

**Christ's Sacrifice Take Away Sin
Hebrews 10:1-10**

The Psalmist in Psalm 84 declared how blessed are those who dwell in the house of the Lord for they will be forever praising Him! And hopefully, if we have embraced Christ as our Lord and Savior by grace through faith, this is exactly what we are experiencing this morning... And what has made all of this possible? The sacrifice of Christ on the cross of Calvary has made this all possible.

And hopefully all this will come alive for us this morning as we return to our study of Hebrews. So what have we learned so far about this book?

The book of Hebrews was written to a group of struggling Hebrew believers, living in Rome, who under a great persecution, were in danger of turning away from Christ and returning back to Judaism.

And how did the author of this book counter this danger? The author countered this particular danger by focusing on Christ's superiority. So what have we seen so far?

We have seen the author setting forth the superiority of Christ to prophets, to angels, and to Moses and now we are seeing him setting forth the superiority of Christ's priesthood over all other **priesthoods**. So how has the author been seeking to demonstrate this particular superiority so far within our study?

The author began by focusing on Christ's appointment as high priest according to the order of Melchizedek and now he is focusing on Christ's superior high priestly offering. We divided this segment into 3 parts.

The first part was: The superiority of Christ's high priestly ministry (Hebrews 8:1-6). The second part was: The superiority of the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:7-13). And the third part was: The superiority of the New Covenant Offering (Hebrews 9:1- 9:28).

And how did the author go about developing this particular section? He began by focusing on the Old Covenant tabernacle, describing it and its provisions for worship (Hebrews 9:1-10). And why did he begin in this way?

He began in this way in order to set the stage for what he was going to say about Christ's ministry in the heavenly tabernacle or in other words “**the greater and more perfect tabernacle**” (Hebrews 9:11-9:28).

So as this author began to explore Christ's ministry in the heavenly tabernacle or in other words “**the greater and more perfect tabernacle**” what did he communicate first?

The first thing that the author communicated was this: that Christ had not entered that greater and more perfect tabernacle through the blood of goats and calves but through His own blood having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11-14).

And what was the second thing that the author communicated? The second thing the author communicated was this: Because Christ has entered into this greater and more perfect tabernacle through His own blood and not through the blood of goats and calves, He is now the mediator of a New Covenant (Hebrews 9:15-22).

And why was Christ able through His own blood to enter into this greater and more perfect tabernacle? It was because Christ's blood was the “**better sacrifice**” which the author made clear to us in Hebrews 9:23-28. So why was his sacrifice the better sacrifice?

First of all His sacrifice was the better sacrifice because it **cleansed** the heavenly tabernacle thus making it possible for Him to represent us before God in that tabernacle.

Secondly His sacrifice was the better sacrifice because once He entered into the heavenly tabernacle (or in other words into that cleansed heavenly tabernacle) His entrance was **once-for-all** or in other words He did not have to keep leaving that cleansed heavenly tabernacle as the high priests of Israel had to do in respect to the earthly tabernacle.

And finally we saw that His sacrifice was the better sacrifice because it guarantees His **reappearance** from the heavenly tabernacle when He will come to catch us up to be with Him in glory in the event that is commonly referred to as the rapture. And this is where we left off.

So where will the author go from here? The author will now, in **Hebrews 10:1-18**, be summarizing all that he has said about the superiority of Christ's high priestly offering beginning with **Hebrews 8:1** through **Hebrews 9:28**.

And because the author in this concluding section will be summarizing what he has said previously about the superiority of Christ's high priestly offering we will of course be seeing the most important themes in this section revisited. And certainly I would hope that as we revisit these most important themes, that these themes will come alive to us to the praise of His glory and to our comfort and encouragement. So what was the first theme that this author revisited? The first theme that the author revisited was this:

MESSAGE

The sacrifices prescribed by the Law could not take away sin (Hebrews 10:1-4). This is the first theme that the author revisited. And where do we find this theme in our text? We find it in **Hebrews 10:1-4**.

So now let me read these verses for you. And what do these verses say? They say this **“For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. (2) Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? (3) But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. (4) For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”** So based on these verses can we say that the sacrifices prescribed by the Law could not completely take away sin? Yes, we can absolutely say that.

And how did the author go about developing this thought within these verses? He began by pointing out to his readers in **verse 1** that just as the earthly tabernacle had been described by him as a shadow of the heavenly tabernacle in **Hebrews 8:5** the Law was also a shadow.

And what was it a shadow of? The Law was a shadow of the good things to come or in other words the Law along with its sacrifices was a shadow of the future sacrifice of Christ and all that His future sacrifice would accomplish on behalf of sinners.

So was the Law a good thing? Absolutely! Because the Law and its sacrifices was a shadow of Christ and His sacrifice, the Law and its sacrifices became a means by which God could point people to Christ and the need for His future sacrifice. But though the Law and its sacrifices were good in that particular sense it was still only a shadow of a future reality and not the reality itself and therefore it could never do what, according to **verse 1**? It could **“never, by the same sacrifices which they (or in other words the high priests) offer continually year by year make perfect those who draw near.”**

And what did the author mean by this? He simply meant that no matter how many times the high priests of Israel offered up the blood of goats and bulls on the Day of Atonement in the Holy of Holies on behalf of the people of Israel. Those sacrifices offered up under the Law would never ever take away the sin of the people in a total, complete, and lasting sense.

Why was this? It was because these repeated blood offerings were simply the repeated offerings of shadows, which in and of themselves, no matter how many shadows were piled up one upon another, still had no substance, and therefore no ability to make perfect those who were seeking to draw near to God through those sacrifices.

And what was the evidence the author put forward to support this thought? Let me read for you **verse 2** and what does it say? It says this, **“Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered because the worshipers, having once been cleansed would no longer have had consciousness of sins.”** So what was the evidence that the author put forward to support his contention that the Law and its sacrifices were totally ineffective to make perfect those who were seeking to draw near to God through those sacrifices?

The ineffectiveness of the Law and its sacrifices to make perfect those people who were seeking to draw near to God through those sacrifices was their ongoing “consciousness of sins” or in other words their ongoing sense of **guilt** before God in spite of those sacrifices.

And how do we know that they had an ongoing **“consciousness of sins”** or in other words an ongoing sense of guilt before God in spite of those sacrifices? We know this because the yearly sacrifices offered up by the high priests of the Nation of Israel on behalf of the people never ceased to be

offered. They continued to be offered year after year after year after year. This is the point of **verse 2**.

So if the yearly offerings of the high priests on the Day Atonement, were unable to make perfect those who were seeking to draw near to God through those sacrifices as evidenced by their “**consciousness of sins**” or in other words their ongoing sense of guilt before God in spite of those sacrifices, as evidenced by the repetition of those sacrifices, what did those yearly sacrifices accomplish? They reminded them of their sins.

Let me read for you **Hebrews 10:3** and see if this is not so. And what does it say? It says this, “**But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year.**”

And then what did the author declare in **verse 4** based on everything that he had just said in **verses 1-3**? He declared this, “**For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.**”

So if everything I have shared with you from **verses 1-4** is in fact true, what can we conclude? We can conclude this: No person living under Old Covenant Sacrificial system could ever have experienced, based on that system, any sense of closeness with God! How could they? They could not be made perfect through that system and the system itself continuously reminded them of that fact.

So what was the first theme the author revisited in his conclusion in **Hebrews 10:1-18**? The first theme the author revisited was this: The sacrifices prescribed by the Law could not take away sins. But what the Law and the Old Covenant sacrificial system could not do Christ and His sacrifice did. And this brings us to the second theme that the author revisited in **Hebrews 10:1-18**.

So what is this second theme that this author revisited? This was the second theme: Christ’s sacrifice for sin on the cross of Calvary (very much unlike the law and its prescribed sacrifices) was able to take away sin totally, completely, and forever (Hebrews 10:5-10). And where will we see this particular theme developed? We will see it developed in **Hebrews 10:5-10**.

And how did the author develop this theme within these verses? He made three different points. So what was the first point? The first point was this: The cross of Christ was the will of God (Hebrews 10:5-9). So let me now read for you **Hebrews 10:5-9** and see if this is not so. And this is what these verses say, **“(5) Therefore** (in light of the ineffectiveness of the Law and its prescribed sacrifices to take away sins) **when He comes into the world, He says...** (And now at this point in our text the author will begin to quote, from the Septuagint, **Psalm 40:6-8**) ... **‘Sacrifice and offering you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for Me; (6) In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you have taken no pleasure. (7) ‘Then I said, “Behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of Me) to do your will, O God.’ ”** (At this point the author then in **verse 8** re-emphasized what he had just quoted. So let us continue to read and see if this is not so. And this is what the author said ... **“(8) After saying above, ‘Sacrifice and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you have not desired nor have you taken pleasure in them’ (which are offered according to the Law, (9) then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will.’ ”** ...

So based on these verses was the first thought the author put forward to emphasize the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice in **verses 5-9** the fact that Christ's sacrifice was according to the will of God? Absolutely!

The cross was not an accident or an unforeseen tragedy that took Jesus by surprise. It was not a temporary setback that God would then have to figure out, how He might then be able to turn it for good. Rather the cross was God's predetermined plan, established in eternity past, to deal with our sin. And what was the plan? Jesus would come into this world as a man, would unlike other men live a life of perfect obedience, and after having fulfilled all the righteous demands of the Law, would then also in obedience offer Himself up to God on the cross of Calvary as a sacrifice for sin. This was the eternal predetermined plan of God.

So what was the first thought that this author put forward to emphasize the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice in Hebrews 10:5-10? It was this, “The cross of Christ was no accident but was rather an expression of obedience in accordance with the predetermined will of God.”

And what was the second thought that the author put forward to emphasize the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice? This was the second thought.

Christ's obedience to God's will at the cross **set aside** the Old Testament sacrifices forever (Hebrews 10:9). So let me now read for the last part of **verse 9** and see if this is not so. And what does it say? It says this, "... **He takes away the first in order to establish the second.**"

So what was the author referring to when he referred to the "first"? And what was the author referring to when he referred to the "second"?

The word "**first**" was most likely not specifically referring to the Old Covenant parse but rather, based on the context the word "**first**" was most likely referring to the Levitical sacrifices offered up by the Levitical priests to God under the Old Covenant Levitical system.

And what about the word "**second**"? The word "**second**" was most likely was not referring to the New Covenant parse but rather to the sacrifice of Christ, which He as an expression of His obedience to His Father willingly offered up to Him in accordance with His eternal pre-determined plan.

So what did Christ's sacrifice, which He offered up to His Father as an expression of obedience and in accordance with His eternal pre-determined plan do? It "**took away**" or in other words "**did away**" with the Levitical sacrifices or in other words the "first."

And this was always God's plan, for He always knew that the "second" would take away "the first." And why was this necessary? It was necessary to establish the second, which was the only means by which those who desired to draw near to God could be made perfect.

So what was the third thought that the author put forward to emphasize the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice? This was the third thought: By Christ's obedience to God's will at the cross makes it possible for those who exercise faith in Him to receive a perfect **standing** before God forever (Hebrews 10:10).

Let me now read for you **Hebrews 10:10** and see if this is not true. And what does this verse say? It says this, "**By this will** (Or in other words by

predetermined eternal plan) **we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**”

The word translated “sanctified” or “made holy” basically means to be set apart. When the word is used in scripture of men, it always refers to being set apart by God and for God. So what happens when we, based on Christ’s sacrifice, exercise faith in Christ? We through the offering of the body of Christ or in other words through His sacrifice are set apart by God and for God or in other words we are made holy.

Does this mean that we will never sin again? No!! It does not mean that at all! This is why, though we may have been sanctified **“once for all”** we can still commit sin and experience pangs of guilt. But even though we may still be able to commit sin and still experience pangs of guilt this does not change the fact that if we have exercised faith in Christ that we have been sanctified through faith in Christ once-for-all or in other in other words “forever.”

So in light of these facts we will seeking, as those who have been saved by grace to faith, to live in a manner consistent with who we are in Christ. But what happens if we do sin, which of course we will? We need to as quickly as possible, by the grace of God, to confess and forsake that sin. If we consistently do this what will we experience? We will be able to enjoy the blessings of God's presence free any sense of guilt.

So in light of these facts what should we be striving to do? We should be striving, by the grace of God, to live our lives in a manner consistent with who we are in Christ. If we do that we will be able to live in the presence of God and enjoy the blessings of God free from guilt.

CONCLUSION

This was not something the people of God living under the Law and its prescribed sacrifices could ever experience. But this can is something we can experience through Christ and His sacrifice if we have exercised faith in Christ. We can live in the presence God free guilt. So what is our prayer for this morning?

May we by God's grace be filled with praise knowing that because we have been made perfect through Christ's death that we can live in the presence of God without **guilt** (day in and day out enjoy the blessedness of that presence both in time and eternity).