

Hebrews

Chapter 9

FAITH COMES BY HEARING: Read Chapter Nine

SUMMARY: Verses 1-28

1. We get a glimpse into the set up of the tabernacle in the Old Testament.
2. The tabernacle was the place where God dwelt and where the priests made sacrifices and offerings to God.
3. Back in Exodus, chapter 25, God gave Moses the instructions to make a tent. He built it so that God could be properly worshipped while the Israelite people were on their way to the Promised Land (it took a while—forty years to be exact).
4. Inside the tent there was a lampstand (or menorah), a table, and some bread called "the Holy Place." There was also a curtain or veil that separated out another section of the tent: the Holy of Holies. This was the V.I.P. section that held the Ark of the Covenant. The only person who could ever enter this area was the high priest, and he could only go in once a year on Yom Kippur. It was very exclusive.
5. When the high priest went into the Holy of Holies, he took blood from a bull and a male goat. Once inside, he would sprinkle the blood on the Ark of the Covenant (kind of gross, but hey). The idea was that this ritual would help the priest and the people atone for their sins and get right with God again.
6. These rituals, however, could never help bring the Israelites closer to God.
7. Jesus is our high priest, but he didn't go into a tent in the desert help people. He used "the greater and perfect tent." That's not something that people made but that the Creator himself made.
8. Jesus also didn't mess around with animal blood. He used his own blood to atone for everyone's sins.
9. When Jesus sacrificed himself, He didn't just purify people's bodies; Now, believers are also freed from performing "dead works" and they can put their faith in a God who's alive.
10. Think of it this way, says Hebrews: Christians are God's kids and they're entitled to inherit all the good things he has. But generally, you can't claim an inheritance until someone dies. So it's kind of like God wrote a will for humanity and then, when Jesus died, we got to cash in.
11. And while the high priest has to do the same ritual year after year, Jesus' sacrifice was so perfect that He only had to do it once to accomplish the same results.
12. People only get to set foot on this Earth once, but Jesus will come back. The first time, He sacrificed Himself for our sins. The next time He makes an appearance, He'll save all the people who had faith in him.

REFLECTION

1. What verse stuck out most to you?
2. Why do you think that 'earthly tent' in the O.T. was so important to God?
3. How do you think this 'tent' and the worship that took place in it showed the holiness of God?
4. Why do you think blood is so important to God?
5. Why was Jesus' blood so much better than all the animal sacrifices previously offered to God?
6. When you hear the phrase, "Jesus cleared our guilty consciences so we could serve the living God" what does that mean to you?
7. How would you explain this verse to someone who doesn't believe in Jesus: "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

APPLICATION

1. When you feel guilty before God how do you handle it?
2. Make a list of things the blood of Jesus brought to you as an inheritance.
3. Are there areas in your life than aren't not up to par with God's holiness? If so, what can you do about such?
4. Take time each day to thank Jesus for His sacrifice and the 'better' things He has in store for your life.

