

Shadow of Heavenly Things

HVFC

July 6, 2025

Jesus is Better Series

Hebrews 8:1-6

Good Morning.

I always appreciate that you come back after I preach a hard sermon. There are times when it feels like I get up here and purposely pick on someone with my sermons, which is true. They become the focal point of everything I write, and each point is sculpted to hit just such a way as to bring the feeling that I know something very specific about them. And I do, because it is me.

Last week was no different.

How often do we berate and belittle people who entertain things that we think are foolish, only to ignore the very same things we do that are foolish in their own right.

The Hebrew Christians were contemplating going back to Judaism, seeking Angels, Moses, and Levitical Priesthood; all which were inferior. Yet many of us do the same in some way.

We turn to supernatural sources that are not God, are more afraid of offending the culture around us, than standing on the Word of God. And dabble in several types of religion, just in case, because you never know. And that was the sentiment the writer was addressing to them and to us.

God had introduced some changes with Jesus. But the draw to go back to the old ways are strong at times.

And what needs to happen is we need a mind shift. To see and understand each piece for what it is. Not what we perceive it to be.

Chapter 8 is that transitional chapter where the writer begins to try to bring their focus to what God is doing today, (both then and now as only God can do), and break their preoccupation to what God had done in the past.

And I love how he does this, and I hope it will enlighten us to what God is doing in each of our lives.

I want to read the first 5 verses of chapter 8 this morning to show where we are going.

Hebrews 8:1-5

1 Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,
2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer.

4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;

5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

NKJV

Let's Pray.

We are in the year 2025. Ever wonder how we got here.....

I mean to say why do we say we are living in the year 2025?

Looking at different ancient groups. There are many different years that nations or peoples say they live in.

For instance in Ethiopia, the year for them is 2018, we say 2025. For China they are in year 4722, and the nation of Israel would say they are in year 5785, with year 1 as creation.

This whole system of determining the year was developed by Gregory 13 in 1528. And because they didn't want to exclude any time or people that could be learned about they settled on what we have. They took the most important event in History, which was Jesus and made his life the peak, year 0. And from that time we have AD, or the year of our Lord. BC doesn't not stand for Before Christ, which would make the most since, but stands for Before Common Era.

This way for as long as the Lord delayed, the years would continue, but also it could stretch back as far as it needed to go to include all of human history.

To me it makes since in that the world was leading up to the time of Jesus, like climbing up one side of a mountain. Jesus arrives, starts everything new, and leaves us to await his return, walking back down the other side of the mountain.

Much like Hebrews.

The writer has been working us up to this pivotal crowning moment regarding Jesus.

And that is verse one and two. Jesus is a High Priest that is seated at the right hand of the throne of Majesty, the Minister of the tabernacle in the heaven, that was created to continuously resonate with glory to God.

Can I paint this scene for you?

Rev 4:2-11

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

Rev 5:11-12

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"
NKJV

Can you imagine that scene?

It is continuously, on an eternal loop being proclaimed in the Throne Room. And Jesus is there, our High Priest making petitions and intercessory prayer for me...

This is what the writer is saying, we the believers have access to. His main point is for us to see this.

But for the readers, it goes against everything they have ever known.

Moses is mentioned here and the Covenant God made with him on Mt Sinai. Jewish culture started at this mount.

Moses went up on top, and God showed him something, a pattern.

We don't know, but I have often wondered if what we read in Revelation is what Moses saw.

Because the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and temple were where the manifest presence of God was to reside, much like he would in his throne room.

Food for thought, but I digress.

Moses was given the pattern the children of Israel were to use to worship God.

This was a temporary assignment, intended as a short-term solution.

However man's version of temporary and God's perspective are eternities apart in difference.

This morning I have a simple message from our passage, that I hope will spark something within each of us.

As I read this verse 5 kept jumping out.

Hebrews 8:5

who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

NKJV

The problem with the Jews, well really with people, is that we like to see, taste, smell, feel, and hear things. It makes it real for us.

They preferred serving the copy and shadow of heavenly things.

It gives the outward appearance of holiness but allows the inner thoughts and tendencies to be full of hypocrisy and lawlessness according to Matthew 23.

Paul tells us this in Romans 1 that man changed out the glory of the incorruptible God for an image made like corruptible man.

We like the things that we are in charge of.

We desire control.

We want to be in control of our own destinies.

And in a way the leaders of Israel did have that.

And so God replaced that covenant with a new one.

Hebrews 8:6-7

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

NKJV

The copy had become obsolete, and the true covenant God wanted with us was now available through the work of Jesus.

Why was the copy obsolete?

Paul teaches us in Romans the Law could never bring righteousness.

Romans 7:10-11

10 So I discovered that the law's commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead.

11 Sin took advantage of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me.

NLT

The law is holy, but man is not. And sin took advantage of God needing to give a copy or shadow of His righteousness temporarily until Jesus would come and pay for my sin.

The copy gave way for man to manufacture his righteousness.

It is basically a list of rules to do or not to do. And as long as you were obedient you produced your own righteousness, no matter what your heart was like.

This was the Pharisees. Heck, this is us.

We know how to make the outside so clean. Yet in our hearts, we are lustful, hateful, greedy, proud, and liars.

The fault of the law and old covenant was it could not change our hearts.

It could make us look the part but not change us.

The copy and shadow allow us to worship while still living in our sin.

Jesus does not. He knows our heart, our intentions and our desires, not just our words and actions.

Jesus came to give us actual righteousness in our heart.

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

NKJV

How do you and I fall back into worshipping the copy and shadow?

Because we do.

Following our wild train of thought this morning.

We can get wrapped up in traditions and rituals. Matthew 23.

Where we are so involved in how things are supposed to be done, we miss the reason behind them being done.

A great example for me, just a couple of weeks ago doing baptisms in the creek, pouring rain, with temperatures in the 40's while there is a baptismal in the basement.

It would have been easy for me to say well this is how it has always been done. And this matter is small, but some people get so locked in on the what and how, the why is overlooked and missed. This was the pit of the pharisees.

A second way is Cultural Christianity. Found in Romans 1:18 to the end. I know I spoke of this last week, however it is still true. We compromise difficult parts of our faith with more palatable, watered down versions to keep the peace. In the compromise we trade biblical truths for man's approval. Culture eventually rubs away all our Christian identity until we are just another member of the masses.

A third way is we become Laodicean Christians or lukewarm Christians. Remember them, they are in Rev. 3. The lukewarm church. Neither hot nor cold. Much like American Christianity.

Revelation 3:17

Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked —

NKJV

We have been vaccinated with just enough Christianity to keep us from getting the real thing. We go through the motions, lift our hands, bow our heads, check the boxes and live like we want.

Proverbs 30:8-9

Give me neither poverty nor riches — Feed me with the food allotted to me;

9 Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the Lord?" Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.

NKJV

Last this morning.

We live for and seek out emotional experiences.

When life is going well, our relationship with God is going well. When life stinks, our relationship with God stinks.

This copy seeks to remain on the mountain peaks of faith. It is where all the excitement is and God is moving, and it feels like the ultimate goal in our faith.

I believe this is a manufactured faith. It is where we seek to serve God by what we are doing, where we are going, but leaves little time for our heart and intentions to be examined.

There is no time to pray and get my life in order, I am saved and there are those who are dying out there.

However God's most important work is the work he is doing in your heart.

This morning as we close this exercise in speaking.

The passage jumped out at me, and began to cause me to search my own heart.

There are times when I am serving the copy.

Riding the emotional experiences, following traditions, getting caught up in materialistic and prosperity tendencies, and letting culture override my faith.

This is what kept many Israelites from following Jesus.

Don't let it sift you away either.