

Note

Hebrews – Part 2 of 2

Summary

Hebrews reveals Jesus Christ is superior as a sacrifice, bringing on a new and superior covenant. God's laws dwell inside us through the holy spirit and enable us to know Him in an intimate way when Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice for sins once and for all. The trials of faith prove God discipline His children for their good and His glory. Hebrews reminds believers to live faithful and fruitful lives by offering up a sacrifice of praise to God, doing good deeds and obeying our leaders for the glory of God.

Transcript

Hebrews – Part 2 of 2

We continue with Hebrews, the second part, beginning in chapter 8.

In chapter 8, the author is telling us “Jesus is superior as a sacrifice, bringing on a superior covenant”.

Let's look at chapter 8 verses 4-6,

[4] Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law.

[5] They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”

[6] But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant He mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

The author tells us that, ‘Moses, when he was asked to make the tabernacle, he was told, “Make this carefully, because this is a pattern of what is up there [in Heaven]. This is not the real deal, this is a copy of what is up there [in Heaven].”

Then, he says, “This Jesus, though He is not ministering in this copy temple, but He’s ministering in the real one, up there.”

So, let's look at Hebrews 8:10-13. If it’s a bit confusing for you, go back, think about it, and it will slowly sink in.

Hebrews 8:10-13,

[10] “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people,

[11] And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest.

[12] For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

[13] In speaking of a new covenant, He makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

It says here that Jesus has brought in a new law and a new covenant.

Remember, Moses brought the law, it was on the tablets (stony tablets). The law was written there, and people would say, "Obey this law."

When Jesus comes, He brings the law, not on tablets of stone, but, it says, "He will write the law—not on stone—but in your heart". In this new covenant that Jesus is going to bring, as opposed to the old covenant that Moses brought, the law is written in our hearts.

What does that mean?

It means that we will want to serve God. The heart is about "wanting", "emotion". The stone is about "you don't have a choice"; your heart may not want to, but you better obey that. And everybody failed, because the heart didn't want to obey that.

Now, He not only gave us the law but He wrote it in the heart. Heart is "desire", "love". You now not only need to obey the law, but you actually love the law, and say, "This is good, I want to do it." So, Jesus is going to bring the law, not on stone, but in your heart.

In the past, you had to force people to learn. Now, it says, "you don't need to teach people." Instinctively, someone who is born-again, by the Spirit, wants to know the Word of God, not because he needs to, but he wants to. You know whether you're a believer, if you say, "I like this beautiful Book. I want to know more, not because I need to know more, to get to Heaven, but I want to know more. I am going to Heaven, but I want to know more."

And then, verse 12, "...I will be merciful toward their iniquities... remember their sins no more." Sins forgiven.

So, that's the superior new covenant.

Verse 13 is interesting, “In speaking of a new covenant, He makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.”

What do you mean “is becoming obsolete and growing old, and is ready to vanish away”? What is meant by that?

The temple in Jerusalem was still there. At the time of this writing, it was still there. They were competing. The old covenant was still in existence, and still very much alive in Jerusalem, and Jews could still go back. It was not cut-off. The Jerusalem temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. This was sometime before that, but it was going to go away, according to the writer.

We go on to Hebrews 9:13-14.

Remember, we’re still on the sacrifices and the covenant. So, Jesus is a superior sacrifice, bringing a superior covenant.

Hebrews 9:13-14,

[13] For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh,

[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 serve the living God.

What's the difference between the blood of animals and Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross?

Animals were slaughtered all the time, in the temple or the tabernacle. If you wanted to worship God, you brought an animal because you knew, as a sinner, you cannot face God. You have no right to even stand in the presence of God. Ceremonially, you were filthy and had no right to enter. So, your ticket was to bring an animal and slaughter it. And then, when the blood of the animal was shed, then you had the “ceremonial” right, you were now accepted by the priest, to enter the temple and perform your duties to God.

So, that was called cleansing. Look carefully at verse 13 the blood cleanses you “for the purification of the flesh”.

In other words, I can now stand before God in the temple. But my conscience still says, "My sins are still not settled, I'm just legally allowed to be here."

As opposed to verse 14, "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience".

When you believe in Jesus, and what He did on the Cross, your conscience tells you, "Jesus settled my sins, I can now come to God and call Him, Abba Father. I can walk right into His presence, because I'm not just ceremonially clean to stand in the temple, I am clean in my heart because of Jesus, Who paid the penalty for my sin, to stand before God. I can dare call Him "Father" anytime, because I am cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ."

Big difference.

In chapter 10, he compares the animal sacrifices with the perfect Sacrifice.

Hebrews 10:1-4, first.

[1] For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

[2] Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?

[3] But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year.

[4] For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Even I know, any human knows... How can an animal be a substitute for me? I'm not an animal, a substitute must be a fair substitute.

If I steal your car, I must give you back your car. I cannot steal your car and give you back a bicycle. That's not a substitute, it may appease me, for a while, "At least you tried to repay me something," but it doesn't satisfy me.

When you bring an animal to die for your sins, instead of you dying for your sins, you know, it is not a sufficient sacrifice. That's why, every year you bring.... to remind yourself, "I haven't fully paid."

So, people who bring animal sacrifices for their sins are just bringing “bicycles to repay for the car”.

Hebrews 10:10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Note that, “once for all”.

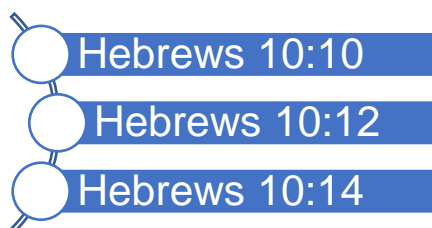
Hebrews 10:12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God,

Hebrews 10:14 For by a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

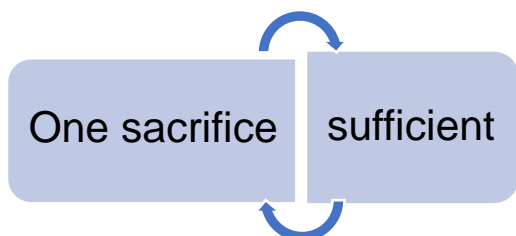
3 times it’s mentioned, in chapter 10: verse 10, verse 12, verse 14.

Unlike the animal sacrifices they had to bring day by day, year by year, and yet, it never ended -it’s an endless cycle. But Jesus offered Himself, once, on the Cross.

Why once? Because that one sacrifice perfectly paid for all our sins.
Remember:



Remember these three.



So, we see, the animal sacrifice = endless; Christ's sacrifice = once.

Hebrews 10:19-23,

[19] Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,

[20] by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh,

[21] and since we have a great priest over the house of God,
[22] let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

[23] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

So, what should we do? He tells these Jewish Christians,
“Perfect sacrifice. Perfect High Priest. You can draw close to God, with confidence, because not only can you stand in the presence of the temple, but you can now stand in the presence of God with a clean conscience; that your penalty, the fine, has been paid for you, therefore, hold fast.”

So, you see, “let us draw near” —verse 22— “with a true heart...”

[23] “Let us hold fast...” [24] “let us consider how to stir up...”

So, we see here, the encouragement now... “Don't quit, you, who are pondering about all the persecution you're suffering, your kids are suffering; your house is being vandalized, and people are mocking you... Don't quit, hold fast.”

We move on, to Hebrews 10:24-25,

[24] And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,
[25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Many of the Jews became afraid of meeting together, because they would get persecuted. So, they stopped gathering together. And, the writer says, “Let us hold fast... Let us gather together... Let us encourage one another... We need to do that, as we see the Day approaching,” We don't know what the Day is, here...

That's an encouragement. Every time we feel discouraged and fearful, the best thing to do is, not to run, but to gather.

And then, Hebrews 10:37-39,

[37] For, “Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay;
[38] but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.”

[39] But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

So, he said, “Don't leave. Don't shrink back. Hang in there.”

We see, this was written for people who were wavering, they're not really believers, probably very close. Because, if they were really believers, they would hang on. Some were believers, maybe out of fear they denied the faith, and died in shame. But always once saved, always saved.

Hebrews 11 is a chapter we are not going to talk about, because it's been preached over and over again, if you have been in church for a while. It is called the Hall of Fame of Heroes of the Faith.

The writer puts this Hall of Fame there, of all these heroes of the faith, who also suffered persecution, who hung in there, who often never even saw the promises visibly with their eyes, but believed it was worth it all.

It's put here to encourage the struggling Jewish Christians, to say, “You have a whole list of heroes of the faith, who suffered more than you. And they saw less than you, they never saw Jesus. They never had this clarity, they had bits and pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, and they hung on to those bits and pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, that God would save them. And you have seen the Messiah clearly preached to you, Who died for your sins and rose from the dead. And you are considering running away?”

Those heroes of the faith are to be our heroes.

We come to Hebrews 12:1-2,

[1] Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

[2] looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

There were heroes of the faith, first, as good examples. Then he gives Jesus as the perfect example. In chapters 11, 12, and 13, it's already the positive part, more on encouragement.

“Look at the heroes of the faith. Then, look at Jesus, Who suffered so much more than you, He endured it. Do you know where He is now? He's at the right hand of God, the Father.”

So, you have not even suffered anything like that. You have not suffered anything like Him.

Hebrews 12:3-5,

[3] Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

[4] In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

[5a] And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

So, he says, “Why are you quitting? Your suffering is shame, not even up to shedding blood yet.” At this point, they were not even being martyred, they were not being killed, but they were being shamed, threatened maybe...

Then, it goes on to Hebrews 12:5-13.

[5] And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by Him.

[6] For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives.”

[7] It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

[8] If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

[9] Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

[10] For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good that we may share His holiness.

[11] For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

[12] Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,
[13] and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

He's telling them, “You're being chastened. Your fathers used to chasten you, to make you stronger, make you better in character, scolded you,

sometimes, punished you, and all fathers do that" So, God's doing that for you, to make you stronger, better, more appreciative, more humble.

You see, it says, "If you don't have chastening from your earthly father, probably, you're not even his son. He doesn't really care about you."

If I see other kids misbehave, it's not my problem. I'm not going to scold them, they can misbehave as much as they like. But, my children, when they need correction, I do it. Because... I love them.

So, Christians, when we don't have correction, it's not that we are living right, it may be we're not even God's child. Kind of worrisome, if you do wrong, and God doesn't seem to do anything about it. If He leaves you to... "Go ahead! Do what you like!" You're probably not even a child of God. You say, "Come on. That's not very fair."

Well, ask yourself... If your father watches you do all kinds of things; take drugs, do bad things, immoral things. And your father just smiles at you, and just walks by, and says nothing. You'll begin to wonder, "Is he really your father? Are you really his child?" You don't need high theology for this; you need plain, old common sense. Sometimes, common sense trumps deep theology.

So, he's telling them, "Chastening, you are going through chastening. Don't get upset, it's painful for the time being, but, it's needful for long term."

Hebrews 13:1, we end here, "Let brotherly love continue."

And then, we go on to a whole practical section.

He says, "In the midst of all this persecution, don't forget to love one another." In times of persecution, we forget about our responsibilities, we just worry about ourselves.

Hebrews 13:13-14, we come near to the end of this Book.

[13] Therefore, let us go to Him outside the camp and bear the reproach He endured.

[14] For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

Christ suffered outside the camp, outside Jerusalem, brought up to the hill to be crucified. We, similarly, as Christians, I believe, we are to go out and

suffer outside. In our case, the church. Go out, suffer for Christ, as Christ went out, suffered for you.

Hebrews 13:15-17,

[15] Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name.

[16] Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

The sacrifices you and I bring, now, are not animals. He's talking to Jews who keep thinking "sacrifice is bringing animals to the temple". It's the sacrifice of praise. Even when you're being chastened, "Thank You, God for teaching me, warning me, chastening me, humbling me." That's the sacrifice of praise.

Secondly, another sacrifice you bring to God is to do good works. "Do not neglect to do good, to share what you have," (they were being persecuted) "for such sacrifices are pleasing to God".

So, you and I still bring sacrifices, but not animals.

1) Lips. 2) Doing good deeds.

And then, verse 17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

So, another thing, he tells them, "In the midst of all this struggle, remember, to obey your leaders. Respect your leaders."

So, in the midst of persecution, expect to have:

- 1) praises;
- 2) charitable works, even though you may not have a lot
- 3) obey your rulers

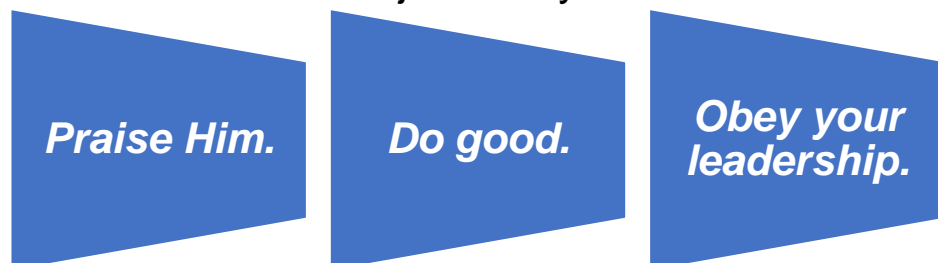
And then, it ends with Hebrews 13:20-21,

[20] Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,

[21] equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

So, “may the God, Who has saved you, equip you, to do His will.”

What is His will? He just told you.



May God equip you, to do every good work, and fulfill His good will.

So, this is the Book of Hebrews.

What is this whole Book about?

It's about the perfect Savior.

Better than anything. Better than the angels.

Many religions still look at angels and spirits as a big deal.

No, Jesus is way above.

Better than all the heroes of the faith.

A lot of Christians love to read mission stories, heroes of the faith. Nothing wrong with that. But remember, there's Someone far superior.

And then, superior to the priest. Everyone looks up at their leaders, like God, sometimes. There's Jesus. Far, far superior.

And then, people make sacrifices for us.

Everybody. Often, parents make sacrifice.

But there's one Sacrifice far, far better than all, Jesus Christ.

And then, there's all kinds of blessings.

We get covenants and promises. There's one covenant, better than all. The new covenant, in Jesus Christ. He writes His laws in our heart.

In other words, we have been blessed with a heart transplant. Total heart transplant. We are new creatures, because of Jesus Christ.

What a Savior! What a Lord!

The Book of Hebrews, though it's not written for us, written for Jews on the verge of running back to an old, inferior covenant. You and I, though we're not Jews, with that same temptation to run back to, except idols, or nothingness.

But we have something to look forward to...

To love, to honor Jesus

For some, Jesus is just a baby, at Christmas, in a manger.

For some, Jesus is just a dead Man, on a Cross, hanging on their necklace.

For some, Jesus is just a miracle worker.

For some, Jesus is just a good teacher.

For many, Jesus is the best Man, a good Man.

But, for you and me, Jesus... Amazing. Unbelievable.

I hope the Book of Hebrews will put this beautiful Son of God in the forefront of your mind. The Book is only beautiful because it shines a spotlight on Jesus, the radiance of God, the glory of God, the express image of the invisible God. The beautiful God, seen in the beautiful Son, revealed in the Beautiful Book.

May God bless you.