

Hebrews 10:1-39 A Better Sacrifice

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

- In chapter 9 we read that these sacrifices could never make the priest perfect and now, in chapter 10, we find those same sacrifices could not make the worshippers perfect

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

- The Old Covenant never lifted the condemnation of sin as that sin was never removed only pushed back

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

- The yearly day of Atonement would once again draw near and all those sins were remembered again
- The Old Covenant's purpose was to point to a future day of forgiveness

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, **but a body hast thou prepared me:**

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, **Lo, I come** (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) **to do thy will, O God.**

- Refer to Psalm 40:6, the writer of Hebrews quotes from the Greek Septuagint, but the Hebrew translation refers to the "opening of the ears"

Psalm 40:6-8

*6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; **mine ears hast thou opened**: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.*

*7 Then said I, **Lo, I come**: in the volume of the book it is written of me,*

*8 I delight **to do thy will**, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*

- The phrase "mine ears hast thou opened" is literally "my ears you have digged" referring to the ceremony of a servant that would willingly devote himself to his master even though the law would set him free as detailed in Exodus 21

Exodus 21:2-6

2 If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

3 If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

4 If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

5 And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:

6 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

- It is of note that the first laws given after the 10 commandments would be those dealing with the rights of slaves within the nation of Israel
- The servant willingly obedient to the master would be taken and publicly (before witnesses) be pierced to wood and would forever bear those marks in his body all for the love of His master and his bride
- This answers why Jesus has chosen to bear the marks of His crucifixion in eternity

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- It is ironic that the One humbling Himself to the form of the servant is also revered as Lord by all

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst **pleasure** therein; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, **I come to do thy will**, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

- The animal sacrifice was never God's focus, but rather a heart of obedience and faith (even in the Old Testament)
- *Pleasure*, Greek for *approval*
- Christ established the New Covenant in His blood to take away the Old
- There was never a transition period where the Old and New could coincide and be relevant, immediately at the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the New Covenant would supersede the Old and render it null and void
- It is important to remember that it was God's will to replace the Old with the New (this was the division between Christ and the religious leaders during His earthly ministry)
- This does not mean that the law does not apply as by it we gain a knowledge of sin and we remain under its bondage until experiencing redemption in Christ's sacrifice, but the old system of animal sacrifice ceased its efficacy once the true sacrifice was offered

Romans 7:6-7

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 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.

- The law served its purpose in revealing our inability to fulfill its requirements

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest **standeth daily** ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never **take away** sins:

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

- *Standing daily* alludes to the early writing of this letter as the temple was destroyed along with Jerusalem in 70AD by the Roman general, Titus
- The daily, perpetual sacrifices of the Old Covenant served their purpose as a delay until the time when the One spoken of by the prophets would come to remove sin
- *Take away*, Greek word used as a sailing term to *cast off the anchor*

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.
14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.
15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,
16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, **I will put my laws into their hearts**, and in their minds will I write them;
17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

- *I will put my law into their hearts*, the New Covenant would be an *inner transformation*, but this internal change would be made manifest in our *outward conduct*
- *Remember*, Greek for *recall for reward or punishment*

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

- When they debt is paid, the payments cease
- Story of Nicholas II Tsar of Russia forgiving the debt of Count Ivanovich

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

- *Boldness*, Greek for *bluntness, frankness, publicity, assurance*
- The entrance to the Holy of Holies is still the veil, but this veil which is the body of Christ, was torn open at Calvary that we might gain access

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in **full assurance** of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

- In a time when many considered *falling away*, the writer urges his readers to *draw near*
- *Full assurance*, Greek for *entire confidence*

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our **faith** without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

- *Faith*, Greek for *anticipation or expectation*
- Draw encouragement from one another and incite each other to do the good works of God

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

- Build up one another, not lessening our convictions as we see the day of His return drawing closer

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, **there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,**

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

- In this context, the *willful sin* appears to be a neglect of gathering in worship the Lord with our brothers and sisters and denying Christ by returning to temple worship
- The writer ties the connection between the denial of Christ and the attempt to return to practicing the Levitical law as a sufficient substitute – there remains no sacrifice for this sin

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

- The writer relies on the benefits of his audience's knowledge of the law as he encourages them to stay the course
- He recalls for them the punishments of rejecting the Old Covenant to address the seriousness of rejecting the New
- *Despite*, Greek for *insult or offense*

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, **The Lord shall judge his people.**

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- All the points made by the writer in this subject deal with God's people – not unbelievers, so this would lead us to consider the "willful sin", "walking on the blood of Jesus", and "insulting or offending the Spirit of grace" in the context of believers rejecting the New Covenant they have experienced in favor of the dead works of religion
- Possibly, the writer recalls David's remarks when he numbered the people

2Samuel 24:14

14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

38 **Now the just shall live by faith:** but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

- Habakkuk 2:4 is quoted (3) times in the New Testament with an emphasis on different parts of the statement
- In Romans 1:17 Paul stresses the *faith*
- In Galatians 3:11 Paul stresses the *just*
- In Hebrews 10:38 the writer stresses *live*

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

1Kings 19:19-21

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

- May we have the same resolve as Elisha when he received his call and burn the instruments of our former lives so we might set our sights on our calling today