.**

From before the beginning, God planned a way to justly and mercifully forgive those who transgressed the moral law (the Law of Love summed up in the Ten Commandments). Through Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross, God planned to justly and mercifully forgive the sins of those who truly served and worshiped God under the old covenant revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures. Moses was the mediator of that old covenant. As Mediator of the new covenant, Jesus is the One we go to for God's forgiveness, salvation from sin, divine guidance, spiritual power, eternal life, and much more. Through faith in Jesus as the Mediator of the new covenant, Jesus made the "eternal inheritance" possible for everyone who believes in him. In Matthew 5:5, Jesus promised that the meek will inherit the earth. And the New Testament speaks of Jesus' followers also inheriting eternal life, the

kingdom of God, the imperishable, salvation, what has been promised, and a blessing. In Revelation 21:7, we read, “Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”

**(Hebrews 9:16) Where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established.**

To illustrate what Christ did in fulfilling the old covenant and creating the new covenant as revealed in the New Testament, the writer describes how a will is administered. Before a person can receive an inheritance in a will, the death of the person who made the will must be certified or fully proved. Jesus’ death and burial were fully proved; therefore, believers in Jesus can receive the eternal inheritance He willed for all who will follow him.

**(Hebrews 9:17) For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.**

Jesus’ death was no unplanned accident. Jesus had to die for believers to inherit what could only be given after His death and resurrection. Jesus explained much of what He would do for His followers and promised them even more blessings that at that time they could not even begin to understand when He was alive. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, He began to fulfill what He had promised His followers. Because Jesus lives today, He keeps all His promises revealed in the new covenant for our benefit, with more blessings yet to come when He returns as He promised.

**(Hebrews 9:18) Hence not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.**

By comparison, when God gave Moses the old covenant and the Ten Commandments, along with the designs for the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat, the tabernacle, the priestly garments, and the implements for temple sacrifices and worship, Moses made everything God designed and Moses did all God told him and then Moses sprinkled blood on everything made with human hands and all the people to officially begin the Hebrews religious life under the first covenant.

**(Hebrews 9:19) For when every commandment had been told to all the people by Moses in accordance with the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people,**

God revealed the Ten Commandments through Moses the mediator to the Hebrews. Then, God created ceremonial provisions for the people to worship God, especially if they broke His laws. The blood of these sacrifices could set apart for holy use the people, the priests, and the implements used in worship. However, religious rituals could not remove the true moral guilt of the Hebrews after they sinned. They could only be saved by grace through faith. In Job 19:25, we see how Job expressed his faith in the Messiah that God planned to send for his redemption: “I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth.” When Jesus Christ came, He (and His apostles after His resurrection) showed how the old covenant sacrifices pointed forward to the time when God’s Messiah would make the supreme sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins, so those who repented and believed in Jesus would inherit eternal life.

**(Hebrews 9:20) saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you.”**

For everyone’s good, God gave the Hebrews the Ten Commandments. Everyone of sound mind must admit that if everyone in a nation obeyed these few commandments that their nation would be a happy place—no theft, no murder, no adultery, no coveting, but people loving and caring for one another and receiving God’s blessings. Since life is in the blood, blood could be used in sacrificial worship to remind the worshipers that doing everything God’s way brings true life and joy to people, but disobeying God results in the shedding of blood and death.

**(Hebrews 9:21) And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship.**

Unfortunately, even though the blood from sacrifices made people and instruments used in worship ritually holy, the blood of animals did not help transform the Hebrews spiritually and morally to live a loving and holy life

in relationship with God and one another. Blood could be sprinkled everywhere, but it did not bring new life—that could only be done after the death and resurrection of God’s Messiah and the sending of the Holy Spirit to indwell all Jesus’ followers.

**(Hebrews 9:22) Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**

Under the old covenant, if a person consciously and deliberately violated one of the Ten Commandments, he could not be forgiven by a ritual sacrifice or the shedding of an animal’s blood. He could only be forgiven when God counted him righteous through faith in the true God as revealed in the Bible. Jesus had to come and die and rise again as the promised Messiah before God could with justice and mercy forgive those who believed and repented whether they lived before and after Old Testament times. As their Savior and Lord, by grace through the faith of His followers, Jesus gives believers the eternal inheritance that God prepared for His children.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. What is one blessing believers in Jesus can receive from Jesus as their High Priest?
2. What is one blessing believers in Jesus can receive from Jesus as their sacrifice?
3. What had to happen before believers in Jesus could receive their promised eternal inheritance?
4. What is one blessing that the followers of Jesus inherit?
5. Name something sacrifices under the old covenant could not accomplish for the Hebrews.

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly  
*International Bible Lesson.*

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