

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
A Study of Hebrews 10:1-39
By Pastor Marcus Bates

Introduction – Review

- The apostle Paul is believed to be the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (**GC 347, 411, 413, 420-421**).
- Timothy was a close ministry associate of Paul, and is mentioned by name in the epistle (**Heb. 13:23**), similar to other epistles written by Paul (**2 Cor. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:2; 1:18; 6:20-21; 2 Tim. 2:1; Philemon 1:1**).
- Produced prior to Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70, this epistle was written to Jewish Christians, and might have also been used as an evangelistic tool to reach the Jewish people with the Gospel message.
- One of the central themes in the book of Hebrews is the “**Jesus is better than . . .**” theme.
- **Heb. 1:1-14** (Jesus is better than angels); **Heb. 2:1-18** (Jesus is better than any human being); **Heb. 3:1-19** (Jesus is better than Moses); **Heb. 4:1-16** (Jesus offers a better rest – salvation, Sabbath, and eternal life); **Heb. 5:1-14** (Jesus has a better priesthood – Melchisedec); **Heb. 6:1-20** (Jesus offers better promises); **Heb. 7:1-28** (Jesus is a better priest than the OT Melchisedec was); **Heb. 8:1-13** (Jesus ministers and serves in a better sanctuary); **Heb. 9:1-28** (Jesus ministers in a better sanctuary, and through His better sacrifice, He offers a better intercession).

Hebrews 10 – Reflections on Hebrews 10:1-4

- The apostle Paul stated that the Old Testament sacrificial law was merely a shadow pointing toward Christ and His infinite sacrifice as the reality, and is not the reality itself.
- The earthly sacrifices that took place on a yearly basis during Old Testament times could not make those who participated perfect or cleanse them from sin.
- If these Old Testament sacrifices could make them perfect, the Israelites would have stopped offering them, because, having been purged from sin, they would have no longer needed to offer sacrifices.
- However, these yearly sacrifices under the Old Testament sanctuary system were annual reminders of their sins; it was not possible for the blood of animals to cleanse people from their sins.

Hebrews 10 – Reflections on Hebrews 10:5-10

- Christ was the one true sacrifice for sin; this sacrifice involved him taking on human nature.
- God had prepared a human body for Christ to take on so that He could offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin, because ultimately God does not have pleasure in animal sacrifices.
- The “Book,” i.e. the Bible, has been written about Christ; He is revealed all through the Old Testament – it predicated the messianic ministry of Christ, and the fact that He came to perfectly live out the will of God.
- Christ came to fulfill the predictions of the Old Covenant and establish the New Covenant.
- Believers are sanctified by the sacrifice of Christ one time; He doesn’t need to be sacrificed repeatedly.

Hebrews 10 – Reflections on Hebrews 10:11-18

- The earthly priests ministered regularly during Old Testament times, offering the same animal sacrifices over and over, which ultimately had no authority to take away their sins.
- Yet, Jesus has offered one final and complete sacrifice for sin, and is now at the right hand of God, where He waits for the time at the end of human history when He will make His enemies His footstool.
- Through His one offering, Jesus has forever perfected faithful believers who are being sanctified.
- The Holy Spirit is also a witness for Jesus Christ, and writes God’s law into the heart and mind of every faithful believer; under this better covenant, God will forgive and forget their sins and iniquities.

Hebrews 10 – Reflections on Hebrews 10:19-27

- Believers are to have the boldness to spiritually enter the heavenly sanctuary through Christ’s blood.

- Jesus is the new and living way under the New Covenant, which has been given and established for us through the spiritual veil of His own flesh, which was sacrificed for our sins (**1 Pet. 2:24**).
- Jesus is the great High Priest over God's spiritual house, the church, which means we can draw near to Him with a heart full of assurance, because we have our sins purged by His sacrifice.
- We should hold fast to this promise (God is faithful with His promises!), and reflect love and good works.
- We should also not fail to gather together with like-minded believers on a regular basis to give and receive encouragement through exhortation, as the day of Christ's return draws near.
- If we commit willful sins against God, Christ's sacrifice does not cover us until we repent; if we do not repent, judgment from God awaits us; we should maintain an attitude of faith and repentance with God.

Hebrews 10 – Reflections on Hebrews 10:28-34

- Professed Old Testament believers who died while living under the Mosaic Law suffered punishment for their sins based on the testimony of two or three witnesses.
- Yet, those who reject Christ and His covenant of salvation (which was purchased by His own precious blood), and trample His name under their feet, will meet with a sure and swift destruction, because of their resistance of the Holy Spirit; God will judge sin in a swift manner; vengeance belongs to Him.
- We should fear falling into the hands of a holy and just God; Hebrew believers should also remember their former days, when they had great faith to endure the challenges and afflictions that came their way.
- They also took care of Paul while He was in prison, having a willingness to part with their earthly goods for his benefit and comfort, knowing that they were laying up treasure in heaven.

Hebrews 10 – Reflections on Hebrews 10:35-39

- We should not cast off our confidence in Christ, because the reward for having faith is eternal.
- We must have patience, that, after having done God's will, we might receive the promise of eternal life.
- Eventually Christ will return, and will not tarry any longer; the just (i.e. those justified by Christ) will live by faith; yet, those who draw back from their faith will have no reward.
- Paul encouraged believers by saying that the faithful should not draw back into sin and perdition; rather, believers should have a faith and confidence that results in eternal salvation.

Summary of Hebrews 10:1-39

- Earthly sacrifices had no authority to take away sins; only Christ's sacrifice can atone for sin.
- Christ's sacrifice involved Him taking on human nature and a human body; as a human being, Christ perfectly represented what it means to live out the will of God.
- Christ only needed to die once for sin; He doesn't need to be sacrificed over and over.
- Through the conversion process, the Holy Spirit places God's Law into the heart and mind of every faithful believer; in this New Covenant process, Christ forever perfects those who are being sanctified.
- As the process of conversion takes place, God forgets the past sins and iniquities of responsive human beings, and gives them the full assurance of approaching Him in the heavenly sanctuary with confidence.
- While God displays great mercy, He is also a God of judgment; those who reject His Holy Spirit and refuse to accept Christ's holy sacrifice will meet with swift judgment and destruction, if they persist in harboring this attitude and eventually take themselves beyond the limits of salvation through their rebellion.
- Believers should gather together regularly in corporate worship to encourage each other, especially as the day of Christ's return continues to draw near.
- We should have full confidence and assurance in Christ's sacrifice; soon He will return, so we should live by faith and not fall back into the temptations of the world.
- Overall, consistent with our "Jesus is better than . . ." theme, we can see from this chapter that Jesus offers a better covenant (i.e. God's Law written in our hearts and minds, and the blessing of forgiven sin), which is based on a better sacrifice (Christ's eternal, once and for all sacrifice).