



Hebrews 10:1-10

(1) For the *priestly* law, having *only* a shadow of the good things that are coming, *and* not the image of those things, with the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, is never able to make perfect those who come *to worship*. (2) Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? For once those who worship had been purified, *they would* no longer be conscious of sin. (3) On the contrary, in *offering* these *sacrifices* year by year, *there is* a remembrance of sins (4) Because *it is* impossible *for the* blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (5) For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. (6) You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin. (7) Then said I, 'Lo, I come (*as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book*) to do Your will, O God.' " (8) In the saying above, *He said*, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the *priestly* law) You did not desire nor delight in"; (9) Then He said, "Lo, I come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*; (10) By Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

A Faithful Version

This passage makes a distinct statement about the comparison between Christ and everything or everyone who came before He arrived on earth to complete the work of [God](#). Jesus' teaching, leadership, and personal example is reality compared to the misty shadows cast by everything else.

The key term throughout Hebrews, then, is "better." The author uses the comparative "better" a number of critical times: [Hebrews 1:4](#) ("so much better than the angels"); [Hebrews 7:19](#) ("a better hope"); [Hebrews 7:22](#); [8:6](#) ("a better covenant"); [Hebrews 8:6](#) ("better promises"); [Hebrews 9:23](#) ("better sacrifices"); [Hebrews 10:34](#) ("a better and enduring possession");

[Hebrews 11:16](#) (“a better . . . country”); [Hebrews 11:35](#) (“a better resurrection”); and [Hebrews 11:40](#) (“something better”).

Not only is “better” emphasized, but “greatness” is also mentioned several times: [Hebrews 2:3](#) (“so great a salvation”); [Hebrews 4:14](#) (“a great High Priest”); [Hebrews 7:4](#) (“how great this man was”); [Hebrews 9:11](#) (“the greater and more perfect Tabernacle”); [Hebrews 10:32](#) (“a great struggle with sufferings”); [Hebrews 10:35](#) (“great reward”); [Hebrews 12:1](#) (“so great a cloud of witnesses”); and [Hebrews 13:20](#) (“that great Shepherd of the sheep”).

The author draws the Hebrews' attention to the contrast between what they gave up in converting and what they gained: Christians have “a great High Priest” ([Hebrews 4:14](#)); “an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast” ([Hebrews 6:19](#)); and an exclusive altar ([Hebrews 13:10](#)). Christians are also exhorted to look forward to “[the world](#) to come” ([Hebrews 2:5](#)); to “the age to come” ([Hebrews 6:5](#)); to the New Covenant being made with the united houses of Israel and Judah ([Hebrews 8:10](#)); to “the good things to come” ([Hebrews 9:11](#)); to Christ's second appearing for salvation ([Hebrews 9:28](#)); to the receipt of the promise at His coming ([Hebrews 10:36-37](#)); and to a future heavenly city ([Hebrews 11:14-16](#); [13:14](#)).

Everywhere a reader turns within Hebrews, by means of sheer repetition of comparisons revealing the superiority of Christ, Christianity, and the New Covenant, he or she is quietly but forcefully drawn to one overriding reality. The center of Judaism was the Temple, the priesthood, and the sacrifices, all of which were fine teachers and good experiences as God intended them. Even so, they are not what God desires for His children at this time within His purpose. They are not good enough for His children now. The author writes in [Hebrews 8:4-6](#), 13:

For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as [Moses](#) was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant,

which was established on better promises. . . . In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Though the Jewish converts were indeed deprived of the distinctive symbols of the past, they were but shadows, symbols, mere copies of heavenly things. Through God's calling and the gifts He provides, they were then, as we are today, dealing with realities and preparing for the realities of eternal life in the [Kingdom of God](#).

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Why Hebrews Was Written \(Part Three\)](#)

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[Better Resurrection](#)

[Comparison of Christ and Angels](#)

[Comparison of Christ and Moses](#)

[Great Cloud of Witnesses](#)

[Hebrews, Book of](#)

[Jesus Christ as Mediator of a Better Covenant](#)

[Jesus Christ as the Great Shepherd](#)

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