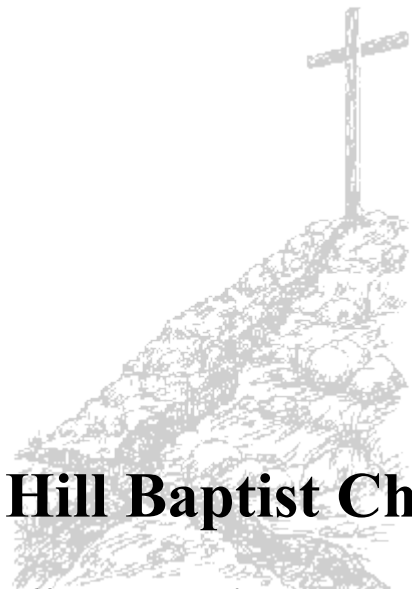


Pertaining To The Conscience

Hebrews 9:6-9



Rock Hill Baptist Church

605 Rock Hill Road
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Brother David Buffaloe
731-845-6104

online at bibleteacher.org

FOCAL Hebrews 9:6-9 (KJV) "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. {7} But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: {8} 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: {9} 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;"

The beauty of the Scripture is this: the whole of its text, from beginning to end, is a *supernatural and wondrous thing*, a living creation from the hand of God. Many are the people who will try to dissect God's Holy Word. Some will take it and, in order to please a greater crowd of humanity, pervert its loveliness. Others because of unbelief and faithlessness will discount the first eleven chapters of Genesis because the *idea of a Sovereign God* is repugnant to the mind of the modern man. Hasn't Darwinism taught us that God is *limited* in His abilities, that He must have had *thousands of years* to - through a process of evolution - create all that we see around us? Hasn't science proved that man slowly evolved from primordial goo? Isn't this Scripture just several books of fantasy and superstition, all bound under one cover?

Every time man considers himself superior to God, God once more proves our inabilities, our weaknesses, our foolishness. The Scripture has proven itself the source of

absolute truth, because it comes from the Sovereign and Absolute God.

Now the absolute truth of Scripture gives us an explanation as to why God brought the Law to unbelieving mankind. Man thought that he did not need God's offer of *salvation by faith*, so God responded by offering man the Law through the Prophet Moses. God told the Israelites:

Exodus 19:10-11 (KJV) "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, {11} And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai."

The Israelites rejected salvation by faith in God, so God told the Israelites to **sanctify** or set themselves apart. They were to *wash their clothes* and get completely clean on the outside. They wanted to follow God not by faith, but by Law, so God started them on the path of the Law *by ritualism and sight*. **When God came before the unbelieving peoples, ritual forbade them to touch God.** They were told:

Exodus 19:12 (KJV) "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: **whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:"**

When the Law came it came with *thundering and*

roaring, lighting and fire. Damnation was promised for failing God, as is promised for all who choose to follow *works* rather than the eye of faith. Death to the sinner, life to the saint! It is significant that *after the third day Israel* was to be ready for God's approach, though His approach under the Law kept the children of Israel from reaching the Almighty. Consider the difference in our Lord Jesus Who, *after the third day* told His frightened children:

Luke 24:38-39 (KJV) "And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? {39} Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

The *eyes of Law* were forbidden to touch God after three days, but the *eyes of grace and faith* offered the raw nail scarred hands and feet. **Handle Me** said Jesus! **See Me** Children of faith! **Back off** children of doubt, children of faithlessness, children of evil! The Children of Israel were further told:

Exodus 19:21-22 (KJV) "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. {22} And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them."

You would not look at Me with eyes of faith, so see Me with no eyes at all. Doubt cannot look on God, nor will unbelief be blessed with rest. A veil fell between the

unbeliever and God on that day, a veil that remains to this day on all who will not believe and glorify Him. Under the Law only a select few, *the High Priest and Moses*, could come beyond the veil to God.

Exodus 19:24 (KJV) "And the LORD said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them."

What other wonders did *unbelief* and the *Law* bring to Israel? Look and see. Those who will not love Him, who persist in loving the *rituals rather than a growing and loving relationship in Him* can expect this type of response in their own lives:

Exodus 20:19 (KJV) "[Israel] said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

Did the Law bring a great relationship between God and Israel, the people He would save? No, not at all. In fact, the *separation* of Israel from a loving relationship with the Creator *because of their unbelief* left them with *no spiritual equipment whatsoever*. The reason that Israel created the Golden Calf and worshiped it was because they were used to believing *on things* and not on *God our Savior*. The Bible says:

Exodus 32:1-5 (KJV) "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and

said unto him, Up, make us gods¹, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. {2} And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. {3} And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. {4} And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. {5} And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD."

Having no relationship by faith in God *with* God - having no more spirituality than a love-hate relationship with their leader Moses - they soon lost interest in the fire on the mountain and began to kindle their own fire down below. The Israelites - *along with their High Priest Aaron* - created their own golden goddess using riches that the Grace of God had bestowed on them when they came out of Egypt². If the only relationship you have with God is the *external trappings of religion*, you will have *nothing of substance* when the hard times come upon you! Religion without relationship to God will bring you only punishment, separation from God, and

אֱלֹהִים¹ 'elohiym {pronounced el-o-heem'}, the first name of God used in Scripture, refers to His Triune Being (plural word). Genesis 1:1

2 Exodus 11:2-3 (KJV) "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. {3} And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people."

will place you at the mercy of the world around you.

Having covered the background, now we can study Hebrews.

1. The Law Separated - But Grace Still Enabled

FOCAL Hebrews 9:6 (KJV) "Now when these things were thus ordained³, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God."

"Now when these things were thus ordained" gives us understanding about the Law that few today understand. The Law was *set up* by God *once and for all* as a complete whole. It was not fragmented into various parts or counterparts as we like to believe. For instance, the Ten Commandments in the Law was also part of the same whole that provided the *sanitary laws*, such as those found in:

Leviticus 12:2 (KJV) "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean."

And the *dietary laws*, such as those found in:

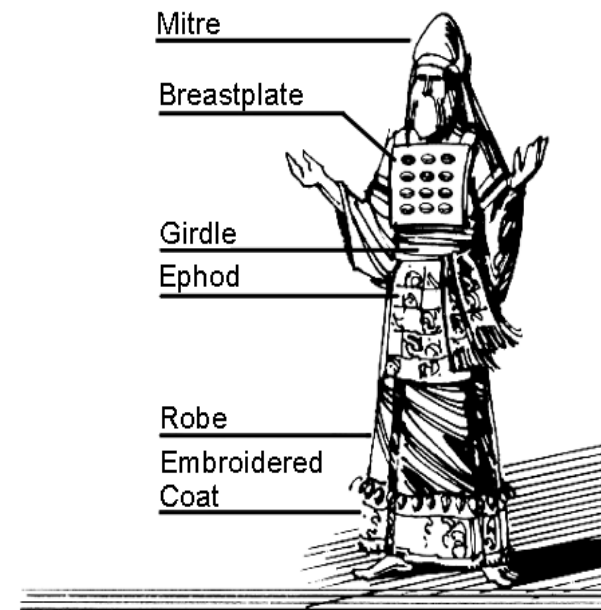
Leviticus 11:4-8 (KJV) "Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

³ kataskeuazo {pronounced kat-ask-yoo-ad'-zo}, Perfect Passive Participle, *were set up once and for all*

{5} And the coney [rock rabbit], because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. {6} And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. {7} And the swine [pig], though he divide the hoof, and be cloven footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you. {8} Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you."

Just as the Law separated wives from their husbands, and people from certain foods, it separated the *priestly caste*

THE HIGH PRIEST AND HIS GARMENTS



from the *non-priestly caste*. Since the Law established a barrier between God and man at Mount Sinai, that barrier had to be breached - else God could never be reached. Did those who *entered in through the veil* achieve *holy or perfect status* before

God before they entered the veil? Absolutely not! The very fact that the High Priest entered the veil at all was entirely a function of God's Grace. The Priest was

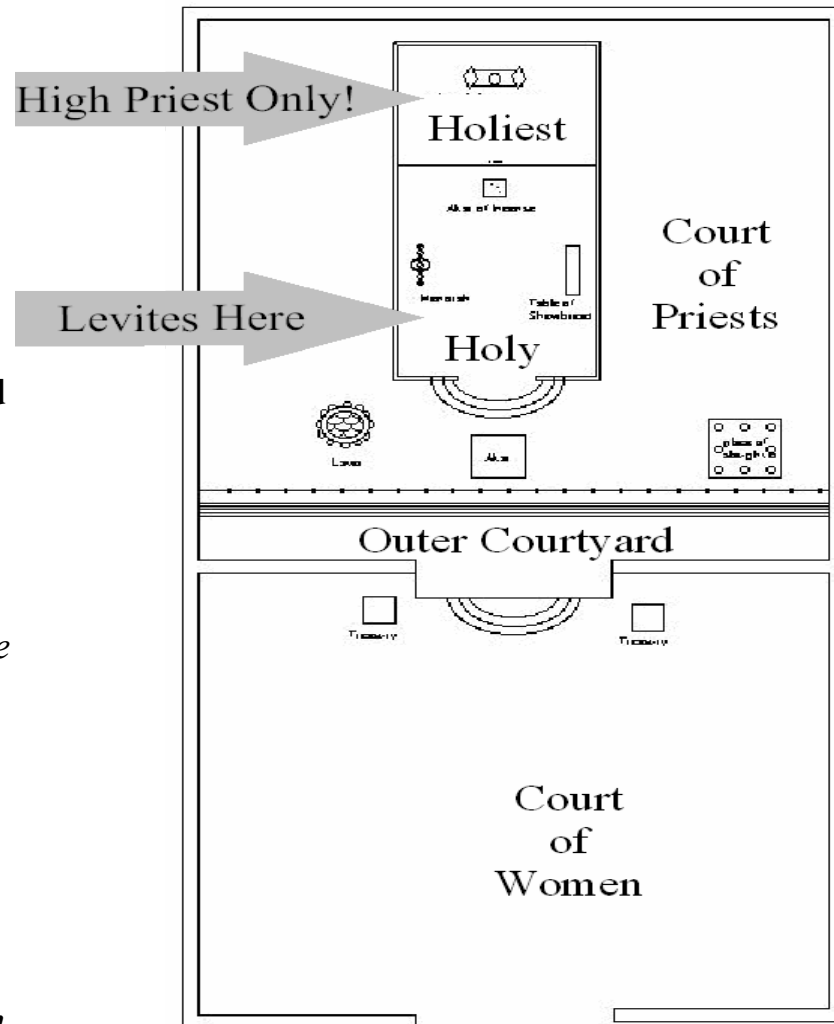
clothed at the direction of God, entered the veil of the Holiest Place at the direction of God, and made sacrifice to God for himself and the people at the direction of God. It was *all of Grace* that Israel was not destroyed outright for their disobedience both before and after Mount Sinai. The Scripture says:

Romans 3:19-20 (KJV) "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. {20} Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

The Law existed for one reason only - to show us that *we could not reach God apart from Grace*, no matter how hard we tried. Read further:

FOCAL Hebrews 9:6-7 (KJV) "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. {7} But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.."

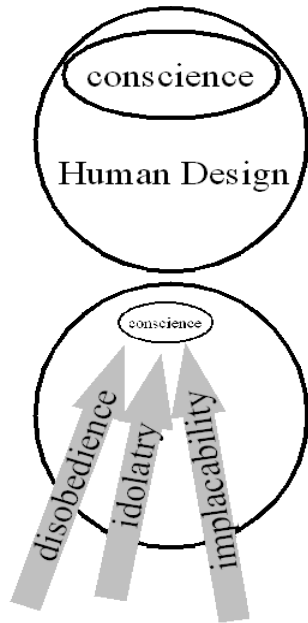
The *priests* or the Family of Levi went into the *first tabernacle*, that is, into the *Court of the Priests*, but only the High Priest went into the *Holiest of All*, and then *only once a year*. The High Priest, when he entered the Holiest Place, always carried *blood* taken from an animal killed on the altar outside of that place. When you look at the Temple you can see how the Law broke people



into groups and castes, dividing and restricting the people of God. The Law brought division, knowledge of each person's transgression (**the errors of the people**), and was supposed to awaken the *conscience* in Israel.

Romans 7:7 (KJV) "What shall we say

then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."



God designed the *inner person* or the *soul* with a *conscience* that understood basic norms and standards of right and wrong. An interesting thing about the human being is that God has designed our bodies - and our souls - with the ability to *adapt*. When we do not use a body part - say, an arm for instance - for a period of time, in time that arm will *wither and cease to function*. This is what happened to the *conscience* of the average Israelite. Israel had so compromised with the Egyptian world that they were enslaved to

that, in time, their conscience *became hardened* and *useless*. God used the Law to *stimulate the conscience* by showing Israel - and all unbelievers - what God considered righteous and unrighteous.

The Doctrine of the Conscience

1 Those who reject a loving *relationship with God* by *faith in Christ* and instead decide on following the ways of the world *have defiled their consciences*:

Titus 1:15 (KJV) "Unto the pure⁴ all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their **mind and conscience is defiled.**"

4 katharos {pronounced kath-ar-os' }, clean, pure

Who are **the pure** that are spoken of in this sentence? They are those who have *heard and obeyed the words of Jesus Christ our Savior*. Jesus uses the same word for **pure** when He describes the believer in:

John 15:3-4 (KJV) "Now ye are clean⁵ through the word which I have spoken unto you. {4} Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

The Christian is *katharos* or *pure before God* not because we have followed the Mosaic Law nor some ritual, but because we have a *loving relationship by faith with Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior*. The unbeliever has, at best, a *deformed conscience* - and the believer who has compromised with Egypt and its gods also has a *defiled conscience*. Here's a good example of this.

Voddie Baucham, Jr. recalled a conversation he had with a friend of his that pastored a certain local Church. He wrote in his book *The Ever Loving Truth*⁶:

"[My pastor friend] was teaching through 1 Corinthians and he had come to chapter 5. The young people, as was their practice, were sitting in a group down front. Much to the pastor's surprise, it was not the idea of the illicit affair that intrigued the crowd but the idea that Paul would have the audacity to suggest to the church at Corinth that they should have removed him from their midst. This was part of the text that the crowd found the most disturbing. Many of those present - both young and old - could

5 katharos {pronounced kath-ar-os' }, clean, pure

6 Broadman and Holman publisher, copyright 2004, page x

not believe that Paul said 'I have already passed judgment on the one who did this.' ... He was surprised when one of the older members - a leader in the church - stated 'I don't care what the Bible says; we are not supposed to judge other people!'"

2 The human conscience is designed by God to establish *norms and standards* for relationships with both God and man. The Apostle preached:

Acts 24:15-16 (KJV) "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. {16} And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men."

When the conscience is defiled people begin to lose the perspective they have in relationship to others. When the children of Israel came to Marah *they murmured* or complained to Moses because *the waters were not sweet*⁷. They continued in this *murmuring* or complaining state until they began to harden their conscience. Once the conscience hardened the Israelites lost touch with reality:

Exodus 16:2-3 (KJV) "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured⁸ against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: {3} And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by

the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Instead of rejoicing in their salvation, Israel *bitterly complained* against Moses and God. They began to imagine that the "good old days" in Egypt were better than the freedom they had in God. Further, they began to imagine that Moses *made them* leave Egypt. How one man could *make six million people* do anything is beyond me! But this is what happens when the conscience hardens.

3 The conscience *convicts of evil doing*. In the account of the "woman taken in adultery" our Lord Jesus looked at the self righteous men who had captured this woman and told them that "He who is without sin, cast the first stone". The Bible says:

John 8:9 (KJV) "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."

The conscience has the power to convict of sin, if it has not been hardened *by sin*. I used to wonder what the devil was doing when he took over the entertainment industry in our country. There was a time when you could watch decent television or movies, when sexual activity wasn't openly advertised on the so called silver screen, when every other word out of someone's mouth

7 Exodus 15:23-24

8 Niphal Imperfect liyn {pronounced leen }, to grumble

wasn't a curse word. Now I know. The devil, using the media, has allowed this visual evil to so flood our senses and our consciences until many have become hardened by sin. Which brings us to the next point:

4 The conscience establishes norms of *morality* just like the *Mosaic Law* established norms of morality.

Romans 2:14-15 (KJV) "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: {15} Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness⁹, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"

The conscience of a person *bears witness* to right and wrong just like the *moral codex* of the *Mosaic Law* established right and wrong. If a person's conscience is not hardened then they know *in their conscience* that it is wrong to kill, to steal, to commit adultery. But if the conscience is hardened then a person *must be told* that it is wrong to kill (a violation of the Sixth Commandment), to steal (a violation of the Eighth Commandment), or to commit adultery (a violation of the Seventh Commandment). Where the conscience is operational the Ten Commandments are not needed - but where the conscience is defiled, the Ten Commandments *must be emphasized* if orderly society is to be maintained.

5 Lovelessness in the Church or in the home can defile

9 Present Active Participle summartureo {pronounced soom-mar-too-reh'-o}, to bear witness with another

the conscience of another person. The Apostle warned the Church at Corinth:

1 Corinthians 8:12-13 (KJV) "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. {13} Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

Though believers are *freed from the Law* to serve Christ, we must be careful not to use our freedom in ways that wound or hurt the conscience of spiritually weaker believers. Each member in Christ's Body should have the same care one toward another, lest we wound another - and in so doing hurt ourselves. The Church is a living organism designed by Christ to fulfill His Great Commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**). When lovelessness exists in a Church it is self defeating - and usually collapses the whole organism!

6 When the conscience of mankind *bonds together* under state or national governments, this bonding of conscience produces a sort of *common law*. The Apostle warned believers to heed local laws because these laws - established by human conscience - were used by God as a "**minister of God to thee for good**".

Romans 13:3-5 (KJV) "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: {4} For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that

which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. {5} Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."

7 When a person has a *clear conscience* then he or she will be happiest:

2 Corinthians 1:12 (KJV) "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."

There are two silent witnesses that watch everything you do: Almighty God and your conscience. Though you can kill or harden your conscience by repeatedly sinning against God and man like Israel did, the *normal person* is controlled to some degree by what his or her conscience tells them is right or wrong. The unbeliever, swallowed up by sin, many times *has a darkened conscience* which in turn blinds them to the Gospel truth:

2 Corinthians 4:2-4 (KJV) "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. {3} But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: {4} In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should

shine unto them."

8 The Christian should be careful what he or she allows in his or her life. The conscience can become *shipwrecked* by exposure to sin:

1 Timothy 1:19 (KJV) "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"

Or it can *become seared* or scorched by sin:

1 Timothy 4:1-2 (KJV) "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; {2} Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

Though none of us are perfect by any means, we do need to be careful what we allow to touch our consciences. The believer can only effectively lead others to Christ when he or she *maintains a good conscience*:

1 Peter 3:16 (KJV) "Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ."

9 God used the Law to *convict ancient Israel of their sinful and lost place*. Over and over again they used the rituals of *animal sacrifice* to symbolically purge themselves of sin. By repeated action God used the Law to bring them to a *knowledge of sin* so that they would

know they needed His Grace.

FOCAL Hebrews 9:8-9 (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: {9} 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;**"

Israel had to be brought back to a place where they knew they needed the Savior. America is in this same place today. We have so seared our consciences with sin that we no longer are convicted by the preaching of God's Word. God's answer to the hardened conscience was the Mosaic Law, especially that portion of the Law we call *the Ten Commandments*. This is the reason that Satan has led such a concerted drive against the public display of the Ten Commandments in America today. Pray with me, believers, that God's Church will draw close to Him and begin to *act as the Body of Christ* while there is yet time in America.

I pray that God will touch your hearts with these words!

