

HEBREWS 8—10**THE SON IS THE PRIEST IN THE HEAVENLY TABERNACLE**

5. Christ is the High Priest in the heavenlies who ministers for the believers (8:1-9:28).
 - a. Christ is a high priest in the eternal heavenlies, which are the ultimate of the temporary picture tabernacle (8:1-5).

8:1 Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, " THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN. "

- b. Christ is the high priest of the full covenant (8:6-9:22).
 - 1) God spoke during the period of the Old Covenant (Jeremiah 31) that there would be a better (full) one coming, forcing the old to become obsolete (8:6-13).

8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, He says, "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; 9 NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT

OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD. 10 "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. 11 "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. 12 "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." 13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

- 2) The tabernacle of the first covenant was a picture of the second (9:1-5).

9:1 Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. 3 And behind the second veil, there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, 4 having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant. 5 And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

- 3) The old covenant high priest could not enter, but once a year, a symbol that the way was not opened up yet (9:6-10).

9:6 Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship, 7 but into the second only the high priest enters, once

a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. 8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, 9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, 10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

- 4) Now Christ has become the ultimate sacrifice and high priest, entering a more perfect tabernacle (9:11-14).

9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

- 5) For similar to the old covenant, there was required a death to seal it, and the new covenant had the death of Christ (9:15-22).

9:15 And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. 18 Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. 19 For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to

all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU." 21 And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. 22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

- 6) Christ offers Himself in the heavenly tabernacle only once, not requiring repetition, like the day of atonement, and now can appear again for eternal deliverance of those who are now enduring (9:23-28).

This verse (28) is very important in the scope of the book. It demonstrates that the deliverance that they all want to see (physical from their suffering) will be present when the High Priest returns to save them from their enemies. The point is that the author has not guaranteed them relief during this life, but only in the Second Coming of Christ (which would include the rapture as the beginning of the deliverance).

9:23 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for

salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.⁴⁷

6. Christ perfects the sanctified ones (10:1-39).

a. The doctrine of perfection through Christ (10:1-18).

- 1) The Law only cleansed the offerers for a year and then it never fully took away sins (10:1-4).

10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

- 2) But Christ obediently did the will of God, and became the offered One (10:5-9).

10:5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING THOU HAST NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY THOU HAST PREPARED FOR ME; 6 IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN THOU HAST TAKEN NO PLEASURE. 7 "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE ROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO THY WILL, O GOD.'" 8 After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN THOU HAST NOT DESIRED, NOR HAST THOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them" (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO THY WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second.

⁴⁷ They eagerly await Him since they are suffering and enduring and want Him to relieve them.

- 3) This sacrifice perfects the receiver once for all, not like the priest who daily offered the sacrifices, and now the High Priest (Jesus the Son) awaits the time of vengeance on enemies (10:10-14).

10:10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, 13 waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

- 4) The new covenant forgiveness was prophesied by the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 31); the Old Covenant symbolic sacrifices are no longer valid (10:15-18).

10:15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, 16 "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM," He then says, 17 "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE." 18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

- b. The effects of the perfect sacrifice and high priesthood of Christ are that the believer's access is directly with the Father (10:19-39).

- 1) The fact of the sacrifice and the high priesthood gives believers access as brothers to the Father (10:19-21).

10:19 Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

- 2) The desired results (10:19-25).

- a) The reader is to align himself with the Father of the Son since he is purified and righteous through the sacrifice of the High Priest (10:22).

10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

- b) The reader is to endure with his confession of Jesus Christ as the Anointed One of God who delivers Him for He will deliver (and has delivered) them to relationship with God (10:23).

10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

- c) Let the reader consider how to encourage⁴⁸ the assembly in obedient endurance, instead of abandoning⁴⁹ it for a return to the nation in order to avoid suffering (10:24-25).

10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

- 3) The undesired results (10:26-31).

⁴⁸ Note here that the verbal imperative “encourage” is the opposite of “abandon”. Thus the subject of each verb is the reader. This demonstrates that the reader is a believer for instead of abandoning he is told to encourage. Thus the reader is a believer, for no unbeliever could encourage the others to endure.

⁴⁹ The word here is better translated “abandon”. This is not to be taken mildly as in missing church services. The sin here is that of abandoning identification with the believers for those who reject Christ, an abandonment of Christ.

- a) The action: to abandon identification with Christ after having first identified with Him is to sin presumptuously⁵⁰ (10:26a).

⁵⁰ This is not referring to what is commonly known as sinning knowing you are sinning. In other words if one intentionally *lies*, this is not what is meant by “willfully sinning.” The “willful sin” is a reference to the Old Testament (cf. Num.15:30) and is a sin of rejecting the covenant (through which they obtained forgiveness). That was referred to as the “willful”, “presumptuous”, or “intentional” sin or at times “the sin with a high hand”. In other words one would decide that he did not want to be under the demands of the Jewish God (covenant) any longer and would reject the Old Covenant. In rejecting the Old Covenant, he rejected the forgiveness of sins that the covenant could give. Thus there would be no longer a forgiveness for his sins, since he had rejected the very covenant that provided that forgiveness. An example of this in the Old Testament is Korah (Numbers 16; who rejected Moses and Aaron, the administrators of the Old Covenant) and the person’s death was required.

Believers in Christ are under the New Covenant, where Jesus is the way to have sins forgiven. If an unbeliever rejects Christ then he cannot have forgiveness of sins. If someone was to reject Christ (or the apostles, or the Lord’s table) *after having become saved* (having received the true knowledge), then this would be the *intentional or willful* sin. If one has not rejected Christ then he has not committed this sin. Our everyday sins, though very evil, and sometimes planned, are covered under the New Covenant. In the Book of Hebrews, the Jews who had become Christians were thinking of rejecting Christ to go back to Judaism, since the Jews had thrown them out of their families, and were persecuting them.

If one is worried about whether they have committed this sin, this shows that they have not, since to be convicted about it shows that the Holy Spirit is working since conviction about sin and forgiveness through Jesus Christ can only come through the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit’s job is to turn them to Christ. And God must forgive anyone who can call on Him. Remember, the very fact that one is convicted by the Holy Spirit to desire to have their sins forgiven by Christ is a testimony to the fact that this person *is* saved, because that desire only comes through the Holy Spirit. So if one is worried about it, he has not committed it.

The next question is what will happen to these people. First of all, if they have been saved once, they are still saved and will enter into the gates of the kingdom after death. However, the reward and identification with Christ will be minimized in the kingdom (normally referred to as rewards) since they have rejected representation (identification) here. Also an equally important question is what happens to them now? The answer is clear in the Book of Hebrews; they are out of God’s will (deliverance) on earth. They will have no confidence of God aligning Himself with them in their every suffering, but will be indeed aligned with God’s enemies. And what is worse they will not have the knowledge of their separation from God. They will be deceived and think they do have a relationship when they do not. Probably the worst thing that could happen to a man is that God does not allow conviction and allows him to feel safe in his ignorance. Thus there would be no ability to repent and restore oneself to the relationship. (Refer to Zane Hodges in “Hebrews” from the Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament Edition).

10:26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth

- b) The problem: The sacrificial system is gone (10:26b).

there no longer remains⁵¹ a sacrifice for sins,

- c) The penalty: There is a sure expectation of judgment more serious than those who opposed the authority of the Law of Moses (10:27-29).

10:27 but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. 28 Anyone who has set aside⁵² the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses⁵³. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God⁵⁴, and has regarded as unclean⁵⁵

⁵¹ There are two options for the interpretation here. One is that the old sacrifices are gone, no longer effective, and thus one could not go back to them to find forgiveness. The other is that there never was a sacrifice for the sin with a high hand, and thus having committed it, one would be excluded from the community, usually with death. The first option seems the most likely, going along with 10:18, which would support the former. The second is possible. Even if the one returned back to the Old Covenant, there was not a sacrifice for that sin. On the other hand, the person did not think he had committed it, and thus would feel the sacrifices were efficacious. The use of the plural “sins” here puts weight on the former.

⁵² This was the presumptuous sin, not just standard sins. See also Deut. 17:12. Numbers 14 details the difference between innocent and defiant, or presumptuous sins. The word here is *ἀθετήσας*, which is literally, “treat as nothing,” or “reject.” Thus, this was not just breaking a Law within the Mosaic Covenant, but was, in fact, rejecting the authority of the covenant, by rejecting it, or Moses, or any of the holy things and treating them as common.

⁵³ Deut. 17:12

⁵⁴ This is a reference to Psalm 110. While the Son is awaiting the time where all the enemies are placed under His feet, this apostate is placing the Son under his feet, thus showing that he is an enemy who will ultimately be subjected to the Son. But the reversal is abhorrent considering that this is the Son of God.

⁵⁵ Again this is abhorrent. The very blood of purification is treated as common (unclean). This is clearly the sin with a high hand, as the sin of treating the Son as an enemy. The author could not describe greater statements of abhorrent sin here than he does. He is using the most tremendous of descriptions to state the hideousness of these actions by church members.

the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace⁵⁶?

ἀθετήσας τις νόμον Μωϋσέως χωρὶς οἰκτιρμῶν ἐπὶ
δυσὶν ἢ τρισὶν μάρτυσιν ἀποθνήσκει· (10:28)

- d) The Old Testament predicted an apostate nation Israel (a surprise to the reader) whom God would judge and thus the potential apostate is warned that to join them is to join a nation opposed to God (10:30-31).

10:30 For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY."⁵⁷ And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE."⁵⁸ 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- 4) The reader is encouraged to restore their original endurance when they first came to Christ away from the persecuting nation (10:32-38).
- a) They endured sufferings anticipating the deliverance when Christ comes (10:32-34).

10:32 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, 33 partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. 34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your

⁵⁶ The Spirit of Grace is the Holy Spirit who administered in the New Covenant the very privilege (grace) that God poured out in His Son to the undeserving sinner.

⁵⁷ The reference here is to Deut. 32:35-43 where God judges His people Israel and takes vengeance on those who are disobedient within the nation. It is not referring to the pagan nations here, but to Israel. Thus the point is that God will judge Israel who has rejected Him, and this nation is the very nation with whom these believer seek to re-identify.

⁵⁸ Note here that this is referring to the judgment of Israel (cf. Isaiah 3:13) and is the guarantee that God will judge a nation that is apostate. This would be a surprise to the potential apostates here, who thought that Israel was righteous by decree of son-ship (Deut. 14:1) and now find out that God has prophesied that this nation, who were to represent Him as "sons" are an apostate nation under judgment.

property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

- b) The reader should continue their struggle, as God has promised reward to the one who endures (10:35-39).

10:35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God⁵⁹, you may receive what was promised.⁶⁰ 37 FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. 38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH;⁶¹ AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. 39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction⁶², but of those who have faith to the preserving⁶³ of the soul.

⁵⁹ The will of God here is obedient endurance, even suffering during this age.

⁶⁰ What is promised is the deliverance into the eternal kingdom as a representative of God.

⁶¹ The reference here to Habakkuk 2:4 is an instruction to Habakkuk to wait for the judgment to come. Habakkuk was concerned because Israel was being judged (dominated) by a pagan Gentile nation. God's answer was that the Israelites needed to be judged first since they did not represent God, but that the Gentiles would be judged also. Thus Habakkuk had to wait on God's promises in the midst of a sinful nation. The reader has to do the same thing; walk on the basis of the revelation in the midst of a nation that knows not God.

⁶² "Destruction" here is not hell, but is the elimination of the ability to represent God, that is have a relationship with Him. He is likely referring to Israel here who shrank back to destruction after being delivered from Egypt, as well as the present nation who has rejected Christ. Thus, the believer is not to be of those, or join those.

⁶³ This word here implies that through belief in Christ one 'gains possession' of his own soul. In other words he is in a relationship with God.