

Hebrews 9:8-10 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST

DOCTRINE	DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD	

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 9:8 The **Holy Spirit** is **signifying this**, that the **way** into the **holy place** has not **yet** been **disclosed** while the **outer tabernacle** is **still standing**, ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [touto delountos \(PAPNSG\) tou pneumatos tou agiou, mepo pephanerosthai \(RPN\) ten ton agion odon eti tes protes skenes echouses \(PAPFSG\) stasin.](#)

Amplified: By this the Holy Spirit points out that the way into the [true Holy of] Holies is not yet thrown open as long as the former [the outer portion of the] tabernacle remains a recognized institution and is still standing, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: By this the Holy Spirit is showing that the way into the Holy Place was not yet opened up so long as the first tabernacle stood. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

NLT: By these regulations the Holy Spirit revealed that the Most Holy Place was not open to the people as long as the first room and the entire system it represents were still in use. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: By these things the Holy Spirit means us to understand that the way to the holy of holies was not yet open, that is, so long as the first tent and all that it stands for still exist. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: the Holy Spirit all the while making this plain, that not yet was made actual the road into the Holiest while still the first tent had standing [i.e., remained a recognized institution],

Young's Literal: the Holy Spirit this evidencing that not yet hath been manifested the way of the holy places, the first tabernacle having yet a standing;

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SIGNIFYING THIS: touto delountos (PAPNSG) tou pneumatos tou hagiou

- Heb 3:7; 10:15; Isaiah 63:11; Acts 7:51,52; 28:25; Galatians 3:8; 2 Peter 1:21
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

THE SPIRIT POINTS TO THE TRUTH ABOUT WORSHIP

The Holy Spirit was teaching...

- 1) Worship of God limited - no direct access
- 2) OT sacrifices - imperfect cleansing of conscience
- 3) Old Covenant - Temporary

The Holy Spirit is signifying - Vine comments that "the writer attributes to the Holy Spirit the spiritual significance of the details of the tabernacle. This makes clear that the Pentateuch narrative is not merely a historical record; the history carried with it a spiritual teaching which the Spirit of God unfolds in the New Testament. Again, the heavenly sanctuary itself is not spoken of as the Holiest of all or the Holy of Holies as if suggesting an inner shrine in contrast with an outer. There could not be two parts in the heavenly

tabernacle, for the veil has been rent. Accordingly the writer, in referring to the heavenly sanctuary, speaks simply of "the holy place" (r.v.). (Collected writings of W. E. Vine)

Spurgeon - It is from this sentence that I am sure that the Holy Ghost had a signification, a meaning, a teaching, for every item of the ancient tabernacle and temple. We are not spinning fancies out of idle brains when we interpret these types and learn from them important gospel lessons.

Peter explains the Spirit's role in the revelation of the Word of God to the human writers of Scripture...

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (see notes 2 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 1:21)

The writer refers to the **Holy Spirit** also in the following passages...

Hebrews 3:7 (note) Therefore, just as the **Holy Spirit** says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,

Hebrews 10:15 (note) And the **Holy Spirit** also bears witness to us; for after saying **10:16** "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM," He then says,

Sadly **Israel** as people for the most part resisted the **Holy Spirit's** teaching, Stephen declaring...

Acts 7:51,52+ "You men (first century Jews) who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart (Lev 26:41 Dt 10:16, 30:6 Jer 4:4 9:26) and ears (Jer 6:10; see notes Romans 2:28; 2:29; Colossians 2:11) are always resisting (antipipto = rush against or upon in a hostile manner, assault, resist by force and violence - present tense = their general practice!) the Holy Spirit; you (first century Jews) are doing just as your fathers did. Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become

Spurgeon comments that "It is from this sentence that I am sure that the Holy Ghost had a signification, a meaning, a teaching, for every item of the ancient tabernacle and temple; and we are not spinning fancies out of idle brains when we interpret these types, and learn from them important gospel lessons."

The Holy Spirit is signifying - It could be read "by this (by these things) the Holy Spirit is continually pointing out". Observe Who the writer testifies was the Author of the Old Testament Scriptures!

Signifying (1213) (**deloo** from **delos** = manifest, evident) means to make plain by words and thus to declare. To make manifest to the mind. Deloo is used of indications which lead the mind to conclusions about the origin or character of things. It means to make some matter known that was unknown or not communicated previously. It means to show clearly, to signify, to make manifest, visible, clear, or plain and to make known. When spoken of things past it means to tell, relate or impart information (as in 1Cor 1:11; Col 1:18). Although deloo is used most often in reference to declarations through articulate language, it is also used often (as in the present verse) of any kind of indirect communication.

When spoken of things future or hidden, **deloo** means to reveal, show or bring to light.

Deloo is used 28 times in the Septuagint (LXX) (Exod. 6:3; 33:12; Deut. 33:10; Jos. 4:7; 1 Sam. 3:21; 1 Ki. 8:36; 2 Chr. 6:27; Est. 2:22; Ps. 25:14; 51:6; 147:20; Isa. 42:9; Jer. 16:21; Dan. 2:5f, 9, 11, 16, 23ff, 28ff, 47; 4:18; 7:16). Here are some uses in the **Septuagint (LXX)**

Exodus 6:3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not **make** Myself **known** (deloo) to them.

Exodus 33:12 Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, Thou dost say to me, 'Bring up this people!' But Thou Thyself hast not **let me know** (deloo) whom Thou wilt send with me. Moreover, Thou hast said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.'

Esther 2:22 But the plot **became known** (deloo) to Mordecai, and he told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name.

Psalms 25:14 The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him, And He will make them **know** (deloo) His covenant.

Psalms 51:6 Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part Thou wilt **make me know** (deloo) wisdom.

Psalm 147:20 He has not dealt thus with any nation and as for His ordinances, they **have** not **known** (deloo) them. Praise the LORD!

Isaiah 42:9 "Behold, the former things have come to pass, Now I declare new things; Before they spring forth I **proclaim** (Lxx = deloo = make them known) them to you."

Daniel 2:25 Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king's presence and spoke to him as follows: "I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can **make** the interpretation **known** (deloo) to the king!"

Deloo is used 7 times in the NT...

1 Corinthians 1:11+ For I **have been informed** concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you.

1 Corinthians 3:13+ each man's work **will become evident**; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

Colossians 1:8+ and he also **informed** us of your love in the Spirit.

Hebrews 9:8+ The Holy Spirit is **signifying** this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing,

Hebrews 12:27+ And this expression, "Yet once more," **denotes** the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

1 Peter 1:11+ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was **indicating** as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

2 Peter 1:14+ knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ **has made clear** (of something divinely communicated) to me.

The writer states that the Holy Spirit is both the divine Author of the Levitical system of worship and its interpreter. The point the writer is making is that having the priest come in only once per year, that we have not really seen God's way into His present & that it is closed up.

A few of the sons of Israel surely must have become believers, under the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit, as they saw in these symbolic shadows something of the Way of access to God, of communion with Him, and of admission into heaven thru the promised Redeemer. Sadly though most of the sons of Israel looked no further than the outward forms & shadows, failing to unite the spiritual truths being pictured with saving faith ("good news... but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard" Hebrews 4:2)

The outer tabernacle - **Steven Cole** comments that "Some understand "first tabernacle" to refer to the entire tabernacle, but since the same phrase is used in 9:2 & 6 to refer to the holy place, others take it to refer to the outer or first room of the tabernacle. The meaning then would be that the holy place "was blocking the way into the sanctuary of God's presence for the mass of the people, for whom entry even into the holy place was prohibited.... So long, then, as the holy place continued standing they had no hope of immediate access to God" (Philip Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews [Eerdmans], p. 322, 323). ([God's Remedy for Guilt Hebrews 9:1-14](#))

THAT THE WAY INTO THE HOLY PLACE HAS NOT YET BEEN DISCLOSED: mepo pephanerosthai (RPN) ten ton hagian hodon:

- Heb 9:3; 4:15,16; 10:19-22; John 10:7,9; 14:6; Ephesians 2:18
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Spurgeon - It was necessary that you should take away the sacred tent, the tabernacle—and take away the temple, too—before you could learn the spiritual meaning of them. You must break the shell to get at the kernel. So God had ordained. Hence, there is now no tabernacle, no temple, no holy court, no inner shrine, the holy of holies. The material worship is done away with in order that we may render the spiritual worship of which the material was but the type.

The way - Not "a" way, but **"the way"**, the specific, exclusive, definitive way as emphasized by Jesus and amplified by Paul...

John 10:7,9 Jesus therefore said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **I am the door** of the sheep... **10:9 I am the door**; if anyone enters **through Me**, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am **the** (specific, only) way, and **the** (specific, only) truth, and **the** (specific, only) life; no one comes to the Father, but **through Me**. (Cults twist this passage and translate it to say "a way" the implication of course being that Jesus is fine, but He is just one of many ways to God. Wrong!)

Ephesians 2:18+ for **through Him** we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

Romans 5:2+ **through Whom** (Jesus) also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

The holy place - In the context, this phrase refers to the innermost room of the sanctuary, otherwise known as the holy of holies.

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the **holy place** (holy of holies) by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (see notes Hebrews 10:19; 20; 21; 22)

Disclosed (5319) (**phaneroo** from **phanerós** = manifest, visible, conspicuous from phaino = give light; become visible from phos = light) indicates an external manifestation to the senses which is thus open to all. It means to make visible that which has been hidden. The primary reference is to what is visible to sensory perception and thus which is made to appear, caused to be seen or uncovered, laid bare or revealed. To be manifested, in the Scriptural sense is more than just to appear. For example, a person may appear in a false guise or without a disclosure of what he truly is. Thus in this context, phaneroo conveys the sense of to be manifested or to be revealed in one's true character (this is meaning in Jn 3:21, 1Cor 4:5, 2Cor 5:10,11, Eph 5:13-note)

Worship of God was limited and common folk had no immediate access to God. The people could come only so close. The whole thing was meant to prove that without a Redeemer, without a Messiah, without a Savior, there is no access to God. The Holy Spirit was teaching the impossibility of access to God without a perfect priest, a perfect sacrifice, and a perfect covenant. By allowing the people to go no farther than the outer court, He was illustrating that through Judaism there was no access to Him, only a symbol of access.

As long as that part of the Levitical institution was still in effect, Israel was to understand that the way into the presence of God had not yet been opened. The division of the tabernacle into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies showed the limitations of the Levitical system, and kept the people from coming directly to God. The Holy Place barred both priests and people from the Holy of Holies.

At the time Hebrews was written (before the destruction of the Temple in 70AD), the worship of God was limited and the "lay" Jews had no immediate access to God. The writer of Hebrews is portraying the picture that without a Redeemer, without a Messiah, without a Savior, there was **no access** (see **"the way"** above) to God. The Holy Spirit in fact was teaching the impossibility of access to God without a perfect priest, a perfect sacrifice, and a perfect covenant. By allowing the people to go no farther than the outer court, the Holy Spirit was illustrating that through **Judaism** there was no true access to God, only symbolic access.

How can a sinner now enter into the presence of a Holy God (Hebrews 10:19-20, cf Heb 6:19)? This is what the writer is building toward, and which he will explain later -- it is by entering through the **Veil = Jesus' Flesh**. The veil that hung in the temple represented the Lamb of God, the Covenant Sacrifice slain, laid out, divided in two for you and for me! **A New & Living Way** (**hodos** same as [Jn 14:6](#))

Spurgeon writes that...

It was necessary that you should take away the sacred tent, the tabernacle, ay, and take away the temple, too, before you could learn the spiritual meaning of them. You must break the shell to get at the kernel. So God had ordained. Hence, there is now no tabernacle, no temple, no holy court, no inner shrine, the holy of holies. The material worship is done away with, in order that we may render the spiritual worship of which the material was but the type.

WHILE THE OUTER TABERNACLE IS STILL STANDING: eti tes protes skenes echouses (PAPFSG) stasin

- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Outer tabernacle - From the context this is not a reference to the outer room or to the wall surrounding the Tabernacle complex, but clearly refers to the Tabernacle per se, and its "furnishings" including the Menorah, Incense Altar and Showbread table.

When the new order of things was brought into being by the death of Messiah on the Cross, thus fulfilling the typical sacrifices (see topic Typology), God rent the inner veil of the temple which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, making of the two rooms one. There was, therefore, no more "within the veil." This was God's picture book lesson to the Jews and the Jewish priests, illustrating that the Jewish priestly ministry was now over, because a new Priest had arisen after the **order of Melchisedec**. (see **notes** Hebrews 5:6; 5:10; 6:20; 7:1; 7:10; 7:11; 7:15; 7:17) But, Israel in its stubbornness, resisted the Holy Spirit, "repaired" the veil and kept on offering sacrifices until 70AD when God in His wrath sent Rome to destroy the city of Jerusalem and scatter His chosen people throughout the Roman empire.

Still standing - The Temple was apparently still standing. The old had to pass away before God's new way could be revealed.

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F B Meyer comments that...

THE VEILED WAY INTO THE HOLIEST IS CONTRASTED WITH OUR FREEDOM TO ENTER THE PRESENCE OF GOD. We have the positive assurance of these words that the Holy Spirit meant to signify direct spiritual truth in the construction of the Jewish Tabernacle (ver. 8). He who revealed divine truth by inspired prophets, revealed it so in the structure of the material edifice. The methods of instruction might vary; the teacher was the same. Indeed, the whole ritual was a parable for the present time (ver. 9).

Every well-taught child is aware of the distinction between the holy place, with its candlesticks, incense-table, and shew-bread, and the holy of holies, with its ark, and cloud of glory. The first tabernacle was separated from the second by heavy curtains, which were never drawn aside except by the high-priest, and by him only once a year, and then in connection with an unusually solemn ritual. Surely the dullest Israelite must have understood the meaning of that expressive figure; and have felt that, even though his race might claim to be nearer to God than all mankind beside, yet there was a depth of intimacy from which his foot was checked by the prohibition of God himself. "The way into the holiest was not yet made manifest."

For us, however, the veil is rent. Jesus entered once into the holy place, and as he passed the heavy folds were rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Surely no priest that witnessed it could ever forget the moment, when, as the earth trembled beneath the temple floor, the thickly woven veil split and fell back, and disclosed the solemnities on which no eyes but those of the high-priest dared to gaze. Surely the most obtuse can read the meaning signified herein by the Holy Ghost. There is no veil between us and God but that which we weave by our own sin or ignorance. We may go into the very secrets of his love. We may stand unabashed where angels worship with veiled faces. We may behold mysteries hidden from before the foundation of the world. The love of God has no secrets for us whom he calls friends.

Oh, why are we so content with the superficial and the transient, with the ephemeral gossip and literature of our times, with the outer courts in which the formalists and worldly Christians around us are contented to remain? when there are such heights and depths, such lengths and breadths, to be explored in the very nature of God. Why do men in our time bring back that veil, though they call it "a screen"? Alas, they are blind leaders of the blind.

Hebrews 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot * make the worshiper perfect in conscience, (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [etis parabole eis ton kairon ton enestekota.](#) (RAPMSA) [kath' en dora te kai thusiai prosperontai](#) (3PPPI) [me dunamenai](#) (PPFPN) [kata suneidesin teleiosai](#) (AAN) [ton latreuonta.](#) (5723)

Amplified: Seeing that that first [outer portion of the] tabernacle was a parable (a visible symbol or type or picture of the present age). In it gifts and sacrifices are offered, and yet are incapable of perfecting the conscience or of cleansing and renewing the inner man of the worshiper. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: Now the first tabernacle stands for this present age, and according to its services sacrifices are offered which cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could

not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

NLT: This is an illustration pointing to the present time. For the gifts and sacrifices that the priests offer are not able to cleanse the consciences of the people who bring them. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: For in this outer tent we see a picture of the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered and yet are incapable of cleansing the soul of the worshipper. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: which [tent] was of such a nature as to be an explanation for the ensuing time, according to which both gifts and sacrifices are being offered which are not able to make complete the one who offers them so far as the conscience is concerned;

Young's Literal: which is a simile in regard to the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered, which are not able, in regard to conscience, to make perfect him who is serving

WHICH IS A SYMBOL FOR THE PRESENT TIME: hetis parabole eis ton kairon:

- Heb 9:24; 11:19; Romans 5:14; 1Peter 3:21
- Heb 7:11; 11:39,40; 1Peter 1:11,12
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Which is a symbol - Which is a "**parable**", a parabolic setting forth of the character of the Old Testament. In other words the "old" is set beside the "new" for purposes of comparison.

As **MacArthur** says "the old was only a "parable," an object lesson, for Israel. The old sacrifices were never meant to cleanse from sin, but only to symbolize such cleansing (**ED**:: Therefore in a sense pointing toward the blood of Jesus shed on the Cross for the remission of sins). The conscience of the person sacrificing was never freed from the feeling of guilt because the guilt itself was never removed (Heb 9:9, Heb 9:13, Heb 10:22). The cleansing was entirely external. Consequently, he could never have a clear conscience, a deep, abiding sense of forgiveness." ([Hebrews MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)).

Symbol ([3850](#)) (**parabole** from **para** = beside, near + **ballo** = throw, cast; English "parable") is literally a throwing beside or placing of one thing by the side of another (juxtaposition as of ships in battle in classic Greek). The metaphorical meaning is to place or lay something besides something else for the purpose of comparison. (Mt 24:32, Mk 13:28, Mk 3:23, Lk 14:7). An illustration (Mt 13:3). In Hebrews 9:9 the idea is of something (OT Tabernacle) that serves as a model or example pointing beyond itself for later realization and thus a type or a figure.

A T Robertson says **parabole** in Hebrews 9:9 is "applied to the old dispensation as a symbol pointing to Christ and Christianity." In Luke 4:23 Jesus uses it in the sense of a proverb. Abraham's believed that God was able to raise men from the dead and so figuratively speaking (NIV) he did receive Isaac back from the dead. In the Lxx in Nu 23:7+ parabole refers to a poem or figurative discourse. In Micah 2:4 it refers to a taunt or mocking speech.

Swindoll on parabole - "parable," "figure," "illustrative comparison" This word has the basic sense of "set beside" or "stand beside," with the idea that two things should be compared and then understood as similar. In practice, a parable is a narrative or a saying designed to illustrate a truth. Unlike an allegory, in which the figurative people or things have direct, literal counterparts, a parable is intentionally less precise. In parables, the big picture is what is important, not the details. ([Insights on Luke](#))

John MacArthur says **parabole** is "A spiritual or moral truth would often be expressed by laying it alongside, so to speak, a physical example that could be more easily understood. A common, observable object or practice was used to illustrate a subjective truth or principle. That which was well known was laid alongside that which was not known or understood in order to explain it. The known elucidated the unknown. The parable was a common form of Jewish teaching... Teaching through parables and other figurative means is effective because it helps make abstract truth more concrete, more interesting, easier to remember, and easier to apply to life. When a truth is externalized in the figures of a parable, the internalizing of moral and spiritual meaning is much easier. In the series of parables in chapter 13, Jesus uses such familiar figures as soil, seed, birds, thorns, rocks, sun, wheat, tares, mustard seed, leaven, hidden treasure, and a pearl. But in these particular parables themselves the truth is not made clear, because the basic story tells nothing but the literal account, without presenting the moral or spiritual truth. It was only to His disciples that Jesus explained what the soil, the seed, the thorns, and the other figures represent. And an unexplained parable was nothing but an impossible riddle, whose meaning could only be guessed at." ([Matthew 1-28 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)).

Wuest notes **parable** "is an illustration thrown in alongside of a truth to make the latter easier to understand... The Greek word means "that which is thrown alongside of something else" to explain it. Thus, the tabernacle was an object lesson used to explain spiritual truth. As long as it remained an object lesson, thus a recognized institution, it was clear that the actual tabernacle to which it pointed was not yet in use. The tabernacle in Israel, and later, the temple, remained that object lesson during the history of Israel, until the veil of the temple was rent." ([Hebrews Commentary](#))

Commenting on the use of **parabole** in Heb 11:19, **W E Vine** says "Parabole means a laying alongside, and signifies, not a figure, but something that resembles or corresponds to another. Thus the giving back of the offering to the offerer without the slaying, was in parabolic act a resurrection."

Spurgeon - Only a figure, and only meant for "the present time." It was the childhood of the Lord's people. It was a time when, as yet, the light had not fully broken in upon spiritual eyes, so they must be taught by picture books. They must have a kind of kindergarten for the little children that they might learn the elements of the faith by the symbols, types, and representations of a material worship. When we come into the true gospel light, all that is done away with; it was only "a symbol for the present time." ([Comments](#))

Easton's Bible Dictionary - (Gr. parabole), a placing beside; a comparison; equivalent to the Heb. mashal, a similitude. In the Old Testament this is used to denote (1) a proverb (1 Sam. 10:12; 24:13; 2Chr. 7:20), (2) a prophetic utterance (Num. 23:7; Ezek. 20:49), (3) an enigmatic saying (Ps. 78:2; Prov. 1:6). In the New Testament, (1) a proverb (Mark 7:17; Luke 4:23), (2) a typical emblem (Heb. 9:9; 11:19), (3) a similitude or allegory (Matt. 15:15; 24:32; Mark 3:23; Luke 5:36; 14:7); (4) ordinarily, in a more restricted sense, a comparison of earthly with heavenly things, "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning," as in the parables of our Lord. Instruction by parables has been in use from the earliest times. A large portion of our Lord's public teaching consisted of parables. He himself explains his reasons for this in his answer to the inquiry of the disciples, "Why speakest thou to them in parables?" (Matt. 13:13-15; Mark 4:11, 12; Luke 8:9, 10). He followed in so doing the rule of the divine procedures, as recorded in Matt. 13:13. The parables uttered by our Lord are all recorded in the synoptical (i.e., the first three) Gospels. The fourth Gospel contains no parable properly so called, although the illustration of the good shepherd (John 10:1-16) has all the essential features of a parable.

Most of the uses of **parable** in the NT refer to the stories of Jesus which had a symbolic content and a profound spiritual application.

Related Resource:

- Parable [Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)

TDNT on the classic or **Secular Greek** meaning - 1. This word has the following senses: "setting beside," "standing beside," "aberration," and "division." In rhetoric it means "similitude," "parable." 2. Rhetoric distinguishes between the comparison, the metaphor, the metaphor which has passed into common use, the simile, the allegory, and the parable. The latter compares two things from different fields in order to elucidate the unfamiliar by means of the familiar. 3. Epic poetry makes great use of similitudes because of their illustrative power and evocative content. Gnomonic poetry likes them, and so does Plato, who draws on human life or myth for illustrations. The Stoic-Cynic diatribe also uses illustrations, often in answer to objections. Aristotle thinks examples from history are more valuable than parables, but points out that the latter, as distinct from fables, take their material from real life. The effectiveness of comparisons, he says, rests on the ability to see analogy, and it is better that discerning minds should grasp the point of comparison independently. Parable and allegory often merge into one another.

TDNT adds that - In the LXX parabole is mostly a rendering of mashal, which indicates likeness. At first the mashal is a proverb (1 Sam. 10:12); we find it in the phrase "to become a proverb or byword" (Is. 14:4). In Wisdom writings it is the wise saying and comprises examples from life, rules of prudence and courtesy, vocational advice, moral admonitions, and religious directions. Many proverbs use the comparative "as" (Pr 25:11ff.; 26:18-19). Comparison is also made by juxtaposition (Pr 15:16; 16:8). But parallelism is predominant. Since sages love veiled expressions, parabole and ainigma ("riddle") are often synonymous. In Ps. 78:2 the mashal is a didactic poem that seeks to solve the riddle of the people's history. Another form of mashal is the developed comparison or similitude (cf. 2Sa 12:1ff.; Jdg 9:8ff.). The prophets find parables helpful, either constructing them (Is. 28:23ff.) or receiving them in visions (Amos 7:8). The best known is the parable of the vineyard in Isa 5. The OT parable in this sense is a complete story whose meaning is hidden and may be either discerned independently or disclosed by the prophet. In Ezekiel the mashal is a word of divine revelation (Ezek. 17:2; 24:3); another word is needed to interpret it (Ezek 17:11ff.; 24:6ff.). In Ps. 49:4 the psalmist speaks as a prophet who has received from God a word that explains the strange prosperity of the wicked. Parabolic actions are also performed by the prophets. As a rendering of mashal, parabole takes on a richer content that carries over into the NT.

BDAG says **parabole** is "a narrative or saying of varying length, designed to illustrate a truth especially through comparison or

simile... in the synoptics the word refers to a variety of illustrative formulations in the teaching of Jesus"

Liddell-Scott - Parable - **1.** juxtaposition, comparison, Plat. **2.** a comparison, illustration, analogy, Aristotle **3.** a parable, i.e. a fictitious narrative by which some religious or moral lesson is conveyed, NT. **4.** a by-word, proverb.

Parabole - 50x in 48v - Usage: parable(31), parables(16), proverb(1), symbol(1), type(1). Most referring to parables in the Gospels. -

Matt 13:3, 10, 13, 18, 24, 31, 33ff, 53; 15:15; 21:33, 45; 22:1; 24:32; Mark 3:23; 4:2, 10f, 13, 30, 33f; 7:17; 12:1, 12; 13:28; Luke 4:23; 5:36; 6:39; 8:4, 9ff; 12:16, 41; 13:6; 14:7; 15:3; 18:1, 9; 19:11; 20:9, 19; 21:29; Heb 9:9; 11:19

Parabole - 33v in non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Num 23:7, 18; 24:3, 15, 20f, 23; Dt 28:37; 1Sa 10:12; 24:13; 2 Sam 23:3; 1Kgs 4:32; 2Chr 7:20; Ps 44:14; 49:4; 69:11; 78:2; Pr 1:6; Eccl 1:17; 12:9; Jer 24:9; Ezek 12:22f; 16:44; 17:2; 18:2f; 19:14; 20:49; 24:3; Dan 12:8; Mic 2:4; Hab 2:6

As stated earlier, he uses the old covenant tabernacle and sacrifices (plural) as an object lesson to illustrate the better sacrifice (singular) of Christ. Think of the Old Covenant as analogous to a children's book which especially with young children is filled with pictures to help teach the child truths. In the same way, the structure and rigid rituals of the Old Covenant were God's inspired "picture book" by which He sought to tutor Israel and thereby to lead them to come to know and receive their Messiah.

Spurgeon writes that that it was...

Only a figure, and only meant for "the time then present." It was the childhood of the Lord's people; it was a time when, as yet, the light had not fully broken in upon spiritual eyes, so they must be taught by picture-books. They must have a kind of Kindergarten for the little children, that they might learn the elements of the faith by the symbols, types, and representations of a material worship. When we come into the true gospel light, all that is done away with; it was only "a figure for the time then present."

All these rites could only give a fleshly purity, but they could not touch the conscience. If men saw what was meant by the outward type, then the conscience was appeased; but by the outward sign itself the conscience was never comforted, if it was a living and lowly conscience.

Matthew Poole - the tabernacle in all its parts, and the whole economy of it, was parabole, which signifies the translation of a word or thing from its own natural signification to signify another, which thing so signified by it is commonly more excellent than itself, as the substance exceeds the shadow; equivalent it is to those terms of types, examples, figures of things to come: such are the tabernacle and its services, representations of things spiritual and Divine, and very imperfect shadows of them, serving only for that infant state of the church: and when its nonage was to expire by the coming of the truths themselves, then were they to expire too. The only time when the tabernacle administration was present, and no longer.

In simple terms, the Old Testament **tabernacle** was an object lesson used to explain spiritual truth. The tabernacle itself and all that the Old Covenant represented were suggestive of deeper truths, *parables* as it were of the New Covenant.

For the present time - The time of the temple-worship which had continued still in the day of the Hebrew readers (Temple not yet destroyed).

Steven Cole - The "present time" may mean "the time then present," that is, "in the Old Testament days the way to God was not yet revealed." Or, it may mean "the time now present," indicating that "the real meaning of the tabernacle can only now be understood, in the light of the work of Christ"

ACCORDINGLY BOTH GIFTS AND SACRIFICES ARE OFFERED WHICH CANNOT MAKE THE WORSHIPPER PERFECT IN CONSCIENCE: kath en dora te kai thusiai prosperontai (3PPPI) me dunamenai (PPFPN) kata suneidesin teleiosai (AAN) ton latreuonta:

- Hebrews 5:1
- Heb 9:13,14; 7:18,19; 10:1-4,11; Ps 40:6,7; Galatians 3:21
- Ps 51:16-19
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Wuest - Which (tabernacle) was of such a nature as to be an explanation for the ensuing time, according to which both gifts and sacrifices are being offered which are not able to make complete the one who offers them, so far as the conscience is concerned. ([Hebrews Commentary](#))

Gifts - These probably correspond to the presentation of the offering (of animal, bird, grain, drink) the worshiper brought for the sacrifice.

For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins (see note Hebrews 5:1)

Offered ([4374](#)) (**prosphero** from **pros** = to, toward + **phero** = bring, bear) means literally to bring or bear toward and in this context refers to the presentation of an offering. Notice that **prosphero** is in the **present tense** which signifies that the Levitical priests offered continually, day in, day out, morning and evening, year after year.

Cannot - This is the Greek phrase "me" (not) and the verb **dunamai** (able) in the **present tense** which literally reads **continually not able**. The Old Covenant **gifts and sacrifices** lacked the inherent ability to give a perfectly clean conscience. It should be understood that inability to provide a clean conscience was not the only way the Old Covenant was ineffective, but singling out this subject served the writer's purpose to emphasize his point.

Note the contrasting effect of the **better** sacrifice of the New Covenant...

how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (see note Hebrews 9:14)

let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (see note Hebrews 10:22)

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things. (see note Hebrews 13:18)

Spurgeon -All these sacrifices and ceremonies, although full of instruction, were not in themselves able to give peace to the conscience of men. The new and better covenant does give rest to the heart by the real and actual taking away of guilt, but this the first covenant could not do. It is astonishing that there should be any who want to go back to the "beggarly elements" of the old Jewish law, and again to have priests, and an elaborate ritual, and I know not what besides. These things were faulty and fell short of what was needed even when God instituted them, for they were never intended to produce perfection, or to give rest to the troubled conscience; so of what use can those ceremonies be which are of man's own invention, and which are not according to the new covenant at all?

Make the worshipper perfect - He is not saying make the worshipper "sinless," which is not possible in this lifetime. The idea is finished or complete, needing nothing to make it what it should be. Wuest goes on to explain " The Levitical ritual as such did not touch the conscience. No ritual in itself ever does. There was nothing in it that could deal with conscience. Only the working of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God and the efficacy of the blood of the Messiah could do that. The Holy Spirit did in Old Testament times deal as He does today with the consciences of men, but the salvation which He applied under the Levitical system found its source in the New Testament Sacrifice, the Lord Jesus. Therefore, while operating under the jurisdiction of the First Testament, God was giving salvation to the First Testament believer by virtue of that which was accomplished through the New Testament. Since the First Testament could not do that which the New Testament did, it was set aside in favor of the New Testament. And this is the argument of the Book of Hebrews." ([Hebrews Commentary - Pdf Online](#))

Make... perfect ([5048](#)) (**teleioo** related to **teleios** from **telos** = an end, a purpose, an aim, a goal, consummate soundness, idea of being whole) means to accomplish or bring to an end or to the intended goal (telos). It means to be complete, mature, fully developed, full grown, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness or in good working order. It does not mean simply to terminate something but to carry it out to the full finish which is picked up in the translation "perfected". **Teleioo** signifies the attainment of consummate soundness and includes the idea of being made whole. Interestingly the Gnostics used **teleios** of one fully initiated into their mysteries and that may have been why Paul used teleios in this epistle.

Teleioo is used repeatedly by the writer in Hebrews to emphasize the importance of **perfection**... (which should cause any Jew who is contemplating the worth of Christ and the New Covenant to realize his utter hopelessness to every attain perfection under the Old Covenant). The Levitical ritual could not give a clean conscience, which is the goal of sacrifices for sins.

Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for Whom are all things, and through Whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to **perfect** the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Hebrews 5:9 And **having been made perfect**, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal

salvation,

Hebrews 7:19 (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God... 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, **made perfect** forever.

Hebrews 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot **make** the worshiper **perfect** in conscience,

Hebrews 10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, **make perfect** those who draw near... 14 For by one offering He has **perfected** for all time those who are sanctified.

Hebrews 11:40 because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be **made perfect**.

Hebrews 12:23 (But you have come...) to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men **made perfect**,

It is interesting and doubtless no mere coincidence that in the Septuagint (LXX) **teleioo** is translated numerous times as consecrated or consecration, especially speaking of consecration of the priests (cf Jesus our "great High Priest")

[Not All the Blood of Beasts](#)

Not all the blood of beasts

On Jewish altars slain

Could give the guilty conscience peace

Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,

Takes all our sins away;

A sacrifice of nobler name

And richer blood than they.

My faith would lay her hand

On that dear head of Thine,

While, like a penitent, I stand,

And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see

The burdens Thou didst bear

When hanging on the cursed tree,

And hopes her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice

To see the curse remove;

We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,

And sing His bleeding love.

Perfect in conscience - The point is not that an OT saint (a genuine believer, one declared righteous by faith) could never have a clear conscience but just that such a conscience could never be obtained by the OT sacrifices, no matter how many sacrifices one made. The writer explains that...

if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for

the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (see notes Hebrews 9:13; 14)

Conscience (4893)(**suneidesis** from **sun** = with + **eido** = know) literally means a "knowing with", a co-knowledge with oneself or a being of one's own witness in the sense that one's own conscience "takes the stand" as the chief witness, testifying either to one's innocence or guilt. It describes the witness borne to one's conduct by that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God. (**Click here** for more notes on on this website on **conscience**)

The **conscience** is a **key word** in the epistle to the Hebrews...

Hebrews 9:9 (note) which (the outer tabernacle) is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in **conscience**,

Hebrews 9:14 (note) how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your **conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10:22 (note) let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil **conscience** and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 13:18 (note) Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good **conscience**, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

For the first time in their lives as Jews who worshiped Jehovah the guilt was completely gone, and their conscience could rest easy. This refers to the positional truth because of the cleansing provided by the blood of Christ. But there is also a practical (daily practice or sanctification) aspect to the conscience for Paul writes...

I thank God, whom I serve (present tense = continually) with a **clear conscience** the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, (see **note 2 Timothy 1:3**)

Webster defines "**conscience**" as the sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good.

The Greek noun **suneidesis** is the exact counterpart of the Latin **con-science**, "a knowing with," a shared or joint knowledge. It is our awareness of ourselves in all the relationships of life, especially ethical relationships. We have ideas of right and wrong; and when we perceive their truth and claims on us, and will not obey, our souls are at war with themselves and with the law of God

Suneidesis is that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former and avoid the latter.

To have a "**clear conscience**" does not mean that we have never sinned or do not commit acts of sin. Rather, it means that the underlying direction and motive of life is to obey and please God, so that acts of sin are habitually recognized as such and faced before God (**1Jn 1:9**)

Someone has said that many people have only their bad memory to thank for their clear conscience!

A "**clear conscience**" consists in being able to say that there is no one (God or man) whom I have knowingly offended and not tried to make it right (either by asking forgiveness or restoration or both). Paul wanted Timothy to have no doubt that he endured his present physical afflictions, as he had countless others, because of his unswerving faithfulness to the Lord, not as a consequence of unfaithful, ungodly living. So as Paul neared his death, he could testify that his conscience did not accuse or condemn him. His guilt was forgiven, and his devotion was undivided. To continually reject God's truth causes the conscience to become progressively less sensitive to sin, as if covered with layers of unspiritual scar tissue. Paul's conscience was clear, sensitive, & responsive to its convicting voice. Click on the books below to study the NT picture of conscience.

Charles Colson in his book *Who Speaks for God* (pp 76,77) tells the following story...

Albert Speer was once interviewed about his book on ABC's "Good Morning America". Speer was the Hitler confidant whose technological genius was credited with keeping Nazi factories humming throughout World War II. In another era he might have been one of the world's industrial giants. He was only one of 24 war criminals tried in Nuremberg who admitted his guilt. Speer spent 20 years in Spandau prison.

The interviewer referred to a passage in one of Speer's earlier writings:

You have said the guilt can never be forgiven, or shouldn't be. Do you still feel that way?

The look of pathos on Speer's face was wrenching as he responded,

I served a sentence of 20 yrs, and I could say, 'I'm a free man, my conscience has been cleared by serving the whole time as punishment.' But I can't do that. I still carry the burden of what happened to millions of people during Hitler's lifetime, and I can't get rid of it. This new book is part of my atoning, of clearing my conscience.

The interviewer pressed the point.

You really don't think you'll be able to clear it totally?

Speer shook his head.

I don't think it will be possible.

For 35 yrs Speer had accepted complete responsibility for his crime. His writings were filled with contrition and warnings to others to avoid his moral sin. He desperately sought expiation. All to no avail.

Mark Twain once said "Man is the only animal that blushes, and the only animal that needs to."

Kenneth Osbeck writes that...

The **conscience** has been described as the "rudder of the soul" or the believer's "principle within." One of the prime responsibilities of Christian living is to keep the conscience clear as to the things of God so that we might live worthy lives before our fellowmen. But the conscience must be continually enlightened and developed by an exposure to God's Word if it is to serve as a reliable guide for our lives. A conscience that is allowed to become hardened and insensitive to sin will ultimately lead to spiritual and moral disaster. We must allow God to develop our consciences and then our consciences are able to develop us. ([Osbeck, K. W. Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions. Kregel Publications](#))

I Want a Principle Within

by Charles Wesley

I want a principle within of watchful, Godly fear,
A sensibility of sin, a pain to feel it near.
Help me the first approach to feel of pride or wrong desire,
To catch the wand'ring of my will and quench the Spirit's fire.

From Thee that I no more may stray, no more Thy goodness grieve,
Grant me the filial awe, I pray, the tender conscience give.
Quick as the apple of an eye, O God, my conscience make!
Awake my soul when sin is nigh and keep it still awake.

Almighty God of truth and love, to me Thy pow'r impart;
The burden from my soul remove, the hardness from my heart.
O may the least omission pain my reawakened soul,
And drive me to that grace again which makes the wounded whole.

Conscience is the judgment which we pronounce on our own conduct by putting ourselves in the place of a bystander. (Adam Smith.)

Conscience is a dainty, delicate creature, a rare piece of workmanship of the Maker. Keep it whole without a crack, for if there be but one hole so that it break, it will with difficulty mend again. (S. Rutherford.)

The Christian can never find a "more faithful adviser, a more active accuser, a severer witness, a more impartial judge, a sweeter comforter, or a more inexorable enemy." (Bp. Sanderson.)

Conscience in everything: — Trust that man in nothing who has not a conscience in everything. (Sterne.)

Conscience makes cowards of us; but conscience makes saints and heroes too. (J. Lightfoot.)

Conscience is a marvelous gift from God, the window that lets in the light of His truth. If we sin against Him deliberately, that window becomes dirty, and not as much truth can filter through. Eventually, the window becomes so dirty that it no longer lets in the light. The Bible calls this a defiled, seared conscience... Do you keep a clean conscience? It is a part of your inner being that responds to God's truth. When you sin, the window of your conscience becomes dirty and filters out truth. Avoid sin in your life and live with a clean conscience. Every day feed yourself truth from the Word of God. (Wiersbe, W: Prayer, Praise and Promises: Ps 51:3-6)

Hurt not your **conscience** with any known sin. (S. Rutherford.)

"**Conscience** is that faculty in me which attaches itself to the highest that I know, and tells me what the highest I know demands that I do."

"When there is any debate, quit. There is no debate possible when **conscience** speaks."

Once we assuage our **conscience** by calling something a "necessary evil," it begins to look more and more necessary and less and less evil. - Sidney J. Harris

As someone else has said, "She won't listen to her conscience. She doesn't want to take advice from a total stranger." Bob Goddard

The antagonism between life and conscience may be removed in two ways: By a change of life or by a change of conscience. Leo Tolstoy.

The trouble with the advice, "Follow your conscience" is that most people follow it like someone following a wheelbarrow--they direct it wherever they want it to go, and then follow behind.

Did you know that ever since 1811 (when someone who had defrauded the government anonymously sent \$5 to Washington D.C.) the U.S. Treasury has operated a Conscience Fund? Since that time almost \$3.5 million has been received from guilt-ridden citizens. (Chuck Swindoll, The Quest For Character)

Conscience is God's spy and man's overseer. (John Trapp)

A good **conscience** and a good confidence go together. (Thomas Brooks)

Franklin P. Jones wrote that

"**Conscience** is a small, still voice that makes minority reports."

Someone added

"**Conscience** is also what makes a boy tell his mother before his sister does."

H. C. Trumbull wrote that...

Conscience tells us that we ought to do right, but it does not tell us what right is--that we are taught by God's word.

Christopher Morley said about conscience

Pop used to say about the Presbyterians, 'It don't prevent them committing all the sins there are, but it keeps them from getting any fun but of it.'

The late **General Omar Bradley** was more serious in commenting on conscience

"The world has achieved brilliance without conscience," he conceded. "Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants."

On the subject of conscience **Martin Luther** declared before the court of the Roman Empire at Worms in 1521

"My conscience is captive to the Word of God... I am more afraid of my own heart than of the pope and all his cardinals. I have within me the great pope, Self."

When a person comes to faith in Christ, his conscience becomes acutely sensitive to sin. No longer as a Christian can he sin with impunity. The story is told about an old Indian chief who was converted. Later a missionary asked him:

"Chief, how are you doing spiritually? Are you experiencing victory over the devil?"

"It's like this," the chief replied. "I have two dogs inside me: a good dog and a bad dog. They are constantly fighting with each other."

"Which dog wins?" asked the puzzled missionary.

"Whichever one I feed the most," retorted the wise old man. His conscience was being shaped by the Scriptures.

Billy Graham set out the importance of a clear conscience

"To have a guilty conscience is a feeling. Psychologists may define it as a guilt complex, and may seek to rationalize away the sense of guilt, but once it has been awakened through the application of the law of God, no explanation will quiet the insistent voice of conscience."

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C H Spurgeon spoke frequently about **conscience** as seen in the following quite pithy quotations... beloved if you are contemplating sinning as you read this or are caught in the web of some sin, may the Holy Spirit of the Living God convict you of sin, righteousness and the judgment to come, not only for your sake of your Christian life but even more so for the sake of His name...

Conscience may tell me that something is wrong, but how wrong it is conscience itself does not know. Did any man's conscience, unenlightened by the Spirit, ever tell him that his sins deserved damnation? Did it ever lead any man to feel an abhorrence of sin as sin? Did conscience ever bring a man to such self-renunciation that he totally abhorred himself and all his works and came to Christ?

A man sees his enemy before him. By the light of his candle, he marks the insidious approach. His enemy is seeking his life. The man puts out the candle and then exclaims, "I am now quite at peace." That is what you do. Conscience is the candle of the Lord. It shows you your enemy. You try to put it out by saying, "Peace, peace! Put the enemy out!" God give you grace to thrust sin out!

Conscience is like a magnetic needle, which, if once turned aside from its pole, will never cease trembling. You can never make it still until it is permitted to return to its proper place.

I recollect the time when I thought that if I had to live on bread and water all my life and be chained in a dungeon, I would cheerfully submit to that if I might but get rid of my sins. When sin haunted and burdened my spirit, I am sure I would have counted the martyr's death preferable to a life under the lash of a guilty conscience

O believe me, guilt upon the conscience is worse than the body on the rack. Even the flames of the stake may be cheerfully endured, but the burnings of a conscience tormented by God are beyond all measure unendurable.

This side of hell, what can be worse than the tortures of an awakened conscience?

He was a fool who killed the watchdog because it alarmed him when thieves were breaking into his house. If conscience upbraids you, feel its upbraiding and heed its rebuke. It is your best friend.

Give me into the power of a roaring lion, but never let me come under the power of an awakened, guilty conscience. Shut me up in a dark dungeon, among all manner of loathsome creatures—snakes and reptiles of all kinds—but, oh, give me not over to my own thoughts when I am consciously guilty before God!

Fire such as martyrs felt at the stake were but a plaything compared with the flames of a burning conscience. Thunderbolts and tornadoes are nothing in force compared with the charges of a guilty conscience.

When a swarm of bees gets about a man, they are above, beneath, around, everywhere stinging, every one stinging, until he seems to be stung in every part of his body. So, when conscience wakes up the whole hive of our sins, we find ourselves compassed about with innumerable evils: sins at the board and sins on the bed, sins at the task and sins in the pew, sins in the street and sins in the shop, sins on the land and sins at sea, sins of body, soul, and spirit, sins of eye, of lip, of hand, of foot, sins everywhere. It is a horrible discovery when it seems to a man as if sin had become as omnipresent with him as God is.

The conscience of man, when he is really quickened and awakened by the Holy Spirit, speaks the truth. It rings the great alarm bell. And if he turns over in his bed, that great alarm bell rings out again and again, "The wrath to come! The wrath to come! The wrath to come!"

Nothing can be more horrible, out of hell, than to have an awakened conscience but not a reconciled God—to see sin, yet not see the Savior—to behold the deadly disease in all its loathsomeness, but not trust the good Physician, and so to have no hope of ever being healed of our malady.

I would bear any affliction rather than be burdened with a guilty conscience.

It is a blessed thing to have a conscience that will shiver when the very ghost of a sin goes by—a conscience that is not like our great steamships at sea that do not yield to every wave, but, like a cork on the water, goes up and down with every ripple, sensitive in a moment to the very approach of sin. May God the Holy Spirit make us so! This sensitiveness the Christian endeavors to have, for he knows that if he has it not, he will

never be purified from his sin.

There are thousands of people in this country who would be greatly troubled in their minds if they did not go to church twice on Sundays. And they get comfort in this because their conscience is dead. If their conscience were really awakened, they would understand that there is no connection between conscience and outward forms.

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When Sgt. Ray Baarz of the Midvale, Utah, police department opened his wallet, he noticed his driver's license had expired. Embarrassed at having caught himself red-handed, he had no alternative. He calmly and deliberately pulled out his ticket book and wrote himself a citation. Then Baarz took the ticket to the city judge who fined him five dollars. "How could I give a ticket to anyone else for an expired license in the future if I didn't cite myself?" Baarz asked.

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In a number of languages it would be entirely misleading to speak of `a guilty conscience,' for this would seem to imply that there is something sinful about the conscience itself. In reality, it is the conscience that says that a person is guilty, and therefore it may be necessary to translate Heb10:22 as `with hearts that have been purified from a condition in which their conscience has said that they are guilty.

There is a treasure you can own
That's greater than a crown or throne;
This treasure is a conscience clear
That brings the sweetest peace and cheer. --Isenhour

See 1Pe 3:19 where Peter is encouraging the believers who are suffering (or will soon go thru a fiery trial) with the doctrinal truth that "baptism now saves you" and he equates this "baptism" not with water baptism of Christianity or ritual Jewish baptismal washing for "purification" but with the obtaining of a "good conscience". And in these verses in Hebrews we see the only way one can obtain a clean conscience is by having one's heart sprinkled (with the blood of Jesus) (1Pe1:2) representing the blood of the New Covenant in which the unregenerate person is born from above and receives a new heart (with a new conscience).

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A Clear Conscience - In 1971 he killed a man. Even though he was the prime suspect in the murder, no one could prove it and the case was abandoned. So, he got away with it. Or did he? Nearly three decades later, in failing health and living in a nursing home, he confessed to the crime. A detective who headed the original investigation said, "He was looking over his shoulder for the last 26 years, not only for the law, but for his Maker. I think he wants to clear his conscience before he meets his Maker--or try to at least."

How's your conscience today? Clear or clouded? What would it take to be ready to meet your Maker? How can you be made clean? It may seem strange to speak of blood as a cleansing agent, but that's how the Bible connects the death of Jesus on the cross to our standing before God (Hebrews 10:19-note). Christ shed His blood so that we might be forgiven and made clean inside. Because of what He has done, we can have a clear conscience and "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22-note). No matter who you are or what you've done, Jesus Christ can give you a clear conscience. Why not confess your sin and make things right with your Maker today. --D C McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Now in His mercy He waits to impart
Peace to the conscience and joy to the heart,
Waits to be gracious, to pardon and heal
All who their guilt and their sinfulness feel.
--Anon.

A clear conscience is a soft pillow.

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The 50-Year Desire -- Years ago I was standing by the deathbed of an old minister down in Alabama. The old man had been a preacher for fifty years. I saw his son, who also was a minister, kneel by his father's bed. "Father, you have preached for fifty years, and have done more good than any man I know." The old man, with feeble but distinct voice, said: "Don't tell me about that, son. Tell me about the blood of Jesus. Nothing but the blood of Jesus will do for a dying man." If a man who had preached for fifty years and who had lived a pure, straight life, in his dying hour had to rely upon the blood of Jesus Christ, don't you ever think there is any hope

for you aside from this atoning blood?

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Example of conscience that cannot be cleansed: Albert Speer was once interviewed about his last book on ABC's "Good Morning, America." Speer was the Hitler confidant whose technological genius was credited with keeping Nazi factories humming throughout World War II. In another era he might have been one of the world's industrial giants. He was the only one of twenty-four war criminals tried in Nuremberg who admitted his guilt. Speer spent twenty years in Spandau prison. The interviewer referred to a passage in one of Speer's earlier writings: "You have said the guilt can never be forgiven, or shouldn't be. Do you still feel that way?" The look of pathos on Speer's face was wrenching as he responded, "I served a sentence of twenty years, and I could say, 'I'm a free man, my conscience has been cleared by serving the whole time as punishment.' But I can't do that. I still carry the burden of what happened to millions of people during Hitler's lifetime, and I can't get rid of it. This new book is part of my atoning, of clearing my conscience." The interviewer pressed the point. "You really don't think you'll be able to clear it totally?" Speer shook his head. "I don't think it will be possible." For thirty-five years Speer had accepted complete responsibility for his crime. His writings were filled with contrition and warnings to others to avoid his moral sin. He desperately sought expiation. All to no avail.

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Charles Simeon, one of the greatest preachers of the Church of England, explained his coming to Christ like this: As I was reading Bishop Wilson on the Lord's supper, I met with an expression to this effect—"That the Jews knew what they did, when they transferred their sin to the head of their offering." The thought came into my mind, "What, may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an Offering for me, that I may lay my sins on His head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer." Accordingly I sought to lay my sins upon the sacred head of Jesus.

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F B Meyer comments that...

THE RITES OF JUDAISM ARE CONTRASTED WITH CONSCIENCE-CLEANSING ORDINANCES OF THE GOSPEL. They stood in meats and drinks and divers washings, which at the best were carnal ordinances imposed until a time of reformation; and though they rendered the worshiper ceremonially clean, they left his conscience unappeased.

A great many of the offenses which required to be put away in those olden days arose from the breach of ceremonial laws. A man who touched the dead or the unclean became ceremonially defiled. For any such thing he must undergo the appointed rites of cleansing, ere he could enter the courts of the Lord's house. The ceremonial laws were quite competent to deal with delinquencies like these; but they failed in providing atonement or in securing pardon for acts of sin. "They could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience."

The unsatisfactory nature of sacrifices was even patent on the great day of atonement, which is here evidently referred to. Laying aside the gorgeous robes in which he was usually arrayed, the high-priest clothed himself in simple linen. The animals to be offered during the day were next presented at the door of the Tabernacle; and lots were cast as to which of the two bullocks was to be for himself, and which of the two goats was to be slain. Then for the first time he entered the most holy place amid the fumes of fragrant incense, and sprinkled the blood of the bullock to make an atonement for the sins of himself and his house. A second time he entered with the blood of the goat, to make an atonement for the sins of the people, who, meanwhile, stood without in penitential grief. And when all was over, the nation's sins were confessed over the head of the living goat, which was sent into the land of forgetfulness. Still, no one could suppose that the slaying of the one goat or the sending of the other into the wilderness actually expiated the offense of the whole people. There was a remembrance of sins made once a year; but not necessarily entire remission for all who stood in that vast silent crowd. And many must have turned away in doubt and misgiving. David expressed their feeling when he sang the Fifty-first Psalm beneath the impression of his own sinnership (see also Micah vi. 6).

But how different is all this now! Our consciences are purged (ver. 14). We have no more conscience of sins. We feel that the death of our Lord Jesus is an adequate expiation for them all, and that he has so fully taken them from us and put them away that they cannot be found; they are as though they had never been; they have ceased from the very memory of God. True, there are works which are constantly rendering our conscience unclean, as of old the flesh of the Israelite was rendered unclean by the touch of death. But the blood of Jesus does for our conscience what the ashes of the heifer did for the flesh of the ceremonially unclean. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." We have therefore no longer an evil conscience resulting from unexpiated sin.

Hebrews 9:10 since they relate **only** to **food** and **drink** and **various washings, regulations** for the **body imposed until a time of reformation** (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [monon epi bromasin kai pomasin kai diaphorois baptismois. dikaiomata sarkos mechri kairou diorthoseos epikeimena.](#) (PMPNPN)

Amplified: For [the ceremonies] deal only with clean and unclean meats and drinks and different washings, [mere] external rules and regulations for the body imposed to tide the worshipers over until the time of setting things straight [of reformation, of the complete new order when Christ, the Messiah, shall establish the reality of what these things foreshadow—a better covenant]. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: but which, since they are based on food and drink and various kinds of washings, are human regulations, laid down until the time of the new order should come. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

NLT: For that old system deals only with food and drink and ritual washing—external regulations that are in effect only until their limitations can be corrected. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: The ceremonies are concerned with food and drink, various washings and rules for bodily conduct, and were only intended to be valid until the time when Christ should establish the truth. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: which [the Levitical system] had its basis only in food and drink and various ceremonial ablutions, ordinances befitting human beings, enjoined until the season of bringing matters to a satisfactory state.

Young's Literal: only in victuals, and drinks, and different baptisms, and fleshly ordinances -- till the time of reformation imposed upon them.

SINCE THEY RELATE ONLY TO FOOD AND DRINK AND VARIOUS WASHINGS REGULATIONS FOR THE BODY: monon epi bromasin kai pomasin kai diaphorois baptismois dikaiomata sarkos mechri:

- Heb 13:9; Leviticus 11:2-47; Deuteronomy 14:3-21; Ezekiel 4:14; Acts 10:13-15; Colossians 2:16) (Heb 6:2; 10:22; Exodus 29:4; 30:19-21; 40:12; Leviticus 14:8,9; 16:4,24; 17:15,16; 22:6; Numbers 19:7-21; Deuteronomy 21:6; 23:11
- Heb 9:1; 7:16; Galatians 4:3,9; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:20-22
- Heb 2:5; 6:5; Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:10
- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Since they relate - The writer is explaining how the OT sacrifices could not produce a clear conscience. First, he says that they were external regulations with the implication being that they could not deal adequately with the conscience. Second, he says they were temporary imposed until the time of Christ. The very fact that the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over points to their lack of efficacy to bring about complete, perfect forgiveness of sin. They could only "cover" the sins and put off guilt until for example the next Day of Atonement. The point is that the OT sacrificial system was never meant to be God's complete and final provision for sins but that it always pointed to the coming of the Messiah Who would inaugurate the New Covenant.

Spurgeon makes the point that "These ordinances were only laid upon the Jews-not upon any other people-and only laid upon them until the better and brighter days of reformation and fuller illumination. The appearance of the substance and the putting away of the shadows, was a reformation, or emendation. Is it not wonderful (in the sense of amazing!) that any should wish to undo this reformation, and go back to the beggarly elements of the law?"

Only (3440) (**monon**) alone or uniquely. This adverb helps emphasize that this old order was temporary. The old order was limited, imperfect and temporary. He is exhorting his Jewish readers to move on!

Do not be carried away (present imperative + negative - A command meaning in essence "Stop being carried away..." implying this was happening to some of the readers) by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were thus occupied were not benefited. (see note Hebrews 13:9)

Food (1033) (broma) (meats in KJV) refers literally to that which is chewed such as meat or vegetables in opposition to milk which is liquid

The English word **meat** meant just that in 1611 AD., when the King James Version was translated. Today the word is confined almost entirely to the meaning of edible animal flesh. In regard to drinks, the Levitical law laid down no prescriptions except as to abstinence in the case of a Nazarite vow, and of the priests when they were to officiate. Alford says that the writer had in mind both the legal and the Talmudic conditions imposed upon the worshippers.

Peter got caught up in the "**food**" issue in **Acts**...

Acts 10:13-15 And a voice came to him, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat!" 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." 15 And again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."

The OT had numerous instances of "washings" for various purposes all relating to ritual cleansing from some type of contamination. The writer had previously alluded to washing in his exhortation in Hebrews 6...

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (see notes Hebrews 6:1; 6:2)

Later the writer spoke of the true "**washing**" that was available for those who entered the New Covenant...

let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies **washed** with pure water. (see note Hebrews 10:22)

VARIOUS WASHINGS

There are a number of **washings** ([See Dictionary Articles](#)) mentioned in the Old Testament...

Ex 29:4 — "Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and **wash them with water**.

Ex 30:19-21 — "And Aaron and his sons shall **wash** their hands and their feet from it; 20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall **wash with water**, that they may not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to the LORD. 21 "So they shall **wash** their hands and their feet, that they may not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

Ex 40:12 — "Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and **wash them with water**.

Lev 14:8 — "The one to be cleansed shall then **wash** his clothes and shave off all his hair, and **bathe in water** and be clean. Now afterward, he may enter the camp, but he shall stay outside his tent for seven days.

Lev 14:9 — "And it will be on the seventh day that he shall shave off all his hair: he shall shave his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair. He shall then **wash his clothes and bathe his body in water** and be clean.

Lev 16:4 — "He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash, and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall **bathe his body in water** and put them on.

Lev 16:24 — "And he shall **bathe his body with water** in a holy place and put on his clothes, and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people.

Lev 17:15 — "And when any person eats an animal which dies, or is torn by beasts, whether he is a native or an alien, he shall **wash** his clothes and **bathe in water**, and remain unclean until evening; then he will become clean.

Lev 17:16 — "But if he does not **wash** them or **bathe** his body, then he shall bear his guilt."

Lev 22:6 — a person who touches any such shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat of the holy gifts, unless he has **bathed his body in water**.

Nu 19:7-12 — 'The priest shall then **wash** his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward come into the camp, but the priest shall be unclean until evening. 8 'The one who burns it shall also **wash** his clothes in water and bathe his body in water, and shall be unclean until evening. 9 'Now a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer (see [Red Heifer](#)) and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place, and the congregation of the sons of Israel shall keep it as water to remove impurity; it is purification from sin. 10 'And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall **wash** his clothes and be unclean until evening; and it shall be a perpetual statute to the sons of Israel and to the alien who sojourns among them. 11 'The one who touches the corpse of any person shall be unclean for seven days. 12 'That one shall purify himself from uncleanness **with the water** on the third day and on the seventh day, and then he shall be clean; but if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he shall not be clean.

Dt 21:6 — "And all the elders of that city which is nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley;

Dt 23:11 — "But it shall be when evening approaches, he shall bathe himself with water, and at sundown he may reenter the camp.

Regulations ([1345](#)) (**dikaïoma** from **dikaïos** = just, righteous) conveys 3 distinct meanings and seems best described comprehensively as "a concrete expression of righteousness" or a declaration that a person or thing is righteous. In this context it represents an ordinance or what God declared to be right.

It refers specifically to the OT ordinances for the flesh. The cleansing, like the covenant as a whole, not only was limited and imperfect but temporary. It related only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. This system was never intended to last forever. It was not intended even to last through human history. It was instituted thousands of years after human history began and ended thousands of years before human history will end. As of now, it has been nearly two thousand years since the last sacrifice was made in the Temple.

Body ([4561](#)) (**sarx**) refers here to humanity. The ordinances were such as had to do with human conditions of life, food, drink, cleanliness. These were imposed upon Israel until the time of reformation.

Paul countered a similar attraction that had apparently been introduced by teachers into the body of believers at Colossae, commanding them...

Therefore **let no one act as your judge** (present imperative + negative - A command meaning in essence "Stop letting others judge your Christianity..." implying this was happening to some of Paul's readers) in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day (see note Colossians 2:16)

Paul went on to address this tendency of our fleshly tendency to gravitate toward legalism (even believers! You know exactly what I mean, don't you!) instead of resting by grace through faith in the law of liberty...

Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize (present imperative + negative - A command meaning in essence "Stop letting others steal your prize" implying this was happening to some of Paul's readers - How was this happening?) by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, 19 and not holding fast to the Head (the "antidote" to legalistic, mystical false teachings), from Whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

If (Since - assumes you have been born again) you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" 22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? 23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of (absolutely) no value against fleshly indulgence (in fact they actually "stimulate" or arouse the old fallen nature! - see note Romans 7:5). (see notes Colossians 2:18; 2:19; 2:20; 2:21; 2:22; 2:23)

IMPOSED UNTIL A TIME OF REFORMATION: mechri kairou diorthoseos epikeimena (PMPNPN):

- Hebrews 9 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 9:1-14 The New Covenant, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Spurgeon - These ordinances were only laid upon the Jews—not upon any other people—and only laid upon them until the better and brighter days of reformation and fuller illumination.

Imposed (1945) (**epikeimai** from **epí** = upon + **keímai** = to lie on) means to lie upon, to be placed on, to lie on (literally of the stone against Jesus' tomb - Jn 21:9, of fish on the fire of coals - Jn 21:9). Metaphorically as used here in Hebrews 9, **epikeimai** means imposed upon and has the force of obligation, thus speaking speaks of necessity.

Another metaphorical meaning is to be insistent (pictures one keeping putting pressure on so to speak) in Lk 23:23. The idea is to act upon through force or pressure. The people were in a sense piling evidence on top of Pilate (so to speak), nearly burying him with reasons he need to sentence Jesus to crucifixion (cf Pilate's efforts in Jn 19:12) **A T Robertson** adds that **epikeimai** was "an old verb for the rush and swirl of a tempest... Pilate was overwhelmed by this tornado."

In Acts 27:20 **epikeimai** conveys the metaphorical sense of assailing, picturing the storm "pressing upon" their boat.

Epikēimai - 7x in 7v - Usage: am under(1), assailing(1), imposed(1), insistent(1), lying(1), placed(1), pressing around(1). Lxx Uses = Ex 39:31 (fasten); Job 19:3 (wrong me ~ "lie upon me" so to speak), Job 21:27.

Luke 5:1 Now it happened that while the crowd was **pressing around** Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

Luke 23:23 But they were **insistent**, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail.

John 11:38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was **lying** against it.

John 21:9 So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish **placed** on it, and bread.

Acts 27:20 Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was **assailing** us, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

1 Corinthians 9:16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am **under** compulsion (literally the idea is "necessity is **laid upon** me"); for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.

Hebrews 9:10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

Comment: The legal ordinances are pictured as being placed upon the people of Israel during the dispensation of the old covenant (the Law).

Reformation (1357) (**diorthosis** from **diorthoo** = correct, amend from **dia** = through, marker of instrument by which something is accomplished + **orthos** = straight, erect, upright) means to make straight, to straighten thoroughly, to correct, to reform. **Diorthosis** in its physical sense means the making straight, the restoring of something to its natural and normal condition, especially something which in some way protrudes or has gotten out of line, as for instance broken or misshapen limbs. In short, **diorthosis** means to set things right.

Diorthosis in the present context (the only NT use) means "to bring matters to a satisfactory state" referring to the introduction of the New Covenant which displaces the Old Covenant. The Old never was satisfactory, so far as offering a sacrifice that could pay for sin was concerned and thus could not give salvation.

In the **Septuagint (LXX)** the related verb **diorthoo**, was used of mending one's ways (Jeremiah 7:3,5 - Jeremiah 7:5 *For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor*), and of setting up or establishing (Isaiah 16:5 - *A throne will even be established in lovingkindness*).

Wuest - The word translated "**reformation**" is interesting and important. It is diorthosis, from the verb diorthoo. The word means in its physical sense the making straight, the restoring to its natural and normal condition, something which in some way protrudes or has gotten out of line, as for instance broken or misshapen limbs. It means "to set things to rights." In the LXX it is used of mending one's ways (Jer 7:3, 5), and of setting up or establishing (Isa 16:5). The word in its context here means "to bring matters to a satisfactory state." It refers to the introduction of the New Testament which latter displaces the First Testament. The First Testament never was satisfactory, so far as offering a sacrifice that could pay for sin was concerned. It could not actually in itself save the believer. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

W E Vine - The word translated "**reformation**" literally denotes "a making straight." The time of reformation was the time when what

was inadequate and imperfect would give place to that which was effectual and perfect, when the substance and the reality would supersede the shadow and the copy, when the unsuccessful endeavors to fulfill the requirements of God's law would be followed by the enjoyment of His grace, under the unconditional terms of the new covenant. The time of reformation would be brought in upon the ground of the sacrifice of Christ and under His High-Priestly ministry in the sanctuary. (Collected writings of W. E. Vine)

Until is a time word which marks sequence. The writer's point is that in the new order of the New Covenant, Christ "corrects" what the Old Covenant could never "correct". Christ is the substance of which the Old Covenant of rituals, symbols and forms were but a pale shadow. It was beyond the capability of the Old Covenant bring about reformation and make things right between holy God and sinful man. The Old Covenant was like a signpost, pointing to the satisfactory sacrifice of Christ.

The writer is not deprecating the Old Covenant, as if it had no meaning or purpose. His point is simply that the Old was temporary and incomplete, and that it all the while served as a picture of Christ's **better**, perfect work on Calvary.