

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 16TH, 2025 // HEBREWS

GIFTS AND SACRIFICES (HEBREWS 8:1-3)

"AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE"

The author has focused on Jesus as our High Priest for several chapters and now offers a clear summary of what the main point has been: Jesus, a superior High Priest, serves His people before God by **offering a superior and effective sacrifice for sins** and now **ministers for us from a position of power and all authority in the heavens.**

"...WHO SAT DOWN..."

The idea of "sitting down" suggested a completed task, signifying that Jesus had finished His job. Jesus **completed the job that led to victory over sin and death** then took up a new job interceding on our behalf.

- The previous OT priests always stood in God's presence without sitting because **their work on behalf of the people was never finished.**

"THE SANCTUARY AND THE TRUE TABERNACLE"

The earthly tabernacle, where Aaron's descendants served, was filled with symbols of God's presence and the forgiveness of sins.

- Jesus was the fulfillment of those symbols, obtaining forgiveness for sins by offering Himself, bringing us into God's presence, and giving us hope.

THE TRUE TABERNACLE

Verse 2 refers to Jesus as **"a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that was set up by the Lord and not man."**

- Earthly tabernacles were constructed by men (though God provided the blueprints) as an imitation of a heavenly reality. **Jesus tended to our need for an eternal heavenly dwelling place in the presence of God.**

REQUIRED TO BRING GIFTS AND SACRIFICES

Every earthly high priest appointed according to the Law of Moses was to **bring both gifts and sacrifices on behalf of the people to God.** These sacrifices had to be repeated since they only temporarily addressed sin.

- **Jesus offered himself** and paid for the sins of the world, completely atoning for the sins of mankind, and no repetition was needed.

CONTRAST (HEBREWS 8:4-6)

"DESPISED AND REJECTED" (ISAIAH 53:3)

According to the laws of man, Jesus was unable to be a priest because of His earthly lineage but because of His heavenly lineage, **He serves forever as a priest in heaven.**

- Jesus was rejected on earth and not placed into a priestly position (Luke 4:24). His ministry on earth was offering himself as a sacrifice for sin, then **He stepped into His heavenly priestly ministry.**

FORESHADOWING A PERFECT SACRIFICE

The "temple work" the priest performed for the temple was only **a foreshadowing and reflection of the work Jesus would accomplish on the cross.**

- The payment for all humanity's sin cost more than all the sacrifices priests could offer. **It took the perfect offering of Jesus to cover the debt we owed.**

FORESHADOWING A GREATER SPLENDOR

God gave very specific parameters for the construction and layout of the OT tabernacle and temple (Exodus 25-40; 1 Chronicles 22-29).

- The attention to detail of these earthly structures was only **a foreshadowing of the perfect dwelling place of God to come**, where we will dwell ("tabernacle") with God in the splendor of His presence.

"THE MEDIATOR..."

No earthly priest could take away sin the way Jesus did, making His ministry better than the ministry of the priest under the law of Moses.

- Jesus, the **"mediator"** ("one who stands in the middle between two parties and brings them together"), **stood in the gap that our sin caused and brokered the deal that connected imperfect people with their creator.**

"...A BETTER COVENANT...ON BETTER PROMISES"

The new covenant was instituted through Jesus because the old was ineffective (7:18).

- In the new covenant **we are promised a new nature** to obey God's law, **a new intimate knowledge of God**, and **the forgiveness of sin.** These are **promises of undeserved blessing and favor that aid us in the most desperate and dark times.**

NECESSITY (HEBREWS 8:7-13)

THE BREAKDOWN WAS WITH US

The old covenant's ineffectiveness was not due to a weakness in the covenant or God, but because of the weakness and inability of humanity to **"continue in [His] covenant."**

- The Law was able to reveal sin but could not meet the needs of sinful people. The issue was not with the Law but with **people who lacked the power to obey the Law** (Romans. 7:7-12).

"SEE THE DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD"

Because of the breakdown on our part, God introduced a new agreement or covenant through Jesus. **The author of Hebrews uses the words of the prophet Jeremiah to explain this new covenant** (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

- The quotation begins by identifying **the words of the prophet Jeremiah as being God's word.**

HE IS MAKING ALL THINGS NEW

As a form of judgment, God turned his back on those who turned their backs on him.

- To restore that relationship, God brought about a **new covenant that would bridge the gap between disobedient people and God.** God did not offer a "new and improved" version of the old, but instead, **something completely new.**

"GOD WAS RECONCILING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF"

God spoke to Jeremiah after He had freed the Jews from captivity in Egypt and at a time when there was civil unrest between Israel and Judah.

- God's timing in communicating a new covenant shows **His desire to heal relationships between each other and between us and Him** (2 Corinthians 5:19).

CONTRASTING THE "OLD" AND THE "NEW"

The old covenant was written on stone tablets, but the new covenant is **written on the hearts and minds of God's people.**

- The old covenant was for Israel and the new extended beyond Israel **to all who would come to God through Jesus** (7:25).
- The old covenant showed God to be merciful but **the new expresses His mercy even further.**

UNABLE TO RETURN TO OLD WAYS

V. 13 shows that saying something new has come means **the old ("first") must be obsolete.**

- If something is obsolete, it ceases to exist. This verbiage is intentional because the readers of Hebrews were inclined to go back to their "old ways." The author wants the audience to see **there is no going back because the old ways have ceased to exist.**

NO GOING BACK

- If our former selves were crucified with Christ and we are resurrected into a new life, how can we go back to the old ways if those things cease to exist?
- If the penalty of sin has been removed, then so has the bondage of sin. **We cannot truly be saved from sin without being transformed into a new life separated from habitual sin.**
- 1 John 3:9, NLT

LOOKING FORWARD

- What's our view of heaven? Have we become materialistic in our views? Is the eternal reward of being with Jesus forever enough?
- Are we willing to let the old ways die for the promise of a new life?
- Easy and good are not the same thing. This new life is not easy. It will take effort, but **through Christ, we have everything we need!**