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Quick Links to the Study

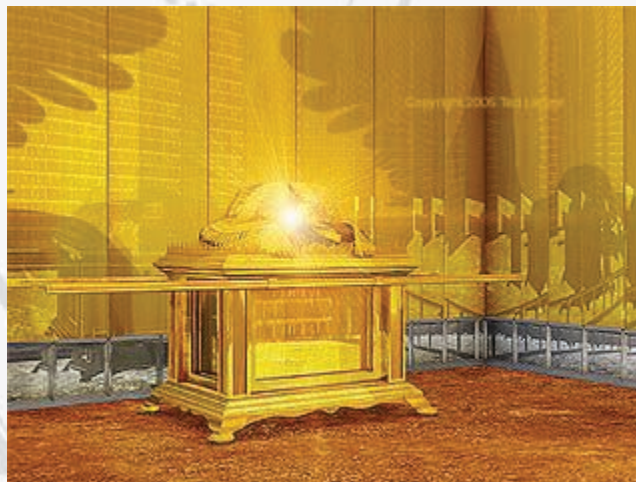
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“Christ died once to cover the sins of a lifetime for all humanity.” This slogan pretty much covers the point of the writer of Hebrews in our passage, Heb. 10:1-18. And this passage is basically a summary of Heb. 8:1-9:28. The supremacy of this sacrifice to the annual offerings made in the Israelite sacrificial system is pointedly put forth. These offerings, first in the tabernacle, and then in the Jerusalem temple, had to be made annually because they only covered sins over the previous year. So this system was a never ending need for sacrifice. But Christ’s death on Calvary stands in stark contrast as a one time offering that need nev



I. Context

As always, consideration of the historical and literary background of our passage plays an important role in the interpretive process. Much of this material will be drawn from [previous studies in Hebrews](#), as posted under [Bible Studies](#) at [cranfordville.com](#). New material will be added in order to supplement existing research.

a. Historical

External History. Although in some older English translations the title of the book is “The Letter of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews,” this title was not a part of the original writing of the document. In reality, it was added several centuries after the writing of Hebrews in order to identify the document as it became a standard part of the New Testament documents. And it reflected a dominant viewpoint at that time. Yet, one should notice the location of Hebrews in the New Testament. The thirteen Pauline letters are listed in descending order of length

beginning with the longest -- Romans -- down to the shortest -- Philemon. The exceptions to this are where two letters are written to the same church or individual. In those instances, the length of the first of these determined the position of both letters. The sevenfold General Letters section follows a similar pattern beginning with James and concluding with Jude. Hebrews is tucked between these two sections reflecting a partial association with Paul as his 'fourteenth' letter, but isn't positioned lengthwise after Romans, where it should be as a full member

of the Pauline corpus of letters.

To a large extent, in the early centuries of Christian interpretation, the authorship of Hebrews remained an open question. Since the time of the Protestant Reformation, the dominant view of NT scholars -- both Protestant and Roman Catholic -- is that Paul did not write it. Then who did? No one knows with certainty! As Werner Georg Kümmel puts it in his NT Introduction,

Since the author of Heb keeps his identity completely in the background — only the close connection with Timothy (13:23) points to the Pauline circle, if indeed the well-known companion of Paul is intended — the most diverse possibilities have been proposed, of which the following may be mentioned:

1. Paul. This proposal is represented nowadays even from the Catholic standpoint only very rarely⁶² and has proved to be untenable (§26.3).

2. Luke. Clement of Alexandria (see §26.2) on the basis of the kinship of style with Acts held that Luke was the translator of a letter written by Paul in Hebrew. But Heb is not a translation and varies so sharply in style and theological distinctiveness that the author of Acts as the author of Heb is not really to be considered.

3. Clement of Rome. The old hypothesis which was already known by Origen (see §26.2) founders on the impossibility of conceiving that Heb and I Clem are the work of the same man, as well as on the assumption of literary dependence of I Clem upon Heb.

4. Apollos. Considered by Luther and represented with vigor by Bleek, this hypothesis has found many adherents.⁶³ This Jewish-Christian biblical scholar from Alexandria, who was also instructed in Greek rhetoric (Acts 18:24 ff) and who carried on a mission alongside Paul but independently of him (1 Cor 1:12; 3:4 ff; 16: 12), could be conceived of as the author of Heb. But we do not know whether Apollos was active as a writer, and it cannot be proved that he was the only one among the Christian διδασκαλοι of the apostolic times who could have written the letter to the Hebrews.

5. Barnabas. In accordance with the tradition attested by Tertullian, Barnabas has frequently been proposed as the author of Heb.⁶⁴ But could Barnabas, a Levite from Cyprus (Acts 4:36) who later took up residence in Jerusalem and was a highly regarded member of the community there (Acts 9:27; 11:22) have so completely abandoned the position of the primitive community with regard to the law and the cultus? Could he have been so rhetorically trained and so Hellenistically oriented as to become the



author of Heb?

It is in reality no longer possible to determine the identity of the author. This conclusion was reached by Origen and has been adopted from the time of Eichhorn and De Wette down to and including most more recent scholars.

Because of the limited information available, only a few images of the author of Hebrews can be understood from inside the document itself. This is summarized well by Fred Craddock in the *New Interpreter's Bible*,

The author was a Christian who lived and thought within the apostolic tradition (Heb 2:3). Timothy had been a companion in ministry and might be again (Heb 13:23). The writer was temporarily distanced from the readers but expects to return to them soon (Heb 13:19, 23). Their situation is known in great detail, either through their leaders (Heb 13:7, 17, 24) or by direct association. The writer joined strong pastoral concern with the authority of either person or office. Both the instructions and the exhortations of the letter reveal a person well educated in Greek rhetoric as well as in Judaism, especially Hellenistic Judaism formed in part by the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament. The Greek translation and not the Hebrew text provides the major lines and the subtler nuances of the writer's argument and appeal."

William Lane (*Word Biblical Commentary*, Logos Systems) contributes more to the internal profile understanding:

- * He possessed an architectural mind; he affirms a thesis and then develops it by way of analysis.
- * The writer's rhetorical skill is universally recognized.
- * The writer was evidently well educated by Hellenistic standards.



* The writer may be characterized as an intensely religious man.

* The writer, finally, was a pastoral theologian who adapted early Christian traditions to fashion an urgent appeal to a community in crisis

When and to whom was this document written? The

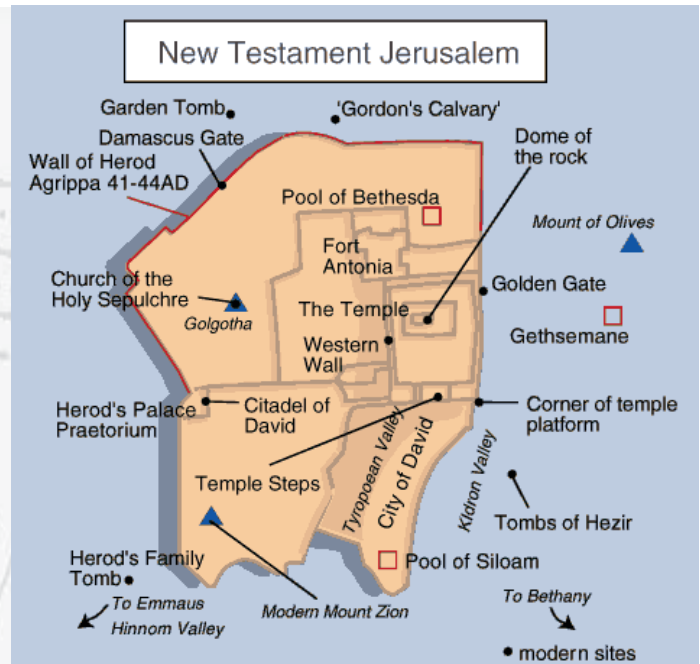
ancient title “To the Hebrews” reflects an early tradition that the first readers were Jewish Christians. But this is not entirely certain. The contents of the document somewhat suggest this but other ways of explaining the content can also be made with persuasion. The more common time frame for the writing of this document is toward the end of the first Christian century, although many NT scholars find indications inside the letter suggesting it was written closer to the middle of the first century. Again, Craddock summarizes the issue well by saying,

If we broadly identify the readers as Hellenistic Jewish Christians, perhaps the best guess for their location is Rome. When the writer says, “those from Italy send you greetings” (Heb 13:24 NRSV), it is not clear whether the expression locates the writer or the readers in Italy. Similarities to 1 Peter, a letter written from Rome (1 Pet 5:13), argue for a Roman origin. However, early knowledge of Hebrews by Clement of Rome indicates a Roman destination, and what we know of the house churches in Rome makes that city a likely candidate as the location of the addressees.

My reading of this material leads me to the conclusion that the dating of the writing seems to be during the 60s of the first century, as implied from a few historically oriented markers inside the document, particularly in regard to the anticipated near destruction of the temple. But even these indicators are not precise. The place of writing and the destination of

b. Literary

Genre. The issues relating to literary form arise at two levels. Although the document is labeled a letter, the only part of the entire document that follows an ancient letter format -- unlike all the letters of Paul -- is the last part, the Conclusio in 13:18-25. And it is very traditional in this. Interestingly, 13:22 calls the document a *παράκλησις* (*paraklesis*), that is, a sermon, as is reflected in the NRSV translation, “I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, bear with my word of *exhortation*, for I have written to you briefly.” Most NT scholars will call Hebrews an ancient sermon or homily, written somewhat along the lines of



the document are less clear. The later added title “To the Hebrews” most likely indicates at least a later belief that the document was written to Jewish Christians. The Conclusio section, 13:18-25, which is the only true letter aspect of the document, does strongly suggest a group of Christians in a specific location, rather than Jewish Christians everywhere like James 1:1 indicates. But no internal markers give clear indication of where that location might have been. The strong Hellenistic tones of the content of the document do suggest that these Christians were residing somewhere outside of Palestine.

Internal History. The time and place markers inside our passage are limited to the activities of sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem and to Christ's death on the cross outside the old city wall of Jerusalem. The one time sacrifice of Jesus in the new covenant stands in contrast to the repeated sacrifices necessary for the priests to offer up in the old covenant.

an ancient Greek epideictic oratory used to confirm certain values and/or to praise significant individuals.

At a smaller level of literary form, 10:1-18 reflect what has been labeled a “homiletical midrash.” In the sermonic style of the entire document, one encounters a distinctly Jewish way of approaching the texts of the Old Testament as the foundation for much of the viewpoint of the writer. This method falls under the umbrella label of midrash. I. Epstein (“Midrash,” *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, iPreach) provides a helpful summation of this Jewish principle:

mid'rash [מדרש, *from root* to search, to investigate, *hence* to expound]. The name given to that exegesis of the Bible which emanated from the rabbinic schools in ancient Palestine. Its aim was to elucidate the meaning of the text of the Holy Writ, to penetrate into its inner significance, to deduce from it new laws and principles, and to establish by reference to it authentic religious and ethical doctrines. There are two types of midrash: HALACHAH, which deals with the legal parts of the Bible; and HAGGADAH (הגדה, “narration”), which deals with the nonlegal parts, and is hence homiletical. In the domain of Haggadah Midrash left its deep impress on the Bible itself. Thus we find passages in Chronicles which are midrashic glosses, supplementing in many details the narratives in the book of Kings. There is also a Midrash to the book of Kings mentioned in II Chr. 24:27, while reference to the Midrash of Iddo the prophet is made in 13:22. Midrash was also employed by Ezra in his public reading of the Law at the memorable convocation in the year 444 B.C., and by successive generations of teachers who followed him. See TALMUD.

Thus we are dealing with the Haggadah variety of midrashic interpretation in our passage.

The distinctive use of this method by the writer of Hebrews reflects creative use of his Jewish heritage in adopting a christological focus throughout the document. E. Dinkler (“Hebrews, Letter to the,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, iPreach) observes:

The form is further characterized by an extensive use of the OT in the LXX, although the author does not stay with the verbal text (1:8 may have a corrupted text; passages from Deuteronomy in 1:6; 10: 30; 12:15; 13:5 are not quoted according to the LXX). Out of thirty-two quotations ten are taken from Psalms. In addition there are many allusions. The method is primarily marked by a christological interpretation (see, e.g., 1:5 ff; 2:6 ff, 12 ff; 10:5 ff) which uses different exegetical approaches: the allegorical exegesis, following Philo, is often used (e.g., 7:2-3; 13:10-14; see also 3:6; 10:20; 12:22), but the typological exegesis is predominant. When Moses and Jesus are discussed together in 3:1-6, it is more a case of simple comparison; but **the whole passage 7:1-10:18 is a typological section.** In 8:6-13 the Old Covenant is the type for the New Covenant as antitype. And the motif of I Cor. 10:1-10 is repeated in Heb. 3:7-4:13--the Israel of the wilderness being presented as the typological figure of the Christian

church. All this is not only a matter of form, but of theological significance, insofar as the author regards Christianity in the historical continuity with Israel and Judaism, despite his constant stress upon its superiority.

Thus we can see a Jewish mind working to mine the text of the Old Testament for evidence to establish Jesus as the promised Messiah who brought eternal salvation to all humanity through his sacrificial death on the cross.

The author does blend together theological affirmation about Christ with moral admonition to faithful living in commitment to Christ. This pattern of theology followed by paraenesis distinguishes the document. Sometimes these two elements are separated with admonition growing out of theology. At other times, they are woven together like a spiritual rope so that one can’t really separate the two aspects.

Literary Context. The contents of Hebrews is oriented to achieving the objective of explaining and defending the thesis set forth in the prologue in 1:1-4, that is, the superiority of Jesus to both Moses and the Law as a means of salvation.

The thematic emphases in the book stress Jesus’ relation to angels (chaps. 1-2), to Moses and the Law (chaps. 3-4), to the priesthood and covenant (chaps. 5-12a), and finally paraenetical admonitions (chaps 12b-13a). The only traditionally letter aspect comes in the Conclusio in the second part of chapter 13.

Heb. 10:1-18 is typically seen as the climax to a longer section beginning either at 7:1 or at 8:1, depending on how the section on Melchizedek (7:1-28) is taken. Clearly the priestly function of Jesus in offering himself as sacrifice begins in 8:1 and continues through 10:18. Jesus establishes a new covenant which is the anti-type to the old covenant of the sacrificial system in the Law.



II. Message

Literary Structure. The internal literary thought flow has been analyzed in detail from the Greek text in the [Block Diagram](#), and [Semantic Diagram](#), then summarized in the [Summary of the Rhetorical Structure](#) section in the larger internet version of this study. This forms the basis of our study here, and is summarized as follows. The OT Law could only address the sin problem with repeated annual offerings covering the past year, but Christ addressed it with one offering for a life-time of sin (vv. 1-10). Thus as priest He offered himself to cleanse believers as testified to by the Holy Spirit (vv. 11-18). Central to this material is the exegesis of Psalm 40:6-8 in part one and Jeremiah 31:33-34 in part two.

But the passage is interlinked along the lines of an ancient chiasmus and this can be sketched out as follows set up in a step parallelism with the two basic strophes:

A	Verses 1-5 - Inadequacy of the Law
B	Verses 6-10 Christ's sacrifice
B'	Verses 11-14 Christ as priest
A'	Verses 15-18 New covenant renders Law unnecessary

a. Christ solves the sin problem, vv. 1-10

Greek NT

10.1 Σκιὰν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων, κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ταῖς αὐταῖς θυσίαις ὥς προσφέρουσιν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς οὐδέποτε δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους τελειῶσαι·
10.2 ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἂν ἐπαύσαντο προσφερόμεναι διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν ἔχειν ἔτι συνείδησιν ἁμαρτιῶν τοὺς λατρεύοντας ἅπαξ κεκαθαρισμένους; 10.3 ἀλλ' ἐν αὐταῖς ἀνάμνησις ἁμαρτιῶν κατ' ἐνιαυτόν· 10.4 ἀδύνατον γὰρ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων ἀφαιρεῖν ἁμαρτίας.

10.5 Διὸ εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον λέγει, Θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, σὼμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι·

NASB

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 which they offer continually year by year, 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.

5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME; 6 IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN

NRSV

1 Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? 3 But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me;

NLT

1 The old system in the law of Moses was only a shadow of the things to come, not the reality of the good things Christ has done for us. The sacrifices under the old system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship. 2 If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared. 3 But just the opposite happened. Those yearly sacrifices reminded them of their sins year after year. 4 For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 That is why Christ, when he came into the world, said, "You did not want animal sacrifices and grain offerings. But

10.6 ὁλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ εὐδόκησας. 10.7 τότε εἶπον, Ἴδου ἤκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ, τοῦ ποιῆσαι ὁ θεός τὸ θέλημά σου. 10.8 ἀνώτερον λέγων ὅτι Θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς καὶ ὁλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἠθέλησας οὐδὲ εὐδόκησας, αἵτινες κατὰ νόμον προσφέρονται, 10.9 τότε εἶρηκεν, Ἴδου ἤκω τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου. ἀναιρεῖ τὸ πρῶτον ἵνα τὸ δευτέρον στήσῃ, 10.10 ἐν ᾧ θελήματι ἡγιασμένοι ἐσμὲν διὰ τῆς προσφορᾶς τοῦ σώματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐφάπαξ.

YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE. 7 THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.'" 8 After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them" (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second. 10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book F68 it is written of me)." 8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings" (these are offered according to the law), 9 then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. 10 And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

you have given me a body so that I may obey you. 6 No, you were not pleased with animals burned on the altar or with other offerings for sin. 7 Then I said, 'Look, I have come to do your will, O God – just as it is written about me in the Scriptures.'" 8 Christ said, "You did not want animal sacrifices or grain offerings or animals burned on the altar or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased with them" (though they are required by the law of Moses). 9 Then he added, "Look, I have come to do your will." He cancels the first covenant in order to establish the second. 10 And what God wants is for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.

Notes:

As the above chiastic outline illustrates, verses 1-10 subdivide into two units of material: vv. 1-4 and vv. 5-10. The first unit makes an important theological affirmation about the inadequacy of the OT Law to adequately address the issue of sin. The writer then turns to Psalm 40:6-9 as the authoritative text to make his case for the adequacy of Christ's offering to address the issue of sin, in stark contrast to the OT Law.

1) **The inadequacy of the Law**, vv. 1-4. The two sentences in the original Greek text form a two pronged argument about the inadequacy of the OT Law to bring about genuine forgiveness of sin that permanently solved the sin problem.

In the first sentence, vv. 1-2, the core declaration is simply "the law can never make perfect those who approach." The writer asserts that no one at any time -- past, present or future (οὐδέποτε) -- could be sufficiently pure in order to approach the presence of God merely on the basis of forgiveness gained through offering sacrifices in the temple. Two rea-

sons are provided in support of this view in the expansions elements of the sentence. First comes a causal participle phrase in the sentence pre-field: "Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities,..." The writer argues that the Law was not intended to be a permanent system of seeking divine forgiveness. Its role was to foreshadow the coming of Christ, as the writer has already claimed in 9:11-12,

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), 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."

It merely established the earthly place of sacrifice that anticipated the perfect Heavenly place of sacrifice which Christ alone entered as the high priest offering Himself as sacrifice for the sin of all humanity.

The second reason is put forth in the conjunc-

tive causal clause in verse two introduced by ἐπεὶ: “Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin?” The English translations above obscure this grammatical connection in their renderings. This becomes the writer’s “pragmatic” reason based on experience in contrast to his initial “theological” reason in verse 1a. Had the offering of sacrifices in the temple accomplished a full solution to the sin problem, they would have ceased being offered. Why? Because the worshipers would have lost any consciousness of sin guilt, if it had been removed completely. Here the writer reiterates what he had already asserted in 7:11 and 7:19.

Heb. 7:11 (NRSV). Now if perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood — for the people received the law under this priesthood — what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron?

Heb. 7:19 (NRSV). (for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God.

To the contrary, the sacrifices had to be repeated annually because sins were repeated, and guilt consciousness reappeared.

Thus the OT Law could never adequately address the issue of solving the human sin problem. And it never intended to do so, as the final declaration in verse four asserts: “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” William Lane (Hebrews, *Word Biblical Commentary*, Logos Systems) elaborates on this:

The argument presupposes the potency of blood for securing cleansing from defilement acknowledged in 9:22: the blood of animals cannot effect a definitive removal of sins. The issue is not whether the blood of bulls and goats sacrificed during the annual observances of the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:3, 6, 11, 14–16, 18–19) has any power to effect cleansing, but whether it has the potency to effect a *decisive* cleansing. The axiom in v 4 restates the εἰ γὰρ ... πόσω μᾶλλον construction in 9:13–14 (“for if ... how much more!”). There the writer stressed the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to effect the decisive purgation of conscience, making possible the full worship of God. Here the accent is placed on the insufficiency of the blood of sacrificial animals to remove the defilement of sins that constitutes a barrier to worship (so Johns-

son, “Defilement,” 340–41; cf. Stylianopoulos, *GOTR* 17 [1972] 225–26).

The Israelite worshiper at the temple could gain cleansing of guilt acquired through his sinning for a short period of time. But he could never fully come to grips with the sin problem so pervasive in his life and being. Consequently sacrifices had to be repeated endlessly in order to alleviate his guilt before God. A better way was needed. And the Law itself pointed to the better way in the coming of Christ.

2) The adequacy of Christ’s offering, vv. 5-10.

The anchor for the writer’s claim of the superior sacrifice of Christ rests here on his exegesis of Psalm 40:6-8.

LXX

7 θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, ὥτις δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι, ὁλοκαύτωμα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ᾔτησας. 8 τότε εἶπον Ἴδού ἡκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ, 9 τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου, ὁ θεός μου, ἐβουλήθην καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου.

NRSV

6 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. 7 Then I said, “Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”

Note that the verse markings in the Septuagint are one verse ahead of those in the NRSV.

The English Bible

follows the Hebrew text which combines verses one and two into a single verse, while the LXX separates the psalm heading into a separate verse, thus creating an extra verse. The writer closely follows the LXX text as represented in the major manuscript traditions of \aleph , B, and A, rather than using the original Hebrew text. He thus reflects his Hellenistic Jewish heritage.

This psalm of David presents the king as representing the people of Israel before God in worship. Thus the writer of Hebrews sees Christ as David’s successor and thus representative of humanity before God.

The use of the Psalm by the writer is in a twofold pattern of citation: *he said...*, *then he said...* (vv. 5-7) and *saying...*, *then he said...* (vv. 8-9). Verses 5-7 form the citation and is followed by his commentary in vv. 8-10.

The introduction to the psalm in verse 5 is quite



different. The words of David in the original psalm now are presented as the words of Christ, “when Christ came into the world,” (εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον). Lane (WBC) comments:

The words of Ps 40:6–8 are envisaged as being in the mouth of Christ. The statement Ἴδού ἤκω, “See, I have come,” furnishes the basis for attributing these verses of the psalm to Jesus at the moment when he entered the world. The temporal expression εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον, “when he comes into the world,” is distinctly “incarnational” language (Stylianopoulos, *GOTR* 17 [1972] 229, n. 36).

Ellingworth (Hebrews, *New International Greek Testament Commentary*, Logos Systems) also observes:

Εἰσερχόμενος ... λέγει: the subject “Christ” is implied from 9:28, the full name “Jesus Christ” being held in reserve until it can be used with great emphasis in v. 10. It is nevertheless remarkable that the author can assume without stating that the words of scripture can be attributed to the pre-existent Christ in this way. It marks a step beyond the christological interpretation of OT texts in chap. 1; the closest parallel in Hebrews is 2:12f., where Christ speaks in the words of Ps. 22 and Isaiah. There is no attempt at argument or justification; contrast Acts 2:24–36, in an apologetic setting. It is probable that this Christ-centred understanding of scripture was generally accepted in the community to which Hebrews was originally addressed. This in turn suggests a predominantly Jewish Christian community in which the OT was well known.

The writer of Hebrews assumes God speaking through Christ who speaks through David. Another possible explanation could be that the writer assumes that Christ in his incarnation “speaks” in the sense of affirms the truths of the text by his actions.

The citation contrasts God’s displeasure with sacrifices and offerings to a body prepared for Christ. This second line, “but you have prepared a body for me,” signals the preference of the writer for the LXX over the original Hebrew text, which reads instead, “but you have pierced my ears.” This reading suits his purposes much easier than does the original Hebrew reading.

In his commentary on the text in vv. 8–10, the writer underscores several points.

First, the sacrifices and offerings that God found no pleasure in were “offered according to the law” (v. 8). This raises doubts about their value and potential. In his recapitulation of the psalm the writer shifts



from the singular sacrifice and offering (Θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν) in the LXX text to the plural designations of sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings (Θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς καὶ ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας). These cover the basic types of offerings set forth in the Levitical Code. In so doing this he stresses the repetitive nature of the system required by the Law, and thus their inability to effectively solve the sin issue.

Second, the adding of the phrase “See, I have come to do your will,” means that “He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.” The doing of God’s will takes precedence over sacrifices and offerings which have no ability to motivate obedience to God. He opts for a common OT prophetic theme underscoring the primacy of obeying God over the cultic offering of sacrifice.

Third, more profoundly, however, the writer makes the huge claim that the old system has been replaced by the new system. Sacrifices and offerings in the temple are a thing of the past and have been replaced by Christ fulfilling the will of God in sacrificing himself.

This is the clear declaration of verse ten: “And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (ἐν

Notes:

The writer now turns to the priest offering the sacrifice, and proceeds to contrast Jesus with the priests offering sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem. He will reach out to a series of Old Testament references for scriptural support for his view. He makes allusion to Exodus 29:38 in verse 11 and Psalm 110:1 in verse 12. Then in verses 16-17 he quotes from Jeremiah 31:33-34. Thus to his initial Jewish oriented readership, he makes his case for Christ on the basis of the Hebrew Bible.

This unit of material subdivides into two sections: 1) the priests and Christ as priest (vv. 11-14) and 2) the witness of the Holy Spirit through scripture to this spiritual reality (vv. 15-18).

1) The priests and Christ as priest (vv. 11-14). First comes the backdrop of the ministry of the temple priests as defined in Exodus 29:38.¹ The priests stood daily in the temple offering sacrifices to God in behalf of the Israelite worshipers. The writer of Hebrews asserts that this endless series of sacrifices could “never take away sins” (αἵτινες οὐδέποτε δύνανται περιελεῖν ἁμαρτίας). The Greek text is more emphatic than the English translation suggests. At no point in time ever (οὐδέποτε) were these sacrifices able to remove sin from the worshiper. They did remove sin guilt for specific sins by the worshiper, but they could not address the sin issue deep inside the worshiper. Thus repeated offerings were necessary for repeated sins.

This stands in stark contrast to Christ who as high priest offered one sacrifice that addressed the sin issue “for all time” (εἰς τὸ διηνεκές). The Greek expression literally means “unto continuously” and affirms an unending benefit for the sacrifice made by Jesus. The same expression will be repeated in verse 14 in regard to the potency of this sacrifice to make one holy. Also, it has close meaning to the earlier “once for all” (ἐφάπαξ) offering of the body of Christ in verse 10.

In contrast to the priest who stand repeatedly in

¹Exodus 29:38-42 (NRSV): **38 Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old regularly each day.** 39 One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer in the evening; 40 and with the first lamb one-tenth of a measure of choice flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. 41 And the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the Lord. 42 It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the Lord, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.

the temple making sacrifices, Christ stood one time to make His sacrifice and then He sat down. But not just anywhere. Drawing upon Psalm 110:1,² Christ sat down at the right hand of the Heavenly Father in Heaven to await the complete subjugation of His enemies. This Psalm was a favorite among New Testament writers and is used often; cf. Mt. 22:44; Mk. 16:19; Acts 2:34; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 1:3, 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2. Thus Jesus’ one time offering is validated by His elevation to the position of power and authority at the right hand of the Heavenly Father in eternity. No temple priest ever experienced such validation of his offering!

The basis for this (γὰρ) is set forth in verse 14: “For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified” (μιᾷ γὰρ προσφορᾷ τετελείωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκές τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους.). Lane (WBC) notes on this

The means by which the community has experienced definitive purging is the sacrificial death of Christ. The expression μιᾷ ... προσφορᾷ, “by means of one offering,” resumes the references to “the offering [προσφορά] of the body of Jesus Christ” in v 10 and to the “one sacrifice” (μίαν ... θυσίαν) he offered in v 12. The stress in v 14, however, falls on the clause “he decisively purged forever,” where the perfect tense of the verb τετελείωκεν in combination with the temporal expression εἰς τὸ διηνεκές emphasizes the permanent result of Christ’s offering. The writer locates the decisive purging of believers in the past with respect to its accomplishment and in the present with respect to its enjoyment. Peterson rightly comments that the perfection of worshipers, which could not be achieved on the basis of the Levitical priesthood (7:11), the law, and its sacrifices (7:19; 9:9; 10:1), is announced in vv 12–14 as the accomplishment of Christ through his single offering for sins (“Examination,” 259–60).

A decisive purging was the prerequisite to the consecration of the people of the new covenant. It is proper, therefore, to interpret the expression τετελείωκεν in the light of the description of the community as “the consecrated ones.” If the present participle τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους is a timeless designation of the community of faith, it describes the result of Christ’s sacrifice, which confers on his people definitive consecration, qualifying them for fellowship with God. Correspondingly, Christ is the consecrator (ὁ ἁγιάζων, 2:11) par excellence by virtue of his atoning death

²Psalm 110:1 (NRSV): The Lord says to my lord, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”

(cf. Riggenbach, 307–8; Peterson, “Examination,” 260–65).

2) The witness of the Holy Spirit through scripture to this spiritual reality (vv. 15-18). In confirming his view the writer of Hebrews once more reaches into the Old Testament for confirmation. And he finds it in Jeremiah 31:33-34, which he has already appealed to in 8:10, 12³:

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God,

and they shall be my people. 34 No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and **remember their sin no more.**

The use of this Jeremiah text by the writer has been defined well by Ellingworth (NIGTC):

Part of the previous quotation from Jeremiah (Heb. 8:8–12), skilfully selected and modified, is repeated to conclude the doctrinal part of the third main division of the epistle (7:1–10:18) (Vanhoye 168f.), or, according to Dussaut (88), the ninth section of the epistle (10:1–18), which thus begins (10:5–7) and ends (10:16f.) with scripture. Either of these schemas is more convincing than the imposition onto Hebrews of an oversimplified division, more suitable to some Pauline epistles, into a doctrinal part (1:1–10:18) and a paraenetic part (10:19–13:25).

The reference is introduced to the readers (“to us”; ἡμῖν) as the witness of the Holy Spirit: “And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us;...” (Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον). Lane (WBC) calls helpful attention to the present tense use of the Greek verb Μαρτυρεῖ:

The present tense of the verb in the introductory formula μαρτυρεῖ ... καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, “the Holy Spirit also bears witness,” is significant; it indicates that through the quotation of the prophetic oracle the Holy Spirit is speaking now. The Spirit brings the detail of the text from the past into the present and makes it contemporary with the experience of the readers. The promises given on the occasion when God announced his intention to enact a new covenant have immediate relevance for the

community addressed in the homily.

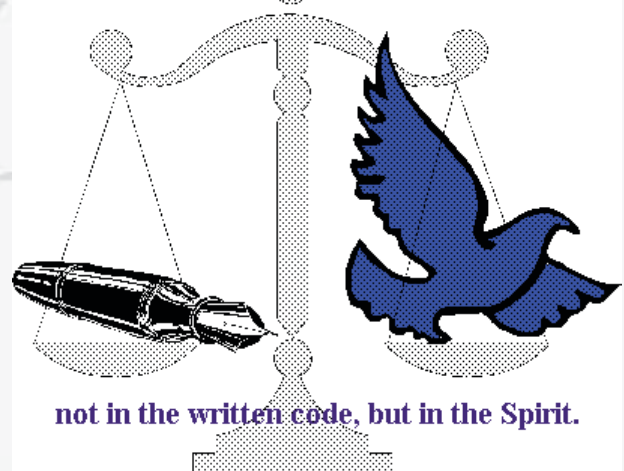
The Hebrews writer makes selected use of the Jeremiah text and structures his citation around “when he had said...(v. 33) then he said...(v.34c)”, as is reflected in the red highlighted text of Jeremiah above. Lane (WBC) further observes in the writer’s use of the OT text:

By directing the attention of his auditors once again to the oracle in an abbreviated form in vv 16–17, the writer makes it clear that the preceding discussion of sacrifice and priesthood is to be related to the prophecy of the new covenant. The writer interprets the text in priestly and sacrificial terms because he views the old covenant in these terms. He recognized that the finished work of Christ on Calvary was the actual realization of the divine intention towards which the sacrificial cult and the prophecy were both pointing (so Peterson, RTR 38 [1979] 76–78). The fact that the old sacrifices had been superseded by the unique offering of Christ implied that the old covenant is indeed obsolete (8:13) and has been replaced by the promised new covenantal arrangement.

The writer selected for quotation only salient features of Jer 31:33–34. In his free repetition of the oracle, two blessings of the new covenant are underscored: God will inscribe his laws on the hearts and minds of his people, and he will no longer remember their sins and misdeeds. These verses develop the “promise” character of the new covenant that was stressed in 8:6. The first promise indicates that the people of God are no longer confronted by an exterior law. It may also suggest that God’s word will no longer be carried in phylacteries upon the head and arms (Exod 13:16; Deut 6:8; Matt 23:5) precisely because it is impressed upon the center of human volition. The alternation of διάνοια, “mind,” and καρδιά, “heart,” in the quotation of the clauses



The Laws of God fulfilled -



³In 8:8-12 the writer cites Jer. 31:31-34 in a more detailed use of this OT text.

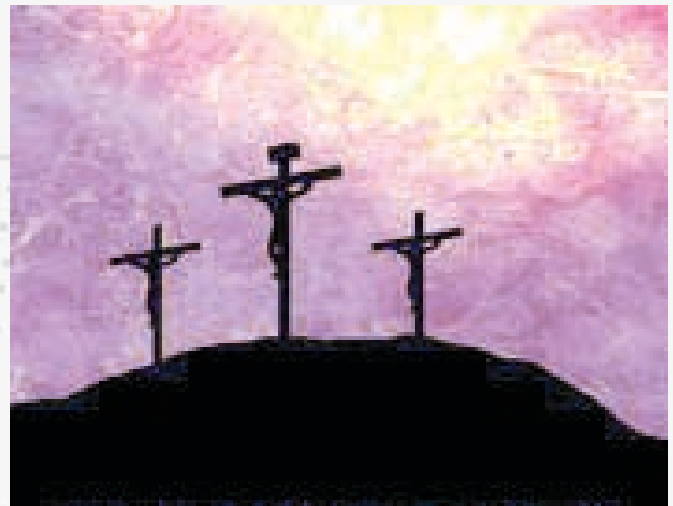
“my laws in their mind” (8:10) and “my laws upon their hearts” (10:16) shows that both words are synonymous terms related to the center of an individual’s interior life (Behm, *TDNT* 4:966). The community’s experience of consecration to the service of God, to which reference was made in vv 10 and 14, validates that the promise of a new relationship to God foretold in the oracle has actually been realized. The second promise is God’s gracious response to the plight of Israel under the old covenant, when the observance of the Day of Atonement amounted to an annual reminder of sins for the covenant people (10:3). The assurance that God will certainly not remember the sins and transgressions of his people under the new covenant presupposes the provision of a definitive offering for sins.



Through Jeremiah, God promised to address the issue of sin and obedience more profoundly than had been done in the sacrificial code. By writing His law in the people’s heart, there would emerge obedience and faithfulness to God, not previously possible. Hebrews sees this promise realized in the sacrifice of Christ and the establishment of a new covenant not just with the Israelites, but with all humanity.

Thus the writer of Hebrews has pulled together the Law, the Prophets and the Writings sections of the Old Testament as evidence for the superior work of Christ in address the issue of sin and holiness before Almighty God.

The writer then concludes with his own axiomatic declaration: “Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin” (ὅπου δὲ ἄφεσις τούτων, οὐκέτι προσφορά περὶ ἁμαρτίας). This is rendered in English more clearly by the NLT as “Now when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.” The logical conclusion to Christ’s one time offering having addressed the sin issue for all time is that no need for continued sacrifices exists.



The connection of all this to us? It should be pretty obvious. Our only hope before God is the perfect sacrifice offered by Christ in our behalf. Our own goodness and merit accomplishes nothing.

And this work of Christ on the cross represents a new relationship with God in which obedience to God’s ways grows out of our inner commitment to Christ as Lord and Master. It’s not dependent upon superficial adherence to a cultic ritual in the temple in Jerusalem. Rather, this profound relationship comes from having been made holy before God through Christ. And this transformation is no mere outward position before God. Rather, it is a transformation of one’s entire life that reaches down to the very core of a person’s existence. And thus obedience comes naturally out of the inner person that is now commitment to following the ways of God as defined by Jesus Christ. May God help us to make Him everything in our life and in our existence!



Greek NT

10.1 Σκιὰν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων, κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ταῖς αὐταῖς θυσίαις ὥς προσφέρουσιν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς οὐδέποτε δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους τελειῶσαι· 10.2 ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἂν ἐπαύσαντο προσφερόμεναι διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν ἔχειν ἔτι συνείδησιν ἁμαρτιῶν τοὺς λατρεύοντας ἅπαξ κεκαθαρισμένους; 10.3 ἀλλ' ἐν αὐταῖς ἀνάμνησις ἁμαρτιῶν κατ' ἐνιαυτόν· 10.4 ἀδύνατον γὰρ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων ἀφαιρεῖν ἁμαρτίας.

10.5 Διὸ εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον λέγει, Θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι· 10.6 ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ εὐδόκησας. 10.7 τότε εἶπον, Ἴδοὺ ἦκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ, τοῦ ποιῆσαι ὁ θεὸς τὸ θέλημά σου. 10.8 ἀνώτερον λέγων ὅτι Θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς καὶ ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἠθέλησας οὐδὲ εὐδόκησας, αἵτινες κατὰ νόμον προσφέρονται, 10.9 τότε εἶρηκεν, Ἴδοὺ ἦκω τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλ-

NASB

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 which they offer continually year by year, 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.

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

NRSV

1 Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? 3 But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; 6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book F68 it is written of me)." 8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), 9 then he

NLT

1 The old system in the law of Moses was only a shadow of the things to come, not the reality of the good things Christ has done for us. The sacrifices under the old system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship. 2 If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared. 3 But just the opposite happened. Those yearly sacrifices reminded them of their sins year after year. 4 For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 That is why Christ, when he came into the world, said, "You did not want animal sacrifices and grain offerings. But you have given me a body so that I may obey you. 6 No, you were not pleased with animals burned on the altar or with other offerings for sin. 7 Then I said, 'Look, I have come to do your will, O God — just as it is written about me in the Scriptures.'" 8 Christ said, "You did not want animal sacrifices or grain offerings or animals burned on the altar or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased

ημα σου. ἀναιρεῖ τὸ πρῶτον ἵνα τὸ δεύτερον στήσῃ, 10.10 ἐν ᾧ θελήματι ἡγιασμένοι ἐσμὲν διὰ τῆς προσφορᾶς τοῦ σώματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐφάπαξ.

10.11 Καὶ πᾶς μὲν ἱερεὺς ἔστηκεν καθ' ἡμέραν λειτουργῶν καὶ τὰς αὐτὰς πολ- λάκις προσφέρων θυσίας, αἵτινες ου- δέποτε δύνανται περιλεῖν ἀμαρτίας, 10.12 οὗτος δὲ μίαν ὑπὲρ ἀμαρτιῶν προσε- νέγκας θυσίαν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ, 10.13 τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκδεχόμε- νος ἕως τεθῶσιν οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ ὑποπό- διον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ. 10.14 μιᾷ γὰρ προσφο- ρᾷ τετελείωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς τοὺς ἁγιαζ- ομένους.

10.15 Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· μετὰ γὰρ τὸ εἰρηκέναι, 10.16 Αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη ἣν διαθήσομαι πρὸς αὐ- τοὺς μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκεῖνας, λέγει κύ- ριος· διδοὺς νόμοῦ μου ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αυ- τοὺς, 10.17 καὶ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἀνομιῶν αὐτῶν οὐ μὴ μνησθῆσομαι ἔτι. 10.18 ὅπου δὲ ἄφεσις τούτων, οὐκέτι προσ- φορὰ περὶ ἀμαρτίας.

said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL." He takes away the first in order to es- tablish the second. 10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacri- fices, 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 UN- TIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sancti- fied.

15 And the Holy Spir- it also testifies 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 ON 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.

added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. 10 And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. 12 But when Christ had of- fered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, "he sat down at the right hand of God," 13 and since then has been waiting "until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet." 14 For by a single offering he has perfect- ed for all time those who are sanctified.

15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies 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 in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds," 17 he also adds, "I will remember their sins and their law- less deeds no more." 18 Where there is forgive- ness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

with them" (though they are required by the law of Moses). 9 Then he added, "Look, I have come to do your will." He cancels the first cov- enant in order to estab- lish the second. 10 And what God wants is for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.

11 Under the old covenant, the priest stands before the altar day after day, offering sacrifices that can never take away sins. 12 But our High Priest offered himself to God as one sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down at the place of highest honor at God's right hand. 13 There he waits until his enemies are humbled as a foot- stool under his feet. 14 For by that one offering he perfected forever all those whom he is mak- ing holy.

15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. First he says, 16 "This is the new cov- enant I will make with my people on that day, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts so they will understand them, and I will write them on their minds so they will obey them." 17 Then he adds, "I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds." 18 Now when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.

Greek NT Diagram

10.1

γὰρ

Σκιὰν ἔχων...

τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν,
οὐκ (ἔχων) αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων,
κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν
ταῖς αὐταῖς θυσίαις

ᾧς προσφέρουσιν

εἰς τὸ διηνεκές

οὐδέποτε

1

ὁ νόμος...δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους τελειῶσαι·

10.2

ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἂν ἐπαύσαντο προσφερόμεναι

διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν ἔχειν ἔτι συνείδησιν

ἁμαρτιῶν

τοὺς λατρεύοντας

ἅπαξ

κεκαθαρισμένους ;

10.3

ἀλλ' ,

ἐν αὐταῖς

2

ἀνάμνησις ἁμαρτιῶν (ἐστίν)

κατ' ἐνιαυτόν·

10.4

γὰρ

3

ἀδύνατον αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων

ἀφαιρεῖν ἁμαρτίας.

10.5

Διὸ

εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον

4

λέγει,

θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας,

δὲ

σῶμα κατηρτίσω μοι·

10.6

ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ εὐδόκησας.

10.7

τότε

5

εἶπον,

Ἴδού

ἤκω,

ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου

γέγραπται

περὶ ἑμους,

τοῦ ποιῆσαι, ὁ θεός, τὸ θέλημά σου.

10.8

ἀνώτερον

λέγων

ὅτι θυσίας

καὶ

προσφορὰς

καὶ

όλοκαυτώματα

καὶ

περὶ ἁμαρτίας

οὐκ ἠθέλησας

οὐδὲ εὐδόκησας,

αἵτινες κατὰ νόμον προσφέρονται,

10.9

τότε

εἶρηκεν,

Ἴδού

ἤκω

τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου.

ἀναιρεῖ τὸ πρῶτον

ἵνα τὸ δεύτερον στήσῃ,

10.10

ἐν ᾧ θελήματι

ἡγιασμένοι ἐσμέν

διὰ τῆς προσφορᾶς τοῦ σώματος

Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

ἐφάπαξ.

10.11

Καὶ

πᾶς μὲν ἱερεὺς ἔστηκεν

καθ' ἡμέραν

λειτουργῶν

καὶ

τὰς αὐτὰς πολλάκις προσφέρων θυσίας,

αἵτινες οὐδέποτε δύνανται περιλεῖν ἁμαρτίας,

10.12

δὲ

μίαν

ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν

προσενέγκας θυσίαν

εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς

οὗτος...ἐκάθισεν

ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ,

10.13

τὸ λοιπὸν

ἐκδεχόμενος

ἕως τεθῶσιν οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ.

10.14

γὰρ

μιᾷ προσφορᾷ

τετελείωκεν...τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους.

εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς

10.15 δὲ
12 Μαρτυρεῖ ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον·
γὰρ
10.16 μετὰ τὸ εἰρηκέναι,
Αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη
ἣν διαθήσομαι
πρὸς αὐτοὺς
μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκεῖνας,
13 λέγει κύριος·
διδούς νόμου μου
ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν
καὶ
ἐπὶ τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν
ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς,
10.17 καὶ
τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν
καὶ
τῶν ἀνομιῶν αὐτῶν οὐ μὴ μνησθήσομαι
ἔτι.
10.18 δὲ
14 ὅπου ἄφεσις τούτων,
οὐκέτι
προσφορά (ἐστίν)
περὶ ἁμαρτίας.

Semantic Diagram

		1	-----	1	γὰρ (10:1-2)	Pres	Dep	Ind	3	S	ὁ νόμος	
	A--	a	-----	2	ἀλλ' (10:3)	(Pres	Dep	Ind	3	S	ὁ νόμος)	
		2--										
				3	γὰρ (10:4)	(Pres	---	Ind	3	S)	αἷμα	
				4	Διὸ (10:5)	Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	(αὐτός)	
I--												
		1	b	-----	5	τότε (10:6-7)	2 Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	(ἐγώ)
	B--	c	-----	6	τότε (10:8)	Perf	Act	Ind	3	S	(αὐτός)	
				7	---- (10:9)	Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	(αὐτός)	
		2	--									
				8	---- (10:10)	Pres	---	Ind	1	P	(ἡμεῖς)	
		1	-----	9	Καὶ (10:11)	Impf	Act	Ind	3	S	ἱερεὺς	
	A--	a	-----	10	δὲ (10:12)	1 Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	οὗτος	
		2	--									
II-				11	γὰρ (10:13-14)	Perf	Act	Ind	3	S	(αὐτός)	
		1	-----	12	δὲ (10:15)	Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	τὸ πνεῦμα	
	B--											
				13	γὰρ (10:16)	Pres	Act	Ind	3	S	κύριος	
		2	--									
				14	δὲ (10:17-18)	(Pres	---	Ind	3	S)	προσφορά	

Summary of Rhetorical Structure

The thought flow of the passage falls into two basic sections as diagramed above. **First** (#s 1-8, vv. 1-10), the inability of the Law to deal with sin adequately is set forth (#1-3; vv. 1-4). Then Christ's coming remedies this weakness of the Law with a one time offering that solves the sin problem forever (#s 4-8; vv. 6-10). This second sub-unit is built around OT citations from Psalm 40:6-9, as is reflected in the **red fonted text** in the [Block Diagram](#) above. The cited text comes from the LXX. The writer makes use of a "homiletical midrash" exegetical methodology in citing OT text and then commenting on it.

Second (#s 9-14; vv. 11-18), Christ's work as a priest is set in strong contrast to that of the priests in the temple in Jerusalem. The priests had to offer annual sacrifices because the forgiveness granted only covered sins for the previous year. In contrast, Christ's one time offering took care of sin for a lifetime for the believer who was being made holy before God by this sacrifice (#s 9-11; vv. 11-14). This is then validated by the Holy Spirit (#s 12-14; vv. 15-18).

The literary pattern of this passage seems to move in the direction of a chiasmus as sketched out in the following:

A	Verses 1-5 (#s 1-3) - Inadequacy of the Law
B	Verses 6-10 (#s 4-8) Christ's sacrifice
B'	Verses 11-14 (#s 9-11) Christ as priest
A'	Verses 15-18 (#s 12-14) New covenant renders Law unnecessary

This is the opinion of several commentators, most notably William Lane in the *Word Biblical Commentary* volume on Hebrews.

NRSV:

1 I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. 2 He drew me up from the desolate pit,^{F73} out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord. 4 Happy are those who make the Lord their trust, who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods. 5 You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

6 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear.^{F74} Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. 7 Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me."^{F75} 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." 9 I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord. 10 I have not hidden your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.

11 Do not, O Lord, withhold your mercy from me; let your steadfast love and your faithfulness keep me safe forever. 12 For evils have encompassed me without number; my iniquities have overtaken me, until I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me. 13 Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me. 14 Let all those be put to shame and confusion who seek to snatch away my life; let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt. 15 Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, "Aha, Aha!" 16 But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the Lord!" 17 As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God.

FOOTNOTES:

F73: Cn: Heb [pit of tumult]

F74: Heb [ears you have dug for me]

F75: Meaning of Heb uncertain

LXX

1 Εἰς τὸ τέλος, τῷ Δαυιδ ψαλμός. 2 Ὑπομένων ὑπέμεινα τὸν κύριον, καὶ προσέσχεν μοι καὶ εἰσήκουσεν τῆς δεήσεώς μου 3 καὶ ἀνήγαγέν με ἐκ λάκκου ταλαιπωρίας καὶ ἀπὸ πηλοῦ ἰλύος καὶ ἔστησεν ἐπὶ πέτραις τοὺς πόδας μου καὶ κατήθυνεν τὰ διαβήματά μου 4 καὶ ἐνέβαλεν εἰς τὸ στόμα μου ἄσμα καινόν, ὕμνον τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν, ὃφονται πολλοὶ καὶ φοβηθήσονται καὶ ἐλπιοῦσιν ἐπὶ κύριον. 5 μακάριος ἀνὴρ, οὗ ἐστιν τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου ἐλπίς αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐνέβλεψεν εἰς ματαιότητας καὶ μανίας ψευδεῖς. 6 πολλὰ ἐποίησας σύ, κύριε ὁ θεός μου, τὰ θαυμάσιά σου, καὶ τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς σου οὐκ ἔστιν τίς ὁμοιωθήσεται σοι, ἀπήγγειλα καὶ ἐλάλησα, ἐπληθύνθησαν ὑπὲρ ἀριθμῶν.

7 θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, ὥτις δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι, ὀλοκαύτωμα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ᾔτησας. 8 τότε εἶπον Ἰδοὺ ἦκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ, 9 τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου, ὁ θεός μου, ἐβουλήθην καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου. 10 εὐηγγελισάμην δικαιοσύνην ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ μεγάλη, ἰδοὺ τὰ χεῖρά μου οὐ μὴ κωλύσω, κύριε, σὺ ἔγνων. 11 τὴν δικαιοσύνην σου οὐκ ἔκρυψα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου, τὴν ἀλήθειάν σου καὶ τὸ σωτήριόν σου εἶπα, οὐκ ἔκρυψα τὸ ἔλεός σου καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειάν σου ἀπὸ συναγωγῆς πολλῆς.

12 σὺ δέ, κύριε, μὴ μακρύνῃς τοὺς οἰκτιρμούς σου ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, τὸ ἔλεός σου καὶ ἡ ἀλήθειά σου διὰ παντὸς ἀντελάβοντό μου. 13 ὅτι περιέσχον με κακά, ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμὸς, κατέλαβόν με αἱ ἀνομίαι μου, καὶ οὐκ ἠδυνήθην τοῦ βλέπειν, ἐπληθύνθησαν ὑπὲρ τὰς τρίχας τῆς κεφαλῆς μου, καὶ ἡ καρδία μου ἐγκατέλιπέν με. 14 εὐδόκησον, κύριε, τοῦ ῥύσασθαί με, κύριε, εἰς τὸ βοηθησαί μοι πρόσχες. 15 κατασυνθίσαντες καὶ ἐντραπίσαντες ἅμα οἱ ζητοῦντες τὴν ψυχὴν μου τοῦ ἐξῆραι αὐτήν, ἀποστραφεῖσαν εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ ἐντραπίσαντες οἱ θέλοντές μοι κακά, 16 κομισάσθωσαν παραχρῆμα αἰσχύνην αὐτῶν οἱ λέγοντές μοι Εὗγε εὗγε. 17 ἀγαλλιάσαιντο καὶ εὐφρανθείσαντες ἐπὶ σοὶ πάντες οἱ ζητοῦντές σε, κύριε, καὶ εἰπάτωσαν διὰ

παντός Μεγαλυνθήτω ὁ κύριος, οἱ ἀγαπῶντες τὸ σωτήριόν σου. 18 ἐγὼ δὲ πτωχός εἰμι καὶ πένης, κύριος φροντιεῖ μου. βοηθός μου καὶ ὑπερασπιστής μου σὺ εἶ, ὁ θεός μου, μὴ χρονίσῃς.

LXX

Hebrew:

יְהוָה מִזְמֹר דָּוִד לַחֲצִנְמָה 1

יִתְעַן שְׁעֵי שַׁיִן לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יִתְיַקֵּן 2

יִתְרָם שְׂאֵן נוֹכַח לַגֵּר עַל סֵלַע סֶקֶן יִינֹן וְיִהְיֶה טִיטִם וְאֵן שְׁרוֹן בְּמִוּנֵי לַעֲיִן 3

הַיְהוּהִי בִּיחֻטְבִּי וְאֶרְיוֹסִי בְּרוּאֶרְיוֹנִי הֵלֵא לֵהֲלֵה ית שְׂדַחְרִי שׁוֹי פִּי בְּתֵי 4

בְּזָכִיטִי שׁוֹמֵי בְהֵרֵלֶא הַנֶּפֶא לִוְחֻטְבִּי הַיִּם שֶׁרֶשׁ שְׂאֶרְבֵּי גֵהִירֵי שֶׁאֵן 5

רָרַע וְיִאֲוִי לֵא רִי־תִבִּי שְׁחֲמוּ רִי־תֵאלֶפֶן הֵלֵא הַיְהוּהִי הַיְהוּהִי יִתְאַוְתִּי שְׁעֵתוֹ בְּחֶ 6
רִי־פִיסִי מִצֶּעֶר הַרְבֵּי דְאִוְהִדִּי גֵא רִי־לֵא

יִתְלֵא־שֶׁאֵן לֵהֲאֶטְחֵה לֹעֵי לִיתִי רִי־כִסִּי נִזְאֵת צִפְחֵא לֹהֵחַ נִמוּחֵב 7

יִלְעֵב וְתִכְרַפִּי סִתִּי לִגְמִי בִי תֵאבְדֵה נִהִי תִרְמֵא זֶאֶן 8

יִעֲמֵקוּ תִיבֵי־תִרְחֹתִי וְיִתְצַפְּחֵי הֵלֵא רְנוּצֵרִיתוֹ שְׁעֵן 9

יִתְעַדִּי הַיְהוּהִי יֵאֵלֶכָא לִי תִפֵּשֶׁה נִהֵבֵר לֵהֲקִיב וְקִדְּצִי תִרְחֵשֵׁב 10

יִתְדַחֲכֵא לִי תִרְמֵא רְתַעוּשְׁתוֹ רְתַנוּמֵא יִיבֵל רֹתִיב וִיתִי־כֵאֵל לִרְתַקֵּדֶצֶן 11
בִּרְלֵהֲקֵל לִרְתַמֵּא וְרִידֶסֶחַ

יִנְהַר־צִידִי מִתִּי־תִמֵּא וְרִידֶסֶחַ יִנְהַמֵּמ רִי־מִחֵרֵא לִכְתֵּאל הַיְהוּהִי תֵאֶן 12

תוֹאֲרֵלִי יִתְלֵכֵא לִוִּיתִנִּי עֵינִי נִגִּי־שֶׁהֶרֶפִּי סִמִּי אֲדַע תוֹעֲרֵי לַעֲזוּפֶפֶא יִכֶּן 13
יִנְבָּזְעִי בִלְוִי־שֶׁאֵן רִתוֹרֶע־שְׁמִי מִצֶּעֶר

הֵשׁוּחִי תִרְזַעֵל הַיְהוּהִי יִנְגִּלִי צֵהֵל הַיְהוּהִי צֶחֶן 14

יִצְפֵּחַ נִמְלִיכִי וְרוּחֵאֶוֹסִי הַיְהוּהִי יִפְסִלִי שְׁפִנִי שְׁקִבִּי דַחֲי וִוִּרִי־פִחִי וְשִׁבִּי 15
יִתְעַר

חֵאֶה וְחֵאֶה־יִלְסִיר מֵאֶה־סֵתִי שֶׁיִּבְקֵע־עֵלֶע־שֶׁן 16

יִבְהֵא הַיְהוּהִי לִידְגִי־מִתְוִרֵמֵאִי רִי־שֶׁקֶב־מִלִּיכִי רִיבֵוִיחִי שִׁי וְשִׁי־שֶׁן 17
יִרְתַּעוּשְׁתִּי

רִחֵא־תֵלֵא־יֵהֵלֵא הַיְהוּהִי יִטְלַפֵּמוּי־תִרְזַעֵי לִבִּי שְׁחִי־נִדֵּא וְיִבְאֵוִי נֶעֱוִי נֶאֶן 18
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