

**HEBREWS: REPLACING MAN'S RITUALISM WITH CHRIST**  
**"Part XII: Supplanting Earthly Shrines And Their Rituals With Christ"**  
**(Hebrews 8:1-10:18)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

Some religious groups believe that involvement in a specific building and its rituals are necessary for one to gain access to God:

(1) The followers of Muhammed must make at least one pilgrimage in life to Mecca of Saudi Arabia. In a mosque there stands a large stone shrine housing a smooth black meteorite. That meteorite was allegedly given to Ishmael from the angel Gabriel. Abraham, Ishmael's father by way of Hagar, allegedly installed that stone in this structure, the "Ka'ba". Muslims from all over the world enter the square and walk around this structure hoping to gain eternal salvation!

(2) Not only Muslims, but people in Christendom hold the visit of shrines as a valuable spiritual event. Thousands have visited "Our Lady Of Fatima" in Europe where it is believed the Virgin Mary has appeared to children giving them instructions on holy living.

(3) **Here in America**, the late Cardinal Gibbons, former archbishop of Baltimore, wrote: ". . . our Lord conferred on St. Peter the first place of honor and jurisdiction in the government of His whole church . . . [ So] to be **true** followers of Christ *all* Christians . . . must be in communion with the See of **Rome**, where Peter rules in the person of his successor [the pope]." (Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p. 95 as cited in Boettner, Roman Catholicism, p. 105) For this reason, that Church group teaches there is no salvation apart from association with a church location that belongs to Roman Catholicism.

Also, this group believes one must partake of the alleged actual body of Christ in the **Mass** ritual. Christ is believed to be offered up as a sacrifice every time the Mass occurs, and one must partake or commit mortal sin (The Baltimore Catechism as cited by Boettner, *Ibid.*, p. 183)

(4) Some Protestants also have a heavy focus on **location** and **ritual**: while I served as a Chaplain at a Baptist hospital in Dallas, it was expected that we Chaplains were to be **baptized** in a *Southern* Baptist Church's baptismal to be seen as **truly** baptized Christians!

I never was baptized in a Southern Baptist Church's baptismal as I had been baptized as a believer in a church of another **Baptist** denomination. Yet, I felt **pressure** on the job for *not* having done so!

**Well, WHY or why NOT put a greater emphasis on SHRINES or RITUALS in worship to please God?!**

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . . )

***Need:*** "Various groups believe a special building is **NECESSARY** for one to use to find God, and that this event comes about by way of specific rituals! However, *Nepaug Church* does not seem to emphasize either its building or worship rituals -- **WHY not?!**

- I. **The writer of Hebrews told JEWISH converts to go on in Christ INSTEAD OF reverting to JUDAISM, Rvr. St. Bib., KJV, p. 1729.**
- II. **In so doing, he revealed the earthly Tabernacle and its rituals had been REPLACED by HEAVEN'S temple and service of Christ:**
  - A. The author of Hebrews announced that Jesus Christ, our heavenly High Priest, ministers in the **true** heavenly tabernacle that was **not** made by human hands, Hebrews 8:1-2.
  - B. This heavenly tabernacle was necessary for Christ's ministry as He was not qualified as a Levite to serve in the earthly tabernacle, Heb. 8:3-4.
  - C. Yet, lest we think Christ's ministry unjustly competes with the earthly, Jewish one as an **insubordinate** one, the author of Hebrews notes the **heavenly** ministry of Jesus is far **superior** to Judaism's earthly one:
    1. First, Moses received instructions for the earthly tabernacle and its rituals **based upon** the **PATTERN** of the **heavenly** one: this means the heavenly temple that **Jesus** uses took **priority** over the earthly tabernacle of Moses as to **importance** from even the **START** of the earthly tabernacle and its system, Heb. 8:5 in light of Ex. 25:40.
    2. Second, Christ's ministry was established upon a covenant that goes beyond prescribing laws as did the Sinai covenant to **putting** the law on the **heart** with the spiritual new birth, Hebrews 8:6-12!
      - a. God announced in the Old Testament that He would come up with a new covenant, implying the old one was temporary, 8:6f.
      - b. That **new** covenant would excel over the old covenant of Sinai in that it would put the law on the **heart**, Hebrews 8:8-10.
      - c. We know that this new covenant involves the spiritual new birth where the will is affected, Heb. 8:11-12 with John 3:5-7.
    3. Third, Christ's new covenant ministry, being superior, **REPLACES** the Jewish tabernacle and its system of rituals, Hebrews 8:13-9:23:
      - a. The writer of Hebrews broadly stated that Christ's new covenant would replace the Old Testament one, Hebrews 8:13.

- b. Specifically, he revealed that the Old Testament tabernacle and all its furnishings were upstaged by Christ's ministry of His entering the heavenly tabernacle with his blood to atone for man's sins, Hebrews 9:1-10 with 9:11-14.
- c. Consequently, Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant that gives eternal life unlike what Moses' covenant could not do, 9:15-23.

III. **In speaking of Christ's HEAVENLY temple priestly ministry, the author of Hebrews reveals Christ's ministry is COMPLETE and NOT TO BE UPSTAGED by that of any other shrine or its rituals:**

- A. The Old Testament Jewish sacrificial system demanded that the High Priest enter the holiest of holies once every year to atone for the sins of himself and of the nation Israel, Hebrews 9:25.
- B. However, Christ's ministry **permanently** upstages not only the Old Testament system, but via application, **all other** shrines & their rituals:
  - 1. Jesus used the heavenly temple made by God and not by the inferior hands of mortal, sinful men, Hebrews 9:24.
  - 2. Jesus did **not repeat** His initial atonement for man's sins as did the Old Testament High Priest, for then He would have had to die often as symbolized in the **repeated sacrifices** of the Old Testament tabernacle system, Hebrews 9:25-26a.
  - 3. **Rather, once-FOR-ALL** as a **consummation of the ages** of *history*, **Jesus Christ** died to put away sin so as to give men **salvation** with a **single, heavenly, perfect** ritual presentation in heaven, 9:26b.
  - 4. As a **result** of Christ's unique, once-for-all presentation of His blood in the heavenly temple, all men have a **great** choice to make: (a) either they reject trusting in Christ and die only to face the judgment for that sin of unbelief (Heb. 9:27) **or** (b) they believe in Him and look for Him to provide salvation with God's glory, 9:28.
  - 5. By application, **no other** shrine & ritual can upstage Christ's work:
    - a. The Old Testament sacrificial system could not take care of sin as revealed in its need for **repeated** sacrifices. Heb. 10:1-4.
    - b. Accordingly, Jesus came to offer His own blood as the sacrifice to **complete** what was lacking for our salvation, Heb. 10:5-9.
    - c. His work was so **effective** that it was done only **once**, 10:10-14.
    - d. Proof of this sacrifice's power is God's promise that, due to Christ's work, He would no more recall forgiven sins, 10:15-18!

***Lesson Application:*** (1) **Jesus' ONE sacrifice on the cross FOREVER and UNCONDITIONALLY MET the demands of a holy God regarding our sins.** (2) **Thus, when one believes on Christ, his sins are so forgiven that there is no more need for him to visit any shrine, temple or church with all its ritual so as to gain any more forgiveness with God!** (3) **Hence, we do not play up our church building or rituals, but glory in the FINISHED work of Christ!**

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . . )

(1) Because of Christ's finished work on the cross, and because of His presentation of His blood to the Father in heaven's temple just once, we need not make a pilgrimage to Mecca in order to gain eternal life. We rather believe in Christ for the complete forgiveness of sins!

(2) Because of Christ's finished work on the cross, and because of His presentation of His blood to the father in heaven's temple just once, we need not make a pilgrimage to Fatima or Lourdes of Litchfield or any other earthly shrine to appease God and gain salvation. What happened for us in that heavenly temple event on our behalf has so satisfied God regarding our standing before Him that it can never be improved upon by any visit or visits to any earthly shrine or shrines!

(3) Because of Christ's finished work on the cross, and because of His presentation of His blood to the Father in heaven's temple just once, we need not (a) join any kind of church or temple on the earth in order to gain eternal life. We need only believe in Christ as our Savior from sin to be eternally forgiven by God. (b) We need not partake of an alleged "re-sacrificed" body and blood of Christ in a weekly "Mass" or any other kind of ritual: the **once-for-all** sacrifice and presentation of Christ's blood in heaven has **fully** and **forever** covered **all** our sins!

(4) Because of Christ's finished work on the cross, and because of His presentation of His blood to the Father in heaven's temple just once, we need not be re-baptized with believer's baptism in any special location. Believer's baptism is an outward testimony done at Christ's command to testify of the fulfilling work of Christ that supersedes any ritual at any earthly shrine or place of worship esteemed by man! Thus, it is not the location, but the fact of believer's baptism that is important!

(5) Because of Christ's finished work on the cross, and because of His presentation of His blood to the Father in heaven's temple just once, any **FUTURE** religious belief that might come into existence that demands there be some **new extra** ritual that needs to occur in some alleged special location to appease God in any way must be **rejected** as false! Christ's work **finished** God's demands for our sins, and our redemption is complete in Christ. If we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin, we can **REST** in God's acceptance, for we are **forever, unconditionally, fully** accepted by our heavenly Father! (John 5:24)