

**Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2017-18
Hebrews #6: OT Sacrifices are Only a Copy and
Shadow Of the Heavenly Realities**

*CSB – Ignatius Catholic Study Bible – Daniel
CCSS – Cath Commentary on Sacred Scriptures on
Hebrews, Mary Healy
NJBC – New Jerome Biblical Commentary
SN = Special Notes / NAB = New American Bible
SK = Chinese Bible / CCC = Catholic Catechism*

<p>A</p>	<p><u>Overview of the Passage – Heb 8:1-13</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the halfway point in the book where the author affirms “the point” that Jesus is the “high priest”. This discussion ends at 10:18. At the heart of Hebrews, as previously discussed “solid food”, is the teaching of the superior excellence of the New Covenant over the Old, as well as the cultic and liturgical traditions of Israel (especially the Tabernacle and the rites of the Day Atonement), are earthly and historical signs that teach us about heavenly realities. • Jesus is seated “at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord”. Sacrifices offered by earthly priest are only a model and shadow of heavenly realities. • Through a more superior priesthood, Jesus establishes a superior covenant. He becomes the mediator of this superior New Covenant. This Covenant, foretells by Jeremiah, is the New Testament; laws written on the heart of humanity. In time, everyone will know God and all sins will be forgiven. 	<p>8:1-13</p> <p>CCSS 149 CSB 8:1 – 10:39</p> <p>8:1-5</p> <p>8:6-13</p>
<p>B</p>	<p><u>The Earthly and Heavenly Tent</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We have such a high priest” – referenced in the previous chapter: according to the priesthood of Melchizedek, “he continues a priest for ever” (7:3); who surpasses Abraham (7:4-7); not in accordance with the restrictions of bloodline but “by the power of an indestructible life” (7:16); one “addressed with an oath (7:20-21);”through which we draw near to God” (7:19). Not “prevented by death from continuing in office” (7:23); he is without sin (7:27); his sacrifice is “once for all” (7:27). Alluding to Ps 110:1, “one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven”. Every time when we celebrate an earthly liturgy, we participate in the liturgy celebrated by Christ in his “holy tent”. • The earthly “tent” is only a sign pointing towards the future and the true tent in heaven, “which is set up not by man but by the Lord”. Christ the high priest offers “gifts and sacrifices” (Latin, “leitourgia”, meaning “celebrating a liturgy”). • “It is necessary for this priest [] to have something to offer”: What would be the gifts and sacrifices of Jesus the high priest for ever? In fact, Christ offers his humanity, his body and blood as an atonement sacrifice in the sanctuary in heaven. Christ’s priesthood belongs to heaven; he would not be a priest on earth because Jesus descended not from the priestly tribe of Levi. 	<p>8:1-5</p> <p>CSB 8:1, CCSS 150-1</p> <p>CSB 8:2, CCSS 151</p> <p>Vat II SC 8</p> <p>CSB 8:3-4, CCSS 151, SN1</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The offerings made by earthly priests “serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary”. The tent erected by Moses is according “to the pattern which was shown [] on the mountain” by God. 	<p>CSB 8:5, CCSS 153, Acts 7:48-50</p>
<p>C</p>	<p><u>A New Covenant Written on the Hearts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ps 110 foretells one who is not a Levi to be anointed as priest according to the order of Melchizedek. This signals “a change in the law” (7:12); a change in the law implies a new Covenant. “Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better”, that is the New Covenant; similar to Moses as the mediator in OT (but deficient in reconciling God and humanity). The “new covenant” spoken by Jeremiah is unique in OT (Jer 31:31-34); this prophecy appears during the lowest point in the history of Israel when the nation was forced into exile under the Babylonian rule. This prophecy reveals God’s intention to do something new to fulfill the covenant between God and humanity: one that will change our hearts and strengthens us to respond to God’s invitation more faithfully. The New Covenant is established for the divided Israel and Judah, that is, for all humanity, in order to reconcile all divisions in the world. The “New Covenant” appears again in the Bible, spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper and remains in the Holy Eucharist. The New Covenant is not engraved without mercy on some cold stone tablets; it is written on our hearts (Deu 6:6). Unfortunately, those who are bound by sin cannot follow since the law itself is insufficient in helping us to achieve righteousness (Rm 8:3-6). The old and new laws differ not in their intention (seeking righteousness) but in the all-powerful God who can help us to achieve the goal – the grace of Christ’s salvation. “ ... after those days ...they shall not teach every one his fellow or every one his brother ... for all shall know me”. In the Bible, “know” does not mean knowledge but relationship, especially the nuptial relationship between spouses. In NT, the relationship between Christ the Church is that of husband and wife; the two are united in the Eucharist. Our sins are forgiven by the grace of Christ’s salvation; the previous, OT, has passed, and has been renewed; including the Temple and offerings. OT and the law have come to pass but that doesn’t imply they have been abolished as “till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished” (Mt 5:18). “God does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues” 	<p>8:6-13</p> <p>8:6, CCSS 154</p> <p>8:7-8, CCSS 156</p> <p>Is 48:6, Ezek 36:26</p> <p>1Cor 11:25</p> <p>8:10, Ex 31:18 Ezek 36:26, 2Cor 3:3 Lk 11:20, Jn 13:34</p> <p>SN 2</p> <p>CSB 8:11-13 CCSS 159, Gen 4:1 Hos 2:21-22</p> <p>Rev 21:4-5</p> <p>CCSS 160 Mt 5:18, Nostra Aetate 4</p>

SPECIAL NOTES

1. The relationship between the five types of offerings under the Mosaic law and Christ's offering:
 - a. "Burnt offering" or "Holocaust" (Lev 1) – offered according to one's desire. Bulls / goats/ fowls are placed on an altar to be burned; a fragrant offering that pleases the Lord. The rising smoke represents the person's complete offering to God. "Tanid" is the goat used as a burnt offering of the whole nation of Israel everyday at dawn and at dusk. Jesus' suffering on the cross is a "Holocaust", too as He completely offered himself, and is entirely consumed by the fire of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Grain offering (Lev 2, 6:7-16) – offered according to one's desire. Choice flour is mixed with oil, and worshipper shall put frankincense on it. The priest will place the portion on the altar to be burned, to become an offering by fire of pleasing odour to the Lord. This is an offering from the poor and is also part of "tanid". Jesus' suffering is also a grain offering as He has become the bread and wine of life.
 - c. Peace offering (Lev 3, 7:11-36) – offered according to one's desire. This is offered during festival, for petition, thanksgiving, and celebration. A banquet will be set in the temple and songs are sung to express a sense of community and the harmony between God and humanity. The Feast of Passover is Israel's peace offering. Jesus' suffering and the last supper have fulfilled the meaning of the Paschal meal, therefore, it's called the Eucharist – Thanksgiving), also a peace offering.
 - d. Purification offering or sin offering (Lev 4:1-5:13, 6:17-23) – for purification of the sanctuary and cleansing of sins. The blood of the sacrificial animal will be sprinkled on the tent in front of the Holiest of Holies and on the altar. The offerings will be burnt outside of the sanctuary. Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement is Israel's guilt offering. According to Heb 13:11-12, Jesus' suffering is a reparation offering since "we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ". His blood has cleansed the sanctuary of life, the Church, once for all. (Heb 10:10).
 - e. Reparation offering or guilt offering (Lev 5:14-26, 7:1-10) – for wrong doings, sacrileges, and for the atonement of our sins. In addition to the offering of a goat, one must admit to his/her sins and offer 1/5 of the earnings. Isaiah foretells the suffering servant whose life is made "an offering for sin" (Is 53:10). Jesus is the suffering servant mentioned in Isaiah who sacrificed Himself to atone our sins in failing to love, in faithfulness and obedience.

Reference: CCSS 152 – 153

2. St. Augustine: "The law was given so that grace might be sought; grace was given so the law might be fulfilled" (*The Spirit and the Letter* 19.34).