



# Hebrews: The Whole Way

A Bible Study with John N. Oswalt at the Francis Asbury Society

## SESSION 7

*Hebrews 8:1–9:10*

### Background

- It is important that we distinguish what is said here from a pagan world view. In that view, this visible world is just a copy of invisible realities and is only significant to the degree that it conforms to those realities. The Bible denies that: this is a real world and what takes place here is significant in its own right. Thus, when the writer talks about a heavenly tabernacle, he should not be understood to be talking about a “real” tabernacle in heaven. He is using language like that of paganism to say that while the original physical tabernacle was real, it was intended to illustrate real spiritual truth (see Heb. 9:9). It is the truth that is real; there is no such thing as a heavenly tabernacle (see Rev. 21:22). Christ is not offering sacrifices in heaven.
  - Probably “we cannot discuss this now” (Heb. 9:5) refers to the spiritual significance of the design and furnishings of the Tabernacle.
1. In the light of the Background above, what is the point of Hebrews 8:1–2?
  2. Where did Christ, as perfect High Priest, offer his once-for-all sacrifice? So, what is the point being made by suggesting that he did not practice his priesthood on earth (vv. 3–4)?
  3. Look up Exodus 25:9. What does he say there about a “Heavenly Tabernacle”? What is he saying and why?
  4. According to verse 10 what was wrong (v. 7) with the Old Covenant? What will be different about the New Covenant? What is the significance of that? Is God going to dispense with his laws (instructions)? Explain your answer.
  5. Look at Hebrews 8:12. What prevents God from “writing [his instructions] on their hearts” in Jeremiah’s day? What must happen before he can do that? What will it take to fulfill that promise?

