

A GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Take-Home · Session 8 · Once For All · Hebrews 9

A Catholic Journey Through the Letter to the Hebrews

What We Found

The old liturgy was a magnificent locked door. Priests daily in the outer room; the high priest alone, once a year, never without blood, into the inner: the floor plan preached that the way in was not yet open, and no bull's blood could reach the conscience.

Every axis of Yom Kippur inverted. His own blood, not another's; once for all, not annually; into heaven itself, not the copy; eternal redemption; and the conscience purified from dead works to serve the living God.

One sacrifice, three tenses. Offered once for all to put away sin (9:26); appearing now in the presence of God on our behalf (9:24); appearing a second time to save those who eagerly wait (9:28). Offered once, presented always, coming again.

Remembrance makes present. The Passover was a zikkaron, a memorial feast (Exodus 12:14); Jewish tradition drew out its logic: in every generation each one regards himself as having come out of Egypt, and the Church defines biblical memorial the same way (CCC 1363). "Do this in remembrance of me" uses that grammar: biblical memorial is participation, not nostalgia.

The Mass is the one sacrifice, made present. Trent's own words: the same victim, the same priest, the manner of offering alone differing. Not repetition: presence (CCC 1366–1367). The cross is too alive to stay in the past.

Voices of the Church

St. John Chrysostom *Homilies on Hebrews*

Do we not offer every day? We do, but as a memorial of his death; and this sacrifice is one, not many: we do not offer another sacrifice, but always the same: or rather, we perform a memorial of a sacrifice.

The Council of Trent *Session 22*

The victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests who then offered himself on the cross, the manner of offering alone being different. The fruits of that bloody oblation are received most plentifully through this unbloody one; so far is it from derogating in any way from that sacrifice.

St. Gregory the Great *Dialogues, Book 4*

Who of the faithful can doubt that at the very hour of the sacrifice, at the priest's voice, the heavens

are opened, and choirs of angels are present in that mystery of Jesus Christ; the lowest things are joined with the highest, earth is united to heaven, and the visible and the invisible become one.

Live It This Week

1. Memorize the three tenses as one sentence: offered once, presented always, appearing again: and pray it at the elevation this Sunday.
2. Reach out to one person who keeps their distance from the Church over this exact objection: not to win, but to reopen: with charity as the headline.
3. **Write down the oldest unanswered question you have carried through this study, so it is ready to bring next session.**

Scripture Memory Verse

HEBREWS 9:24 (RSV2CE)

“For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.”

Before Next Session

Read Hebrews 10:1–25, watching the postures: who stands, who sits, and what each posture means.
Session 1 veterans: bring your oldest question.

Catechism Connections

CCC 1085 (Christ's Paschal mystery transcends all times) · CCC 1363–1364 (memorial, defined) · CCC 1366–1367 (one victim, made present) · CCC 613–614 (the definitive sacrifice)