

The Church Is Sent to Proclaim Jesus

Summary and Goal

Jesus is greater than all. Compared to the institutions, rituals, laws, and sacrifices of the old covenant, Jesus is the better revelation, the better high priest, and the better sacrifice. In fact, He is better than these because He is the One who fulfills all of them. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus grants us eternal salvation. Because of who He is and what He has done for us, we must proclaim Him to others as the better answer to any alternative. Indeed, the Great Commission compels us to make disciples of all the peoples of the world (Matt. 28:18-20). The goal of this session is to help us see Jesus as He is and consequently want to spread the good news of Christ to our neighbors and the nations.

Session Outline

1. Jesus is the better revelation (Heb. 1:1-3).
2. Jesus is the better high priest (Heb. 8:1-6).
3. Jesus is the better sacrifice (Heb. 10:11-18).

Background Passage: Hebrews 1–10

Session in a Sentence

Jesus is better than the Old Testament prophecies and institutions because He fulfills them.

Christ Connection

Jesus is better than the ancient prophecies and institutions because He is the One who fulfills them. Jesus is the Word of God who came so that we might experience a better salvation through His perfect life, death, and resurrection.

Missional Application

Because we have experienced Jesus as our perfect high priest and sacrifice for our sin, we hold up and proclaim Him to others as the better answer to any alternative.

Group Time

GROUP MEMBER CONTENT

Introduction

EXPLAIN: Use the paragraphs on page 29 in the Daily Discipleship Guide (DDG) to illustrate the prevalence of false gods and false worship around the world and in our own neighborhoods.

Imagine traveling around the world. We land in a place in Southeast Asia where the people are bowing before gods they have created with their own hands. The gods sitting on a shelf in the corner cannot hear them, but still their makers pray. Next, we travel to Africa where a father with a sick child seeks both a missionary for prayer and a witch doctor for power. Arriving in Europe, we find the landscape littered with dying and empty church buildings, a sign of the increasing secularization in the West, including the United States, as people devote their energies to various forms of self-directed worship.

We don't have to travel far to find people worshipping and trusting in false gods. On our streets, in our workplaces, even in our own families, all around us are people who worship idols. Some live for wealth, power, or prestige; others seek the approval of false deities. Whatever the case may be, these pursuits require sacrifices but fail to fulfill our deepest longings.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.



What are some world religions and secular belief systems represented by people in your sphere of influence? (be prepared to give an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)

SUMMARIZE: While others bow before their gods, the church has the message of the one true God who came to us in Jesus. Christ alone provides salvation, and it is the church's responsibility to proclaim His message of good news to a world steeped in idolatry. In this lesson, we will focus on Jesus as the writer of Hebrews describes Him: the One who is better than all. Compared to the institutions, rituals, laws, and sacrifices of the old covenant, Jesus is the better revelation, the better high priest, and the better sacrifice. In fact, He is better than these because He is the One who fulfills all of them.

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Point 1: Jesus is the better revelation (Heb. 1:1-3).

READ: Ask a volunteer to read Hebrews 1:1-3 (DDG p. 30).

¹ Long ago God spoke to the ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways. ² In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 30) to explain how Jesus is better than the messages of the Old Testament because He fulfills that message as God in the flesh.

The anonymous writer of Hebrews wrote to believers who apparently were in danger of drifting from their commitment to Christ and returning to the rituals and institutions of Judaism because they were facing persecution and trials. Therefore, the writer wanted them to know that Jesus is better than anything to which they might return. First, He reminded his hearers that while God made Himself known in many ways in the past, He now fulfilled His past messages through sending His Son. The prophets of old pointed to God, but Jesus revealed God because He is God.

- In the Old Testament, God had spoken through means such as prophets, visions, dreams, theophanies, angels, and burning bushes, but the messages were still incomplete prior to the coming of Christ. Those messages in the past, by God's purpose and intent, were pointing to better things in the future. The messages of the Old Testament would be fulfilled in the New Testament with the coming of the Son of God—Jesus.
- Jesus was not just another prophet, rabbi, priest, or teacher. Because of who He is, no one can even compare to Him. He is **God's Son**—the Second Person of the Trinity come in the flesh. The Son reflects the splendor of the Father because He and the Father share the same nature (Heb. 1:3). The word translated “exact expression,” in fact, was used in the first century for engraving or pressing an image into a seal or coin.¹ God the Father and God the Son are distinct in person, but to see Jesus is to see the Father because the two share the same eternal glory and eternal nature.
- With a view to the future, the writer of Hebrews declared Jesus is the **heir of all things**, which He will rule over when He receives His eternal inheritance from His Father (see Ps. 2:7-8). Jesus broke the backs of His demonic enemies through the cross (Col. 2:15), and He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 17:14).
- Looking back, the writer also identified Jesus, the Son, as God the Father's **agent in creation** itself. From the very beginning of time, and before, the Son has existed with the Father in perfect equality (Heb. 1:2,10; see also John 1:1-3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Phil. 2:5-6; Col. 1:15-17).

FILL IN THE BLANKS: Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 30).

Jesus' Deity: Within the person of Jesus Christ, there are two natures—the **divine** nature and the **human** nature. Scripture teaches He is fully divine and fully human. The New Testament points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses **attributes** that God alone possesses, how He performs works that only God performs, and how He Himself claims to be the **Son** of God.

Essential Doctrine “Jesus’ Deity”: Within the person of Jesus Christ, there are two natures—the **divine** nature and the **human** nature. Scripture teaches He is fully divine and fully human. His divinity is on display in passages that describe Him as being equal with God (John 1:1-18; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). The New Testament also points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses **attributes** that God alone possesses (Mic. 5:2; John 1:4), how He performs works that only God performs (Mark 2:5-12; John 10:28; 17:2), and how He Himself claims to be the **Son** of God (Matt. 26:63-64; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5).

EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 30) to address how the Son made purification for our sins through His death, burial, and resurrection, which was followed by His exaltation.

In Hebrews 1:3, the writer also introduces the theme of Jesus’ sacrificial death, which is the topic of much of the Book of Hebrews. The Creator, against whom we have sinned, chose to die in our place, and it is through His shed blood that we sinners are purified. In His unique capacity, Jesus was both the priest who offered the sacrifice to atone for our sins and the sacrifice itself. How can we not praise Him and proclaim Him as the better revelation of God?

- The Bible is clear that everyone has sinned against God (Rom. 3:23) and is blinded by the god of this age while separated from God (2 Cor. 4:3-4). They are, according to the apostle Paul, dead in their sin and under God’s wrath (Eph. 2:1-3). God, however, stepped into our common story to offer redemption through His Son, through His death, burial, and resurrection. The Son of God humbled Himself to be like us and die in our place. Now the Son reigns from His position at the Father’s right hand, a position of authority and honor. There can be no better revelation of the nature and character of God.
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INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.



What has the Son revealed about God? (God is gracious; God is humble; God is holy; God is loving; God rejects self-righteousness; God is tender with those who repent of their sin; God is self-giving; God is forgiving; God is merciful)

Point 2: Jesus is the better high priest (Heb. 8:1-6).

READ Hebrews 8:1-6 (DDG p. 31).

¹ Now the main point of what is being said is this: We have this kind of high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ² a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that was set up by the Lord and not man. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; therefore, it was necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. ⁴ Now if he were on earth, he wouldn't be a priest, since there are those offering the gifts prescribed by the law. ⁵ These serve as a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was warned when he was about to complete the tabernacle. For God said, Be careful that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain. ⁶ But Jesus has now obtained a superior ministry, and to that degree he is the mediator of a better covenant, which has been established on better promises.

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 31) to show the superiority of the heavenly **tabernacle** and Jesus' **priesthood**.

At this point in the Book of Hebrews, the author did not want his readers to miss the significance of what he wrote: We believers have a better high priest who is now seated at the right hand of the "Majesty in the heavens." There, He ministered in a **tabernacle** not made by human hands. As the writer of Hebrews often does, he again described ways in which Jesus is better than the old system. For example, Jesus, the better high **priest**, completed the task of paying the price for sin.

The writer of Hebrews pointed out that the old covenant patterns were only shadows of what was to come.

- The earthly **tabernacle** of Moses was a man-made tent where priests served, but even that unique place could still only point to the heavenly tabernacle where Jesus now serves. The earthly tabernacle was only a "copy" of what God had shown and told Moses to build (Ex. 25:8-9). The heavenly tabernacle created by the hands of God will never pass away.
- The **priests** of the old covenant never truly completed their work, and each successive sacrifice was a reminder that no animal sacrifice ultimately finished the work of atonement. Jesus' seated position, however, was evidence of the finality of His work and His status as the Lord (Ps. 110:1). Only He was a priest who ascended into heaven, and that very position made Him a better high priest than those who served only on earth. In fact, Jesus could not have been an earthly priest according to Jewish law because He was not from the tribe of Levi. He was of a superior priesthood—that of Melchizedek, which preceded the Levitical priestly order and the Mosaic Law (see Heb. 6:20–7:28; Gen. 14:17-20). In heaven, seated at the right hand of the throne of God, Jesus serves as a priest for us forever by making intercession for us because He will never die again (Heb. 7:23-25; see also Rom. 8:34).

FILL IN THE BLANKS: Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 31).

Christ as Priest: As our Great High Priest, Jesus accomplishes the work of reconciling us to God. He is the One whose perfect **righteousness** is presented to the Father for our justification. He is the One who **intercedes** for us before the Father and **prays** for us to remain faithful.

Essential Doctrine “Christ as Priest”: As our Great High Priest, Jesus accomplishes the work of reconciling us to God. He is the One whose perfect **righteousness** is presented to the Father for our justification. He is the One who **intercedes** for us before the Father (Heb. 7:25; 9:24) and **prays** for us to remain faithful (Luke 22:31-32; John 17).

EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 31) to explain how the **covenant** Jesus mediated as our high priest is better than the old covenant.

The writer of Hebrews also wanted his readers to know that Jesus, the better high priest, is the mediator of a better **covenant** (Heb. 8:7–9:28). The old covenant of Moses could not effectively resolve the sin issue. It could only reveal the sin issue while also pointing toward a better covenant to come. The old covenant could not bring salvation; it could only anticipate what God intended to do in Christ. Jesus did for us what the priests of the old covenant could not do. In the new covenant, God invites us into relationship with Him by effectively dealing with our sin problem.

- As the earthly priests of Israel offered gifts and sacrifices as part of their spiritual ritual in accordance with the Mosaic law, or the old covenant, they were pointing toward something greater, something better—the **new covenant**. The writer of Hebrews went on to quote Jeremiah 31:31-34 in Hebrews 8:8-12 to show what God had done through Jesus, our Great High Priest—He established a new covenant with us. The laws of the old covenant were written on stone, but God writes His law upon our heart and in our mind with the advent of the new covenant. He radically changes us on the inside. At the same time, God chooses to remember our sin no more; that is, He fully and finally forgives our sin based solely on our faith in the sacrifice of His Son.
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INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

 What are some ways Jesus' priesthood is better than the priesthood under the Mosaic Law? (Jesus mediates an eternal covenant that promises to change us, not just cover over our sin; Jesus' priesthood is eternal and He will never stop interceding for us; as a perfect priest, Jesus can perfectly represent us before God and reveal God to us)

Point 3: Jesus is the better sacrifice (Heb. 10:11-18).

READ Hebrews 10:11-18 (DDG p. 32).

¹¹ Every priest stands day after day ministering and offering the same sacrifices time after time, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this man, after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ He is now waiting until his enemies are made his footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are sanctified. ¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. For after he says:

¹⁶ This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, the Lord says, I will put my laws on their hearts and write them on their minds, ¹⁷ and I will never again remember their sins and their lawless acts.

¹⁸ Now where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 32) to explain Jesus as the better **sacrifice**: once and for all.

Again the writer compares Jesus with the old system, this time with a focus on Jesus as the **sacrifice**. The priests in the old covenant were required to offer the same kinds of sacrifices regularly, for the animal sacrifices they offered could not take away sins because an animal cannot rightly take the place of a single human being, much less all of humanity (Heb. 10:4). But Jesus, the better priest, offered the sacrifice that settled the sin issue—Himself. Having offered the once-for-all sacrifice, He then sat down, the sign of His completed work for our atonement.

Voices from the Church

“Since sin entered through a man, it had to be removed by a man. But no sinful man could be the sacrifice. Only Jesus could be the sinless substitute for us, dying the death we deserved and giving us His righteousness in exchange.”²

—Mary Wiley

- No animal sacrifice could pay the price for human sin (sacrifices according to the Mosaic Law were a temporary measure until Christ came). The best annual animal sacrifices could do was offer covering for past-tense sins rather than deal with present-tense failures. They could not cleanse the conscience or free people from bondage to sin. Thus, the offerings could not provide a once-for-all cleansing.
- This truth also explains why the priest stood in his daily service. Because the priest’s work was never complete, the tabernacle had no seat for the priest. He only stood, carried out his responsibilities, and returned the next time to sacrifice again. When Jesus, though, offered Himself for the sins of the world, He provided “one sacrifice for sins forever” (Heb. 10:12). The picture of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God is a reminder that He had completed His work. The repetition of this “seated” imagery, in fact, emphasizes the point: the work was done, and no other sacrifice for sin would ever be necessary (see Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2). Thus, Jesus spoke these true words on the cross: “It is finished” (John 19:30).

Illustration: Some years ago on the mission field, I watched a group sacrifice an animal to please their gods. An animal lost its life. Blood flowed. The people carried out their rituals. Some participated in the slaughter, and others watched. As I looked at the scene in front of me and the people around me, I could not help but grieve. The people did not yet realize that their sacrifices would not resolve their issues. They did not know that the better sacrifice, Jesus the Son of God, had come—and it is our responsibility as His church to proclaim to that world the good news of His coming.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

 What are some ways we can wrongly try to atone for our sin? (doing good works to counteract or outweigh our evil deeds; redefining what sin is; trying to make it up to people whom we have wronged; ignoring and trying to forget our shortcomings)

EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 32) to highlight the blessings and rewards to come to Jesus on account of His faithful obedience to His Father. *Apply* this certain future to your group's present actions and heart for evangelism.

Sacrifices in the old covenant reminded people of the reality of their sin, but God has now chosen to remember our sin no more. God in mercy chooses not to hold our sin against us because Jesus has already paid the price for our wrong. The assurance of our salvation is thus based on what God has done on our behalf. And because of Jesus' obedience and atonement for us, He will be rewarded: His enemies will be dealt with, and the people He has saved will be perfected forevermore.

- According to Hebrews 10:13, Jesus is waiting “until his enemies are made his footstool.” This reference to Psalm 110:1 is a reminder that the day will come when Jesus reigns fully over all of His renewed creation and His enemies are defeated.

Application: It may seem some days that evil is winning, but the future is certain: The One seated at the right hand of the Father will destroy forever the forces of evil. Until that day when Jesus comes again, believers are obligated to tell others about Him and the forgiveness He offers. He alone has made us holy, and He is continually molding our minds and hearts to be like Him. It is no wonder, then, that the early church proclaimed the good news throughout the Roman Empire even when doing so led to persecution and martyrdom.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

 How does the Old Testament help us understand the significance of Jesus' sacrificial death? (we are confronted with the heinousness of sin against our holy Creator; we understand that sin deserves death as its punishment; we witness the mercy of God to allow animals as a substitute until Christ's death for us; only a perfect sacrifice can atone)

My Mission

EXPLAIN: Many believers struggle to share the good news with others. Some are afraid of rejection. Others are concerned that they will not know answers to questions their friends ask. Still others do not know how to share the gospel, so they do not try. Our lack of wonder over Jesus is one reason we do not talk about Him with others. We take grace for granted, and we have allowed the story of Jesus' death, resurrection, ascension, return, and rule to become routine. In a tendency similar to the original readers of the Book of Hebrews, we find ourselves lured away from Jesus toward other things. When we remember, however, that Jesus is the better revelation, the better priest, and the better sacrifice, we will do what the church is called and sent to do: we will proclaim Him.

READ the following missional application statement in the DDG (p. 33), and encourage group members to choose at least one of the options below as a way to respond to the truth of God's Word.

Because we have experienced Jesus as our perfect high priest and sacrifice for our sin, we hold up and proclaim Him to others as the better answer to any alternative.

- **How will you choose to respond to seeing Jesus as the better, once-for-all sacrifice for sins?**
- **What are some ways your group can live as a nation of priests for one another in light of Jesus' better and perfect priesthood?**
- **How will you use the Old Testament in expressing to non-Christians the superiority of Jesus as the only true Savior?**

Voices from the Church

"In Christ, shadow has given way to substance; the temporary has been replaced with the eternal; the imperfect has become perfect; judgment has become mercy; and law has become grace."³

—David L. Allen

CLOSE IN PRAYER: Father, we thank You and trust You for Your wisdom of setting up the old covenant so that we might recognize and appreciate the coming of our Savior, Jesus, the better revelation, the better priest, and our better sacrifice who takes away the sin of the world. May we always be turning to Him in faith and praising Him for the glory of Your name. May Your Spirit illuminate the Scriptures for us so we always see Your Son and will be able to proclaim Him faithfully before this world that desperately needs His salvation. Amen.

PACK ITEM 5: CHRIST IS ALL WE NEED: Cut out these bookmarks and pass them out to group members to remind them that we find all we need for life and godliness in Christ, the better sacrifice and priest.

INSTRUCT: As your group departs, encourage group members to read and respond to the **Daily Study** devotions in their DDG (pp. 34-36), which build and expand upon the group study. Also advocate for small groups or families to use **Encourage One Another** (p. 37) for mutual accountability and fellowship grounded upon the foundation of God's Word.

Daily Discipleship

Throughout the week following the session, use the ideas below to remind and encourage your group members to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. The **Daily Study** devotions in the DDG (pp. 34-36) will help group members get into God's Word and study it for themselves. **Encourage One Another** (p. 37) will help group members and families fellowship with one another with purpose.

Daily Study

Brief daily devotions in the DDG (pp. 34-36) will help group members take initiative in their own discipleship.

- Make sure all group members have access to a Bible to read. Have some Bibles available to give to guests who may need one, or offer to get one and arrange a time to meet to give it and show how to navigate it for the devotions.
- Share the following idea from the devotion for **Day 4** as a part of point 2 in the session: **The One who is better is the perfect Son of God, holy and undefiled, the high priest forever. Where the law could not save, Jesus can and does.**



Consider leading by example and reading the daily devotions yourself with your own DDG. Based on your study, use brief messages throughout the week (group text, email, social media) to encourage your group to keep up with their daily time in God's Word and to live it out. Here are a couple of examples you can use:

- **Day 1:** "Jesus lowered Himself to die in our place, but He also was crowned with glory and honor in His resurrection."
- **Day 5:** "Because the Son of God took on flesh and died for us, God welcomes us into His presence."



Visit www.GospelProject.com/Blog for additional content and resources you can use to help group members gain more insight into their daily studies. Send group members a link or a portion of a blog post or other content that you believe will be helpful and encouraging for their time in God's Word.

Encourage One Another

This brief plan for fellowship and accountability in the group member's DDG (p. 37) will help groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. It could also be used for family discipleship with students and children who are using *The Gospel Project* in their groups.

- **Encourage group members to share with one another about the ways the Old Testament has deepened their understanding of who Jesus is.**
- See yourself as a member of the group who also needs encouragement in the faith, and participate in such a group this week.

Additional Commentary

Point 1: Jesus is the better revelation (Heb. 1:1-3).

“The Son of God is the great and final Prophet whose revelation completes that of the Old Testament prophets, through whom God also spoke. In John 6:68, Peter, speaking for all believers, says to Jesus, ‘You have the words of eternal life.’ Therefore, we must pay attention (Heb. 2:1) to Jesus our Lord and Savior when he teaches us through his apostolic witness in the New Testament. Hebrews 1 also presents the Son as Priest and King. What qualifies him to fulfill these Old Testament offices? His identity. He is the beginning and the end of all things: God’s agent in creation and his heir (v. 2). And that is because he is almighty God. He shares the divine glory and is the ‘exact imprint of [God’s] nature’ (v. 3). He is of the very nature of God himself. He also performs works that only God performs, such as creating the universe (v. 10) and upholding it ‘by the word of his power’ (v. 3). All this introduces Hebrews’ main message—that Jesus with divine power and prerogative has made ‘purification for sins’ and has sat down at God’s right hand. His sitting indicates that, unlike Old Testament priests who never sat when making sacrifices, Jesus has finished his work. There is no other sacrifice for sin besides Jesus’ offering of himself to God on the cross. And because of where he sat—at God’s right hand, the place of greatest honor and authority in the universe—his work is perfect. It cannot be improved upon. And because his work is finished and perfect, it is effective to forgive sins.”⁴

“The majesty of the Father is expressly imaged in the greatness of the power of the Son, that the one may be believed to be as great as the other is known to be. Again, as the radiance of light sheds its brilliance from the whole of the sun’s disk . . . so too all the glory which the Father has is shed from its whole by means of the brightness that comes from it, that is, by the true Light. Even as the ray is of the sun—for there would be no ray if the sun were not—the sun is never conceived as existing by itself without the ray of brightness that is shed from it. So the apostle delivered to us the continuity and eternity of that existence which the Only Begotten has of the Father, calling the Son ‘the brightness of God’s glory.’”⁵

Point 2: Jesus is the better high priest (Heb. 8:1-6).

“Two further weaknesses of the Levitical arrangement are demonstrated on the basis of Scripture in 8:1-13. First, the contrast between the heavenly and earthly tabernacle is introduced to supplement the distinction between the new and the old. Levitical priests serve only a shadowy suggestion of the heavenly sanctuary in which Christ exercises his ministry. To the degree that the earthly sanctuary with its ministry only imperfectly corresponds to the ministry conducted in the presence of God, it is marked by deficiency. Secondly, the covenant under which the Levitical arrangement was instituted has been treated by God as obsolete. The mediation of the new covenant demonstrates the eschatological superiority of Christ’s ministry and the divine intention to replace the old arrangement with another that is eschatologically new.”⁶

“Having described the high priest who would truly meet our needs (7:26), the author triumphantly repeats his previous claim: we do have such a high priest (8:1; see 4:14; 7:26). He repeats, too, that Christ has sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, having completed his work of salvation (see 1:3). His place at God’s right hand signifies his kingly power and authority as the Son of God and that he does not serve in an earthly tabernacle . . . The OT priests’ duties included offering gifts and sacrifices as prescribed by the law as a remedy for sin. Christ too has something to offer, but his gift is unique—he offered his life as a sacrifice (8:3-4). Moreover the high priests of the old covenant serve in an earthly tabernacle, which is no more than a copy or shadow of the one in heaven, which was revealed to Moses (8:5). Christ, however, serves in the heavenly sanctuary, the true tabernacle. Therefore, the author concludes, the ministry of Jesus is as superior to theirs as the new covenant is superior to the old since it is established on better promises (8:6).”⁷

Point 3: Jesus is the better sacrifice (Heb. 10:11-18).

“Unlike the priests who had to constantly repeat sacrifices in the imperfect Levitical system, Jesus Christ, as a superior high priest, offered one sacrifice—himself—once for all (10:11-12). To reinforce Christ’s superiority, the writer says that he now waits for his enemies to be made his footstool (10:13). He has made his people perfect, that is, acceptable to God by being set apart for him and living godly lives (10:14,18). Then the writer again quotes from Jeremiah 31:33-34 to show that Christ’s sacrificial act is part of God’s new covenant with his people (10:16-17).”⁸

“The new covenant, according to Jeremiah’s prophecy, not only involved the implanting of God’s laws, together with the will and power to carry them out, in the hearts of his people; it also conveyed the assurance that their past sins and iniquities would be eternally blotted out from God’s record, never to be brought up in evidence against them. Here is something far beyond what the sacrificial law of Old Testament times could provide: in that law there was an annual ‘reminder of sins’ (cf. v. 3), whereas in the new covenant there is no more remembrance of them . . . The finality of the sacrifice of Christ is thus confirmed. In Hebrews 8 the oracle of Jeremiah 31:31-34 was quoted in order to prove the obsolescence of the old economy; now it is quoted again in order to establish the permanence of the era of “perfection” inaugurated under the new covenant. ‘God has spoken in his Son’; and he has no word to speak beyond him.”⁹

References

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