

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 314 – November 10th – Hebrews 10:1-18

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Hebrews

Bruce, FF	<i>The Epistle to the Hebrews</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1964
Guthrie, Donald	<i>Hebrews</i> (Tyndale Commentary), IVP, Leicester, 1983
Hughes, Philip Edgcombe	<i>A Commentary on The Epistle to the Hebrews</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1977
Westcott, BF	<i>The Epistle to the Hebrews</i> , Macmillan, London, 1889

Hebrews 10

Westcott says that in chapter 10, the writer points out:

- i) The inherent weaknesses and provisional nature of these sacrifices (vv. 1-4);
- ii) The true action of the sacrifice of Christ (vv. 5-10);
- iii) The perpetual efficacy of Christ's sacrifice is then argued from his present Kingly Majesty (vv. 11-14);
- iv) In consequence, the prophetic description of the New Covenant finds its fulfilment in Him (vv. 15-18).

Verse 1

Σκιαν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων, κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ταῖς αὐταῖς θυσίαις ἃς προσφέρουσιν εἰς τὸ διηλεκτὸν οὐδέποτε δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους τελειῶσαι·

σκια, ας f shadow, foreshadowing

Cf. 8:5. Westcott thinks that the illustration is from art. The σκια is the outline figure while the completed representation with all its colour and solidity is the εἰκων.

νομος, ου m law
μελλω (ptc. without infin) coming, future
ἀγαθος, η, ον good

"The blessings which belonged to the 'coming age' (6:5) ... These are here spoken of as future from the standpoint of the Law. And though they were essentially realised by the accomplishment of Christ's work (9:11...) they still remain in part yet future in regard to man's full enjoyment of them (13:14)."

εἰκων, ονος f likeness, image, form
πραγμα, τος n matter, thing

"In the expression αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων [*the true form of these realities*] the noun εἰκων does not connote a copy or likeness which as such would be other than the reality; if it did, what is said here would be meaningless if not contradictory. Its sense, rather, is the *manifestation* of the reality itself, and this is the sense found in both classical and contemporary Greek." Hughes. Cf. 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15.

ἐνιαυτος, ου m year

Westcott says that "the two phrases κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν and εἰς τὸ διηλεκτὸν are placed (irregularly) at the head of the clauses to which they belong in order to bring out the conception of 'yearly repetition' and 'perpetuity' of effect which characterise the Old and New Covenants."

θυσια, ας f see 9:26

"The identical repetition was a sign of the powerlessness of the system." Westcott

προσφερω see 9:7

διηλεκτης, ες continuous; εἰς τὸ δ. for all time; continually, perpetually

Westcott argues that διηλεκτὸς belongs with the final verb, τελειῶσαι (see note above). It "expresses the thought of a continuing and abiding result."

οὐδέποτε never

δυναμαι be able to, be capable of
προσερχομαι come or go to, approach

Includes all of the worshipers, not just the priests (cf. 7:25).

τελειωω make perfect

Contrast this with Jn 17:4 and Jesus' cry from the cross τετελεσται Jn 19:30

Verse 2

ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἂν ἐπαύσαντο προσφερόμενοι, διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν ἔχειν ἔτι συνειδησιν ἁμαρτιῶν τοὺς λατρεύοντας ἅπασι κεκαθαρισμένους;

ἐπει since, for

ἂν particle indicating contingency

Introducing a hypothetical question, 'since in that case would they not have ceased ...'

παυω stop; midd stop, cease, cease from

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing
 ἐτι still, yet

συνειδησις, εως f conscience, awareness

Here in the latter sense of consciousness, awareness. "Though what is being spoken of here is more than mere consciousness or awareness (JB): it is the *conscience* or radical knowledge of guilt which places one under the shadow of God's judgment, described as the 'evil conscience' in verse 22 below, and which, as we have seen, the blood of Christ alone purifies from dead works to serve the living God (9:14)." Hughes.

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

λατρευω serve, worship

ἅπαξ once, one time, once for all time

κεκαθαρισμένους Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc
 pl καθαριζω cleanse, make clean

Verse 3

ἀλλ' ἐν αὐταῖς ἀνάμνησις ἁμαρτιῶν κατ' ἐνιαυτόν,

ἀναμνησις, εως f reminder, remembrance

The continual sacrifices served as a continual reminder of sin without providing relief. Hughes suggests that, "It is worthy of notice that the term *reminder* used here by our author is potentially ambivalent, in that the yearly sacrifices not only reminded the people of their own sinfulness but also reminded them that *God remembers sin*." Westcott draws the contrast between this and the 'Christian Eucharist' "that was instituted in Christ's words, εἰς τὴν ἔμνην ἀναμνησιν (Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24), to bring to men's minds the recollection of the redemption which he accomplished. Hughes comments that, "The gospel transforms *anamnesis* from a remembrance of guilt to a remembrance of grace." The promise of the new covenant quoted in 8:12 and in verse 17 below, is that God "will remember their sins no more."

ἐνιαυτος, ου m see v.1

Verse 4

ἀδύνατον γὰρ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων ἀφαιρεῖν ἁμαρτίας.

ἀδυνατος, ον impossible

αἷμα, ατος f blood

ταυρος, ου m bull

τραγος, ου m he-goat

Cf. 9:12f, 19.

ἀφαιρεω take away

Cf Rom 11:27 quoting Is 27:9 LXX

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

Verse 5

διὸ εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον λέγει·

Θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, σῶμα

δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι·

Attention now turns to the continuing effective sacrifice of Christ using words from Ps 40:6-8.

διὸ therefore, for this reason

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

θυσια, ας f see 9:26

προσφορα, ας f offering, sacrifice; act of offering

θελω wish, will

σωμα, τος n body

Follows the LXX. The Hebrew reads 'ears'. Hughes comments, "The original form, 'ears thou hast dug for me,' means simply, 'thou hast caused me to hear and obey thy will,' or, in other words, to 'glorify God in [my] body' (1 Cor 6:20). The thrust is identical with that of Samuel's admonitory words to Saul: 'Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams' (1 Sam 15:22; cf. Isa 1:11ff.; Amos 5:21f.; Hos 6:6; Ps 51:16ff.; Jer 7:21f.)."

καταρτιζω act & midd make, prepare

"The King, the representative of men, recognises in the manifold organs of his personal power – his body – the one fitting means for rendering service to God. Through this, in its fulness, He can do God's will. Not by anything outside of Himself, not by animals in *sacrifices*, not by the fruits of the earth in *offerings*, but by the use of his own endowments, as He is enabled to use them, He will accomplish that which God designed for him to do." Westcott. Compare the use of Ps 8 in chapter 2.

Verse 6

ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ εὐδόκησας.

ὀλοκαυτωμα, τος n whole burnt offering

εὐδοκεω be pleased, take pleasure in

Verse 7

τότε εἶπον· Ἴδου ἦκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ, τοῦ ποιῆσαι, ὁ θεός, τὸ θέλημά σου.

τοτε then, at that time

εἶπον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl λεγω

ἦκω come, have come, be present

κεθαλις, ιδος f roll (of a scroll or book)

βιβλίον, ου n book, scroll, written
statement

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω
write

"The Law which foreshadowed the duties of a King of Israel (περι ἐμου) was the rule of the King's life." Westcott

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω
θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

"The will of God answers to the fulfilment of man's true destiny; and this, as things actually are, in spite of the Fall. Christ, as Son of man, made this will His own and accomplished it. The utterance of the King of Israel expressed man's true aim, which was beyond human reach, and so rightly belongs to the Messiah who attained it. Compare John 4:34; 8:29." Westcott

Verse 8

ἀνώτερον λέγων ὅτι Θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς καὶ ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἀμαρτίας οὐκ ἠθέλησας οὐδὲ εὐδόκησας, αἵτινες κατὰ νόμον προσφέρονται,

ἀνωτερον adv first
ὅστις, ἡτις, ὁ τι who, which
νομος, ου m see 9:19

Verse 9

τότε εἶρηκεν· Ἴδου ἤκω τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου· ἀναιρεῖ τὸ πρῶτον ἵνα τὸ δεῦτερον στήσῃ.

τοτε see v.7
εἶρηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s λεγω
ἀναιρεω do away with
στήσις Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἵστημι set,
establish

τὸ δεῦτερον στήσις "namely, the will of God involving the offering of himself as the one sacrifice for sins forever." Hughes.

Verse 10

ἐν ᾧ θελήματι ἡγιασμένοι ἐσμὲν διὰ τῆς προσφορᾶς τοῦ σώματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐφάπαξ.

θελημα, ατος n will, wish
ἡγιασμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl
ἀγιαζω sanctify, make holy
σωμα, τος n body
ἐφάπαξ adv. once for all time

This sanctification was accomplished through the perfect life and atoning death of Christ.

Verse 11

Καὶ πᾶς μὲν ἱερεὺς ἕστηκεν καθ' ἡμέραν λειτουργῶν καὶ τὰς αὐτὰς πολλάκις προσφέρων θυσίας, αἵτινες οὐδέποτε δύνανται περιελεῖν ἀμαρτίας.

ἱερευς, εως m priest
ἕστηκεν Verb, Perf act indic, 3 s ἵστημι pf
stand

Cf. Deut 10:8; 18:7. "The idea of 'standing' is that of a work still to be done, of service still to be rendered, of homage still to be paid." Westcott

λειτουργεω serve, worship

"They not only 'stand ministering,' but 'stand ministering daily.' They had ministered yesterday; but today they must minister again, and again they must minister tomorrow and the next day – so long as the legal dispensation continues. Every day they began afresh, as if nothing had yet been done." John Brown

πολλάκις often, repeatedly, frequently
προσφερω offer, present
θυσια, ας f see 9:6
ὅστις, ἡτις, ὁ τι see v.8
οὐδέποτε never
δυναμαι be able to, be capable of
περιελεῖν Verb, aor act infin περιαιρεω
take away, remove

"Man is, so to speak, wrapped up in sin. He weaves, as it were, in action ... a terrible robe for himself ... This enveloping shroud, no part of his true self, has to be stripped off (2 Cor 3:16)." Westcott

Verse 12

οὗτος δὲ μίαν ὑπὲρ ἀμαρτιῶν προσενέγκας θυσίαν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ,

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, single
προσενέγκας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
προσφερω

διηνεκης, ες continuous; εἰς το δ. for all time; perpetually

Cf. 10:1, 14 and 7:3. Does the phrase εἰς το διηνεκης belong with προσενεγκας or ἐκάθισεν? Westcott argues the former, saying that "The connexion of εἰς το διηνεκης with the following ἐκάθισεν is contrary to the usage of the Epistle; it obscures the idea of the perpetual efficacy of Christ's one sacrifice." Tasker disagrees saying that Westcott's claims are "excessive."

καθίζω sit down, take one's seat

"A seated priest is the guarantee of a finished work and an accepted sacrifice." Bruce

δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand

Verse 13

τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκδεχόμενος ἕως τεθῶσιν οἱ ἐχθροὶ
αὐτοῦ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ,

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining: (το) λοιπον
adv. henceforth, from now on

ἐκδεχομαι wait for, expect

ἕως conj until, while

τεθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl τιθημι
place, set

ἐχθρος, α, ον enemy, one hated

ὑποπόδιον, ου n footstool

πους, ποδος m foot

An echo of Ps 110:1, cf. also Heb 2:8. Hughes comments, "The complete defeat of his enemies is assured, for the supreme exaltation by which the redemption he accomplished on earth as the incarnate Son has been crowned spells the doom of every opponent of his authority. Indeed, the coming of the Son into the world is already his overcoming of the world (Jn 16:33)." Hughes continues by quoting PT Forsyth, "The absolute ultimate judgment of the world took place in Christ's death. There God spoke his last word – His last endless word. The last moral reality is there, the last standard, the last judgment. The last judgment is behind us. The true judgment-seat of Christ, where we must all appear, is the Cross... We do not realise that the prince of this world has been finally judged, and that we live in a saved world only because we live in a judged world... Christ is not Judge merely at some future coming. He is eternal Judge in His great work as the Crucified, a work historic yet timeless and final. In him the prince of this world has been finally and effectively judged, and the absolute condemnation passed. Satan then fell from his heaven. The absolute and irreversible judgment was passed upon evil. There too, the judgment of our sins fell once for all on the Holy One and the Just. The judgment Christ exercises stands on the judgment He endured. He assumes judgment because He absorbed it. Salvation and judgment are intertwined..."

Verse 14

μιᾶ γὰρ προσφορᾷ τετελείωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκῆς
τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους.

εἰς, μια, ἐν see v.12

τετελείωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s τελειωω
make perfect, complete

"It is significant that Christ Himself is said to perfect 'the offering': it is not said that 'the offering' perfects. His action is personal in the application of His own work. The importance of this form of expression appears from the language used of the Law: 7:19 οὐδὲν ἐτελειωσεν ὁ νομος. Cf. 9:9; 10:1. In the case of the Levitical institution the action of the appointed ministers fell into the background." Westcott

διηνεκῆς, ες see v.12

ἁγιαζω see v.10

Here we have the present continuous in contrast to the Aorist participle of 10:10. It may mean either:

- i) Those who are undergoing the progressive experience of sanctification – to be completed in glory;
- ii) Those many people who are, throughout this Gospel age, coming to know Christ and are sanctified in him.

Westcott combines the two saying it refers to "all who from time to time realise progressively in fact that which has been potentially obtained for them." John Flavel focuses on the latter sense, saying it implies "that the oblation made unto God by Jesus Christ is of unspeakable value, and everlasting efficacy, to perfect all them that are, or shall be sanctified, to the end of the world." (*Works*, Vol 1, p.55).

Verses 15-18

"The apostle goes back in conclusion to the testimony of the prophet from which he commenced his exposition of the high-priestly and sacrificial service of the New Covenant." Westcott

Verse 15

μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, μετὰ
γὰρ τὸ εἰρηκέναι·

"The reintroduction of this quotation with the assurance that it is in truth the witness of the Holy Spirit has the effect of clinching and bringing to its conclusion the long argument regarding the nature of Christ's high priesthood and the perfection and finality of his atoning sacrifice, whereby the new covenant is brought to fulfilment." Hughes.

μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify, affirm

εἰρηκέναι Verb, perf act infin λεγω

Verse 16

Αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη ἦν διαθήσομαι πρὸς αὐτοὺς μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκεῖνας, λέγει κύριος, διδοὺς νόμους μου ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αὐτοῦς,

Cf. 8:10 – part of a fuller quotation from Jer. 31:31-34 in Heb 8:8-12.

Verse 17

καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἀνομιῶν αὐτῶν οὐ μὴ μνησθήσομαι ἔτι·

Cf. 8:12

ἀνομία, ας f wickedness, lawlessness, sin
μνησθήσομαι Verb, fut pass dep indic, 1 s
μνησθῶμαι remember, call to mind

Here μνησθῶμαι rather than the LXX μνησθῶ which is also in 8:12. οὐ μὴ μνησθῶ focuses on the single act of forgetting while μνησθῶμαι carries the forgetfulness to an endless future.

Verse 18

ὅπου δὲ ἄφεσις τούτων, οὐκέτι προσφορὰ περὶ ἁμαρτίας.

ὅπου adv. where

ἄφεσις, εως f see 9:22

"The consequences of sin are threefold: debt which requires forgiveness, bondage which requires redemption, alienation which requires reconciliation ... The words ἄφεσις, ἀφιεναι express the first idea: comp Matt 18:27, 32, 35." Westcott

οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more

προσφορα, ας f offering, sacrifice

"If, as seems to be the case, those to whom this letter is addressed have been swayed by enticements to return to or compromise with a purified type of Judaism, they cannot now, after the full and careful instruction our author has given them, pretend to be ignorant that any reversion to the shadowy forms and sacrifices of the Mosaic law can only mean the negation of the Christian gospel. There follows, approximately, a prolonged and powerful exhortation to lay firm hold of the blessings of the new covenant which God has made available to them through the mediation of Jesus Christ, our sole Redeemer and Lord." Hughes.